



The e-newsletter for the Indian Biotech industry

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December 2024 | Issue 0019

## ABLE Governing Body Members

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Vice President  
Ms. Deepanwita Chattopadhyay

General Secretary  
Dr. Ezhil Subbian

Treasurer  
Mr. Ravi Bhola

### Governing Body members

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Dr. B N Manohar

Dr. Jayashree Aiyar

Mr. Krishna Kalyan T. D.

Mr. Sanjeev B Neelappa

Dr. S. Shriram

Ms. Sowmya L Balendiran

Dr. Vasanth Sambandamurthy

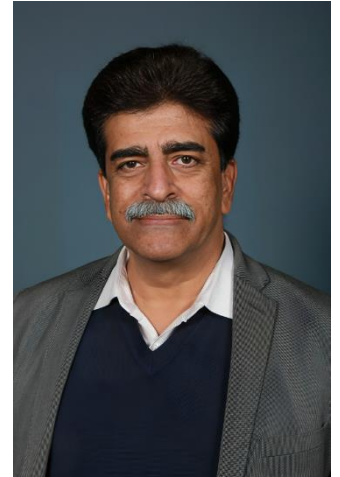
Mr. Venkat K Bundla

COO  
Mr. Narayanan Suresh

Dear All,

Season's Greetings from ABLE!

At the outset, I would like to thank the members who participated to successfully conclude the 22nd Annual General Meeting of ABLE on 14th December 2024 in Bengaluru. The active participation and appreciation for the varied activities conducted by the Association within the country and outside will further boost the members of the Governing Body and the Secretariat to spread the message of our industry's immense contribution to the \$ 151 billion BioEconomy.



The day was also significant as we could conduct the National finals of **BEST** (Biotech Entrepreneurship for Student Teams) and **voice for BT** (Public speaking contest for final year Undergrad and first year Masters BT students), two of ABLE's popular events that engages and encourages, the budding BT students and future industry leaders. The top 2 zonal winning teams from North, East, West and South in the **BEST** competition and the Top 2 winners of **voice for BT** from the 4 zones competed fiercely for the winner's slots on December 14. I would like to thank the 5 jury members, Dr B Gopal (Indian Institute of Science), Mr Arun Chandru (Pandordum Technologies), Ms Sowmya Shresth (Novonesis), Dr Maharnob Sircar (Yokogawa Technologies) and Dr Sridhar Ramanathan (IKP Edge) for their valuable insights provided to the BEST teams and patiently listening to the amazing speeches by the voice for BT contestants and finally choosing the Top 2 winners.

I am very happy to inform you that ABLE's efforts in the past 12 years to push for significant changes in the Biological Diversity Act have seen traction. The government has notified a large number of changes suggested by ABLE to make the implementation of the Act very smooth for biotech companies. We conducted a webinar to explain the salient features of the industry friendly

changes incorporated in the Act. The Webinar was moderated by our in-house expert, Mr Ravi Bhola (K & S Partners) and the two external speakers Dr Malathi Lakshmikumaran and Dr Suhas Nimbalkar highlighted the importance of the key changes. The webinar was very well attended and all the participant queries were answered. In addition, ABLE has submitted the recommendations from members about the need for some more changes required, in a memorandum submitted to the National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) of India for further action. ABLE experts participated actively in the two stakeholder meetings conducted by the NBA on 19th December 2024 to further emphasize the need for some more changes to make the biodiversity rules even better.

ABLE is yet again hosting the India Pavilion at the forthcoming BIO International Convention in Boston, USA from June 16-19, 2025. The India Pavilion at the same event in 2023 at San Diego was a great hit with participants making very useful business connections. The limited space at the India Pavilion is fast filling up and I request members to book their preferred booths at the earliest.

The ABLE Governing body members representing various focus groups have had meetings with our members from various segments of BT business to prioritize on key areas of growth. You would see more development in this front and solicit your valuable inputs.

THE ABLE '**BIOECONOMY CONCLAVE**' IS SCHEDULE FOR **THURSDAY 13TH FEBRUARY 2025** AT BANGALORE AND WE LOOK FORWARD TO YOUR ACTIVE PARTICIPATION AND SUPPORT. YOU WILL HEAR MORE ON THIS SOON.

