

# Govt eyes more NIPERs, pacts with pvt cos for drug research

**NEW DELHI:** The Government plans to step up partnership with private players through NIPERs for drug discovery as it looks to set up more such institutions in the next five years.

"We should innovate, we should produce new molecules. We should have very good drug discovery system to make sure we are activating all our NIPERs. Very shortly, over the next 4-5 years, I think we will have around a dozen NIPERs", Department of Pharmaceuticals (DoP) Secretary VK Subburaj said.

"We are working towards that. Even with the existing NIPERs, we are tying up with the private industry to enable right atmosphere for research."

There are currently seven National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research (NIPER) in the country.

Commenting on other policy initiatives, Subburaj said the Government is looking at implementing the Katoch Committee report as well as working to solve issues plaguing the medical device manufacturers.

"We want to see the medical devices sector grow in



India. Like bulk drugs, in medical devices also, we want to reduce the dependency on other countries. We have to create our own local manufacturing capacities," Subburaj said.

"We need to see that conducive atmosphere is created for medical device manufacturers in India for instance the inverted duty structure, today we can import any medical equipment with zero tax but if we have to import raw material we have to pay tax. We have worked out and given it to department of revenue," he added.

Once inverted duty structure is sorted and infrastructure is in place and the Drug

and Cosmetics Act is through then right atmosphere will be created for the medical devices segment in the country, Subburaj said.

He also exhorted the pharma industry to develop expertise in other verticals apart from generics to fuel further growth in the future.

"Generic sector growth alone is not sufficient. Today we need to go beyond that. You have got ayurveda, veterinary sector, monoclonal antibodies, specialty generics, blood products. All these are huge potential growth sectors but our presence is almost nil", Subburaj said.

He added that if the phar-

ma sector has to grow, it needs to diversify into other sectors as well.

"I think pharma industry should strive to move away from generics, they should be there but there should be expansion diversification in these new sectors as well so that India takes care of these other sectors also all around the world," Subburaj said. Elaborating on India's place globally in terms of generic drug production, he added: "More than 25 per cent of the generic drugs used in the world are produced in India, that is why India is called the silent champion of global healthcare. That has been India's role, but the growth is only in the generic sector."

There is a huge potential for growth as currently Indian pharma industry is just around 3 per cent of the global market, Subburaj said.

"There is a big margin if we want to go to 30 per cent, then we can say we have grown in the pharma sector and that day is very close because potential is there and we are working towards it. We are creating right policies for this to happen," he added.

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