Thank you all for your great support and cooperation in 2024 and we would like to seek your continued support and cooperation in 2025.

**WISHING YOU AND YOUR FAMILIES MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR.**

G S Krishnan  
Hon. President

## ABLE holds 22nd AGM on 14th December

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- India Pavilion at BIO International Convention 2025, Boston, USA
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President G S Krishnan called the Meeting to order and welcomed all the members. He confirmed from COO Narayanan Suresh about quorum. Quorum was confirmed.

He referred to the AGM notice sent to all members on 22 November 2024 along with the detailed activities report for 2022-23 and the Audited Financial Statement for 2023-24. In his welcome address, President emphasized the importance of the membership drive to add new members to the association.

He then referred to the Minutes of the 21st AGM of the Association held in September 2023 and requested approval of the members. A resolution to approve the Minutes of the 21st AGM was proposed by Dr. S Shriram (Jananom) and it was seconded by Mr. Sanjeev Neelappa (Yokogawa Technologies).

President then requested the COO (Chief Operating Officer) to present the report on the activities of the Association in the year 2023-24. Mr. Suresh gave a detailed presentation on the activities, that included the 20th anniversary celebration of the Association held in New Delhi, release of new logo, launch a coffee table book, Enablers of Indian Biotech. He highlighted events handled by the Association such as the India Pavilion @ BIO Boston, Voice for BT, BEST competition, the key role played by ABLE in conducting the Global Bio India event of DBT-BIRAC in New Delhi, the annual Bengaluru Technology Summit. Other key activities included a number of stakeholder meetings conducted in six cities of Karnataka to gather inputs for the latest Biotech Policy for the state, a number of webinars etc.

President then requested the members to consider the activities report and adopt it. A resolution to approve the report was Proposed by Mr. Vireshkumar Sheth (Shriyata Lifetch) and seconded by Dr. Vasan Sambandamurthy (Bugworks Research).

In the absence of Treasurer who was outside the country on business, President requested the COO to present to the members the details of the Audited Financial Statement of the Association for the year 2023-24. COO Mr. Suresh shared the details of the Audited reports. Members were happy to note that the Association had recorded a small surplus of Rs. 24.80 lakh during the year. There were queries related to the membership income registered during the year that ended on March 31, 2024. These queries were answered.

President then requested the members to approve the Audited Financial Statement for the year 2023-24. A resolution to approve the Audited Financial Statement for 2023-24 was proposed by Dr. Vasan Sambandamurthy (Bugworks Research) and it was seconded by Dr. Ezhil Subbian (String Bio). The resolution was adopted unanimously.

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Mr. Suresh, with the President's permission, then presented a resolution to approve the re-appointment of the statutory auditor, Venkat & Vasan for the financial year 2024-24. The resolution was proposed by Mr. Sanjeev Neelappa (Yokogawa Technologies) and seconded by Mr. B N Manohar (Stempeutics). The resolution was adopted unanimously. Another resolution that authorized the Association Treasurer, Mr. Ravi Bhola to convey the appointment of the Auditor to the agency was proposed by Mr. Vireshkumar Sheth (Shriyata Lifetech). The resolution was seconded by Dr. Vasan Sambandamurthy (Bugworks Research).

The President Mr. G S Krishnan then opened the floor for discussion for any other matters of interest to the members. Mr. Krishnan briefed members about the plan to conduct the next edition of ABLE BioEconomy Conclave 2025 on 13th February 2025 at The Taj, M G Road hotel in Bengaluru. He proposed that the various focus groups of members that were brainstorming about the key challenges facing their segments to discuss these issues during the Conclave. He urged the members to contribute liberally by taking up the various sponsorship schemes being proposed for the conclave to support the conduct of the event.

Members provided many valuable suggestions to conduct the event to make it a very high impact activity for the industry. Members also suggested formulating a suitable theme to be highlighted during the proposed event.

Dr. P M Murali (President, Council of ABLE Presidents) praised the leadership efforts of Mr. Krishnan in tremendously increasing the profile of ABLE by engaging the institution very effectively with all the major biotech events in the country and abroad. Dr. Murali mentioned that ABLE Secretariat headed by the COO, Mr. Narayanan Suresh and the staff members have worked tirelessly in engaging with the various segments of the industry and in conducting the GBI 2023 event for DBT-BIRAC. Dr. Murali suggested that ABLE pro-actively pursue new regulatory regimes for emerging areas such as Bio Banking and provide solid suggestions to streamline the bio stimulants space. He urged the Association to spend resources and set up a full-fledged office in New Delhi to liaise more actively with the various government ministries. Another suggestion related to enhancing the scope of the newsletter, eENABLE to spotlight good startups to help them catch the eyes of funders, share key information in the buyer-seller space systematically and adopt newer broadcast media such as podcast and social media. Dr. Murali suggested setting up annual ABLE Awards to encourage and recognize good work done by member companies. He also proposed activities that will help startups to tap more funds and leap frog to the Rs 20-100 crore revenue band very quickly.

Mr. Narayan Kulkarni (MM Activ Sci-tech) suggested ABLE increase the footprint to open more chapters in bio clusters like Hyderabad and Ahmedabad-Vadodara to enhance the Association profile.

President Mr. Krishnan, then concluded the meeting after thanking all the members for their active support and participation in the activities of the Association.



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- Praj Industries Unveils Bio-Bitumen Technology for Sustainable Roads; Targets 3x Revenue Growth by 2030
- Dr. Reddy's Launches Groundbreaking Cancer Drug Toripalimab in India

# Vidya Ramachandran from Shiv Nadar Institute of Eminence, Delhi wins 'voice for BT' 2024 contest

ABLE is delighted to announce the successful conclusion of the 12<sup>th</sup> Edition of 'voice for BT' 2024 National Final, India's premier public-speaking competition exclusively for biotechnology students. This unique initiative empowers young biotech enthusiasts across the country by fostering innovation, confidence, and effective communication—essential qualities for tomorrow's biotech leaders.

### National Winners Announced:

**Winner:** Vidya Ramachandran from Shiv Nadar Institute of Eminence, Delhi NCR

**1st Runner-up:** Vandhana V Nair from Sir M. Visvesvaraya Institute of Technology, Bengaluru, Karnataka



*ABLE President Mr. G S Krishnan and Ms. Sowmya Shresth, Head-People & Organization (MEIA) at Novonesis wish the 'voice for BT' 2024 winners in Bangalore on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2024*

The success of 'voice for BT' 2024 would not have been possible without the generous support of **Novonesis** and **Yokogawa Technology Solutions**, our Patron Gold Members, along with the dedicated efforts of our Regional Academic Partners. Their commitment and collaboration ensured the smooth execution of the competition at every stage.

Over the past two months, intense regional rounds were hosted by:

- **DY Patil University**, Mumbai, Maharashtra (West Zone)
- **KIIT University**, Bhubaneswar, Odisha (East Zone)
- **Vellore Institute of Technology**, Vellore, Tamil Nadu (South Zone)
- **Amity University**, Noida, Uttar Pradesh (North Zone)

The top three winners of each zonal round received cash prizes of ₹20,000, ₹15,000, and ₹10,000, along with certificates. At the National Final, the finalists were honored with Silver Trophies and exclusive internship opportunities from Novonesis.

We extend our heartfelt congratulations to all the participants for their outstanding performances and thank our partners for their invaluable contributions to the success of this event.



**North Zone**



**South Zone**



**East Zone**



**West Zone**

## THISTI Faridabad & Manipur University teams win BEST competition

ABLE is proud to announce the successful conclusion of the Biotechnology Entrepreneurship Student Teams (BEST) 2024 National Final. This pioneering program has been instrumental in nurturing entrepreneurial spirit among biotechnology students across India since its inception. The BEST initiative empowers graduate, postgraduate, and doctoral students to develop entrepreneurial acumen by addressing real-world challenges in biosciences commercialization. Participants are encouraged to bring forth innovative solutions and present their ideas to an esteemed panel of industry experts. Over the years, the program has served as a launchpad for numerous biotech startups, many of which have earned recognition on the global stage.



*Mr. G S Krishnan, Hon. President ABLE; Dr. Ezhil Subbian, Hon. General Secretary ABLE and Ms. Sowmya Shresth, Head-People & Organization (MEIA) at Novonesis wish BEST 2024 winning teams*

**Winner:** Regional Centre for Biotechnology, Faridabad, Haryana  
Team Members: Dhruvin Patel, Ojaswi Singh, Karishma Maddheshiya



*Manipur University team with their certificates. The team participated in the competition online due to travel constraints.*

**First Runner-Up:** Manipur University  
Team Members: Elangbam Diana Devi, Leishangthem Hilemba Meitei, Linika Tayenjam

The winners received cash prizes of ₹60,000 and ₹45,000, along with certificates of achievement for their exceptional ideas and innovative presentations. The competition spanned two months, beginning with intense zonal rounds hosted by:

- **DY Patil University**, Mumbai, Maharashtra (West Zone)
- **KIIT University**, Bhubaneswar, Odisha (East Zone)
- **Vellore Institute of Technology**, Vellore, Tamil Nadu (South Zone)
- **Amity University**, Noida, Uttar Pradesh (North Zone)

The top two teams from each zone advanced to the National Final, where their entrepreneurial solutions and problem-solving abilities were put to the test. ABLE extends its



heartfelt congratulations to all participants for their dedication and innovative ideas. The success of the BEST 2024 program was made possible through the unwavering support of **Novonesis** and **Yokogawa Technology Solutions**, our Patron Gold Members, as well as the contributions of our **Regional Academic Partners**.

### ***North zonal round***



### ***South zonal round***



### ***East zonal round***



### ***West zonal round***





## ABLE signs MoU with Choose New Jersey & Institute For Life Science Entrepreneurship (ILSE)



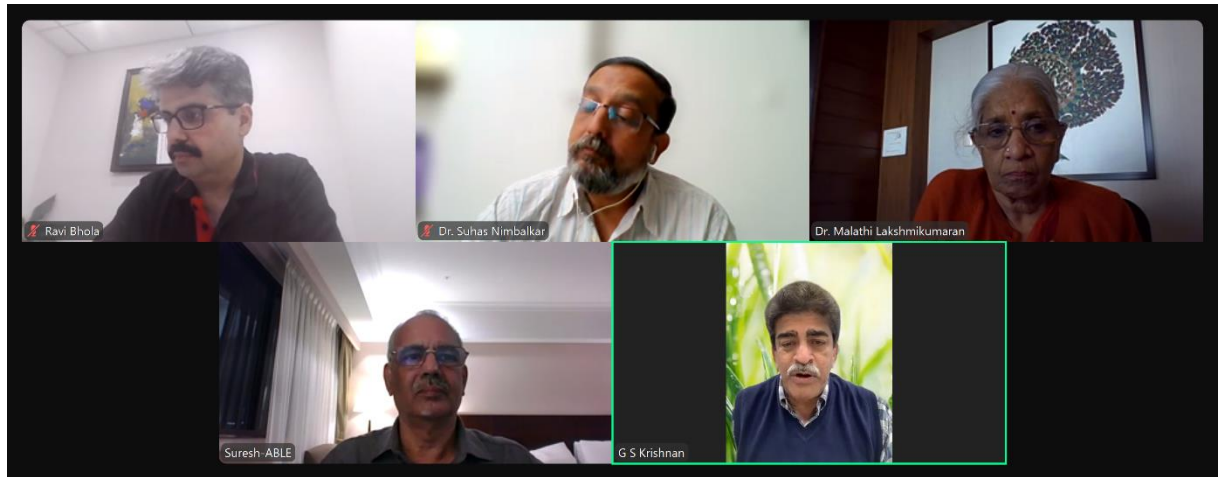
*The MoU was signed by ABLE COO, Mr. Narayanan Suresh and Choose New Jersey CEO Wesley Mathews. It was witnessed by New Jersey Lt. Governor Tahesha Way*

**ABLE signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Choose New Jersey, Inc. and the Institute for Life Science Entrepreneurship (ILSE)** at an event held at the Taj West End, Bengaluru. The MoU signing was graced by the esteemed presence of Lt. Governor Tahesha Way from the State of New Jersey, marking a significant step in advancing bilateral cooperation in life sciences innovation and trade.

This partnership comes as part of the New Jersey-India Commission, an unprecedented initiative established through an executive order, making New Jersey the first U.S. state to create a dedicated Commission with India. This strategic initiative underscores a shared commitment to fostering collaboration, promoting trade, and Driving investments between India and New Jersey—two key hubs for life sciences innovation.

ABLE's association with ILSE began in August 2021 with a previously signed MoU that introduced flexible partnering models, collaborative programs, and joint activities to accelerate innovation in biotechnology and life sciences. Building on this successful foundation, the renewed partnership reflects a strengthened focus on advancing entrepreneurial opportunities, facilitating cross-border research initiatives, and fostering commercialization of biotech solutions.

## ABLE Webinar "New Biological Diversity Rules, 2024 on December 6<sup>th</sup>



The ABLÉ webinar on the "**New Biological Diversity Rules, 2024**" provided valuable insights from a distinguished panel including **Ravi Bhola**, Managing Partner at K&S; **Dr. Malathi Lakshmikumaran**, Executive Director & Practice Head at Lakshmikumaran & Sridharan Attorneys and **Dr. Suhas Nimbalkar**, Founding Partner & Consultant at Eitimo Ventures to analyze the recent amendments and their implications for the biotechnology sector.

The Biological Diversity Act has undergone significant amendments after years of advocacy, impacting various stakeholders and necessitating compliance changes within organizations. This webinar aims to clarify these new regulations and their implications for the industry.

Key topics included the distinction between Indian and foreign companies, new patenting requirements, and the regulations around accessing biological resources. Experts emphasized clarity on approvals for commercial and research utilization of bio-resources. Significant changes in the patent process were discussed, particularly concerning compliance for foreign entities. While Indian companies now face fewer hurdles in securing patents, strict documentation and approvals are necessary to align with biodiversity laws. The panel explored the influence of global agreements like the Nagoya Protocol on biodiversity governance, underscoring the need for researchers to comply with international and national legal frameworks. Specific exemptions for agricultural byproducts and cultivated medicinal plants were discussed, with experts highlighting inconsistencies that require clarification to avoid legal conflicts.

The experts emphasized the need for compliance with the evolving legal framework and clarified the complexities of research, commercialization, and intellectual property rights.

## ABLE at Healthcare+ Expo Taiwan 2024



**Mr. Narayanan Suresh, Chief Operating Officer of ABE**, participated in the prestigious **2024 Healthcare+ Expo Taiwan**, held from December 5-8 in Taipei.

As a distinguished speaker in the **“Biotechnology and Pharmaceutical Session”**, Mr. Suresh provided key insights into India’s rapidly growing medical and laboratory equipment market. He highlighted the transformative role ABE plays in fostering biotechnology innovation and industry growth in India.

With participation from 17 industry and hospital associations representing 15 countries, the *Healthcare+ Expo Taiwan* serves as a leading global platform for healthcare leaders to collaborate, network, and share knowledge. Mr. Suresh’s presence further strengthens international ties and underscores India’s vital role in the evolving global biotech and healthcare sectors, said a statement by the event organizers.

The Expo spotlighted five key sectors: smart healthcare, regenerative medicine, precision diagnostics, biotech pharmaceuticals, and advanced medical devices. Showcasing Taiwan as a leading healthcare innovation hub in Asia-Pacific, the event delved into emerging trends shaping the biotech and medical sectors, with a focus on technological advancements driving future developments across the region.



# India Pavilion at BIO International Convention 2025, Boston, USA



**BIO International Convention & Exhibition** is one of the leading biotech events in the world. It brings together the brightest minds and innovative companies from across the globe. It serves as an unparalleled platform for networking, knowledge-sharing, and showcasing cutting-edge technologies and advancements in the field of biotechnology and allied sectors. **The BIO 2024 had 1500+ companies along with, 50 American States + DC + Puerto Rico exhibiting, 19608 delegates from 68 countries and record breaking 61500 + partnering meetings.**

We are pleased to announce that ABLE yet again is organizing the **India Pavilion** at the **2025 BIO International Convention and Exhibition** scheduled to be held from **16-19 June 2025 at Boston, Massachusetts, USA**. The India Pavilion measures **1600 square feet** and is strategically located on the main pathway in the exhibition area. The floor plan of the India Pavilion has been aesthetically designed and individual booths are oriented to get maximum visibility and draw a large number of visitors.

The India Pavilion Layout at BIO 2025, available built-up booth types & sizes, entitlements, cost, payment and other general terms and conditions are provided in the form of an **Proposal-cum-Information e-Booklet**. The confirmed Exhibitor has to give only the poster designs and logo files in the prescribed format, size and resolution. ABLE takes care of setting up your booth and keeping it ready in Boston, USA.

For more information, please contact: **Dr. S. Balasubramanya, GM-ABLE**  
(9900048833; gm@ableindia.org.in)

## New International Bioeconomy Forum Strengthens Engagement Between U.S. and India on Promoting and Protecting the Bioeconomy



ABLE and the U.S. National Academies' International Bioeconomy Roundtable held an in-person event at the Global Bio-India 2024 conference in New Delhi, India, to discuss the scope of a new National Academies initiative, the International Bioeconomy Forum.

Biotechnology and biomanufacturing are increasingly seen as key sectors for economic growth in several countries around the world. In 2020, the National Academies highlighted the importance of working with international partners to advance bioeconomy-related R&D and address risks to national bio-based economic efforts. In 2022, the U.S government reinforced this position in policy.

This new forum, set to launch in early 2025, will serve as an ongoing, neutral platform for experts in academia, industry, government, and NGOs to explore opportunities and challenges in the global bioeconomy, focusing on complex and interconnecting issues in promoting and protecting bioeconomies. The forum will discuss the benefits of emerging biotechnologies, potential security risks, and national policies, international standards, and best practices in the biotechnology and biomanufacturing sectors to support the global bioeconomy.

"The forum comes at a momentous time with India's new BioE3 policy, which is aimed at fostering biotechnology and biomanufacturing and emphasizes the urgent need to harmonize the terminologies and sectors within the bioeconomy to fully measure its global impact," said Narayanan Suresh of ABLE during the event. "Additionally, the G20 Secretariat, under Brazil's 2024 presidency, is leading efforts to globally harmonize bioeconomy definitions."

Carmen Shaw, director of the future International Bioeconomy Forum, emphasized the importance of the new global platform for building joint efforts between the U.S., India, and members of the international bioeconomy community. During her remarks, Shaw recognized India as a key global bioeconomy leader and mentioned that the forum aims to foster international dialogue on bioeconomy governance, safety, and security.

"The International Bioeconomy Forum represents a historic milestone as one of the first global platforms from the U.S. Academies on this topic," Shaw said. "It is only fitting that this forum begins bilaterally with India, a key driver in advancing the future of biotechnology and biomanufacturing."

Carmen Shaw, far left foreground, addressing event attendees about the U.S.-India Bioeconomy Efforts on Friday, September 13 at Global Bio-India 2024 in New Delhi, India.

Carmen Shaw, far left foreground, addressing event attendees about the U.S.-India Bioeconomy Efforts on Friday, September 13 at Global Bio-India 2024 in New Delhi, India.

The event based its discussion in New Delhi on a previous National Academies workshop held in August 2024, which explored R&D, innovation, investment, and policy landscapes for biotechnology and biomanufacturing in the United States and India. During that workshop, experts from India, the United States, and other countries gathered ideas, topics, and common themes for the new forum and emphasized the importance of collaboration, technology transfer, policy harmonization, and infrastructure development.

This U.S.-India biotechnology collaboration will prioritize several areas, including fostering innovation through public and private sector funding, establishing harmonized policies and international standards for biotechnology, and addressing data sharing and privacy issues.

However, advancing the international bioeconomy is not without challenges. Regulatory complexities in both countries, high costs of bio-goods, dependence on international suppliers, and the need for skilled labor and robust biomanufacturing infrastructure in these countries pose significant hurdles. Safety and security are also critical, as accidents, irresponsible actions, and malicious exploitation of international collaboration and commerce can undermine an otherwise healthy bioeconomy.

The International Bioeconomy Forum is a collaboration between the [Board on Life Sciences](#) and [Policy and Global Affairs Division's International Networks & Cooperation Theme](#).

Source: [www.nationalacademies.org](http://www.nationalacademies.org)



## BIOTECH NEWS

### *GST Council exempt Gene therapy fully from GST*



Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, addressing the media following the 55th GST Council meeting in Jaisalmer, Rajasthan, announced a significant decision aimed at making life-saving treatments more accessible. She revealed that gene therapy, a critical treatment for life-threatening diseases, has been fully exempted from GST. Previously taxed at 12%, this exemption is expected to enhance affordability and accessibility in the healthcare sector. This move underscores the GST Council's commitment to addressing healthcare challenges and supporting advanced medical treatments.

### *Strand Life Sciences Launches CancerSpot and New Genomics Research Centre*



Strand Life Sciences marks a significant milestone in our **24-year journey with the inauguration of its new Genomic Diagnostics and Research Centre in Bengaluru**. This new facility, equipped with cutting-edge sequencing technologies, aims to advance diagnostic solutions and life-saving cancer research. This special occasion also witnessed the **launch of CancerSpot**—a groundbreaking blood test for the early detection of multiple cancers. Utilizing advanced methylation profiling technology, CancerSpot identifies tumor DNA fragments in blood samples, offering a simple, non-invasive method for cancer screening. The test is designed with robust signatures from Indian cohorts, ensuring global applicability.

### *Biocon Founder Honored with Prestigious Award*

Dr Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, Chairperson of Biocon Group, was conferred the prestigious Jamshedji Tata Award by the Indian Society for Quality (ISQ) in recognition of her pioneering role in shaping India's biosciences sector and her unwavering commitment to quality standards. Biocon, under her leadership, has become a global leader in biopharmaceuticals.

## *Biocon Biologics Earns Recognition for Intellectual Property Excellence*

Biocon Biologics, a subsidiary of Biocon, has been recognized for the eighth consecutive year as an Asia IP Elite for 2024 by IAM (Intellectual Asset Management). This prestigious accolade highlights Biocon Biologics' dedication to innovation and its robust intellectual property strategy, which plays a crucial role in enabling access to affordable biosimilar therapies globally.

## *Biocon Celebrates 46th Founder's Day with a Focus on Innovation and Social Impact*

Biocon commemorated its 46th Founder's Day with a series of events that showcased its legacy, purpose, and vision for the future. These included the launch of the Biocon Anthem, a walkathon dedicated to advancing cancer treatments, and the inauguration of the Biocon Experience Center. The company reaffirmed its commitment to innovation, excellence, and making a positive impact on global healthcare.

## *Biocon gets EU approval for diabetes drug, Liraglutide*

Biocon has announced that its European partner, Zentiva has received a Decentralized Procedure (DCP) approval for its complex formulation, Liraglutide, in the European Union (EU). The approval is for the generic versions of Victoza® to treat Type-2 Diabetes and Saxenda® used in the treatment of weight management. Liraglutide is a glucagon-like Peptide1- receptor agonist ( GLO-1 receptor agonist) and is also know as incretin mimetics. Developed by Novo Nordisk, it was first approved in Europe in 2009. The medicine works by increasing insulin release from the pancreas and decreases excessive glucagen release.

## *Superconvergence Event at Science Gallery, Bengaluru*

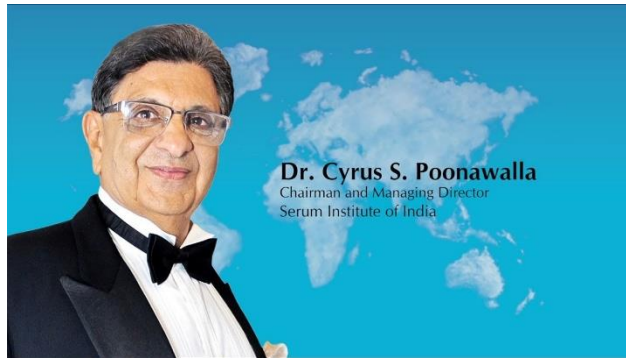


Superconvergence, an event celebrating the fusion of Biotechnology, AI, and Bioengineering, was held at Science Gallery Bengaluru. Hosted by the Vision Group for Biotechnology (BTS 2024), Science Gallery Bengaluru, and Bioconvergence Pioneering, the evening brought together thought leaders from the Bangalore tech ecosystem.

The event featured keynotes from David E. Duncan, who discussed "Microlands: The Future of Life on Earth," and Michael Langer, who spoke on "Investing in Superconvergence: A Boston Perspective."

A panel discussion followed, focusing on creating a pioneering ecosystem in Bangalore, with experts such as Prashanth Prakash (Accel), Nidhi Mathur (Axilor), and Dr. Ezhil Subbian (String Bio). Rajeev Malhotra from Bioconvergence Pioneering moderated the session.

## *Dr. Cyrus Poonawalla Honored for Lifetime Achievement; Serum Institute Expands Global Vaccine Access*



Dr. Cyrus Poonawalla, founder of the Serum Institute of India (SII), has received multiple Lifetime Achievement Awards in 2024, including recognition from the IBLA and CNBC-TV18 India Business Leader Awards. These awards celebrate his decades-long dedication to global health, particularly his work in making life-saving vaccines affordable and accessible

worldwide.

Founded in 1966 with the vision of ensuring healthy childhoods at affordable prices, SII has become the world's largest vaccine manufacturer by volume, producing over 1.3 billion doses annually and reaching an estimated 65% of the world's children. Dr. Poonawalla's focus on quality and innovation has led to accreditations with global organizations like the WHO and collaborations with international agencies such as PATH and NIH to develop vaccines against various diseases, including Meningococcal A, H1N1 Influenza, Rotavirus, and Coronavirus. His efforts have made India self-sufficient in Tetanus Anti-toxin and Anti-snake Venom serum, and he has played a critical role in national immunization programs. For his contributions, he has been honored with the Padma Shri (2005) and Padma Bhushan (2022).

Furthering its commitment to global health, SII has recently entered into two significant licensing and manufacturing agreements:

- **Mpox Vaccine with Bavarian Nordic:** SII has partnered with Bavarian Nordic to manufacture and distribute its MVA-BN mpox vaccine, increasing global manufacturing capacity and expanding access to vulnerable populations, particularly in the Indian market.
- **Chikungunya Vaccine with Valneva:** SII has also partnered with Valneva to manufacture and distribute its single-shot chikungunya vaccine in Asia, addressing a critical public health need, especially in India, which is currently experiencing a severe outbreak. This collaboration is supported by CEPI and the EU.

These partnerships underscore SII's ongoing mission to provide high-quality, affordable vaccines worldwide and address pressing public health needs through collaboration and innovation.

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## *Praj Industries Unveils Bio-Bitumen Technology for Sustainable Roads; Targets 3x Revenue Growth by 2030*

**Praj Industries, a leading bioindustrial company, has made significant strides in sustainable infrastructure and business expansion.**

- **India's First Sustainable Road:** Praj collaborated with the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways to inaugurate the country's first national highway using lignin-based bio-bitumen, a greener alternative to conventional bitumen. This innovation reduces greenhouse gas emissions by 70% and partially replaces fossil fuels, promoting self-reliance and reducing reliance on imports.
- **Paving the Way for a Sustainable Future:** Bio-bitumen offers a promising solution for India's growing bitumen demand, projected to reach 100 lakh tons in 2024-25. Praj's technology has the potential to save ₹4000-4,500 crore on foreign exchange and contribute to the vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat (self-reliant India).
- **Praj's Vision for 2030:** The company is eyeing a threefold revenue increase by 2030. This growth will be driven by opportunities in various sectors, including:
  - **Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF):** Praj is well-positioned to capitalize on the growing demand for SAF, with India targeting a 1% blend by 2027. The company's collaboration with Air Asia and Indian Oil on India's first SAF-powered commercial flight demonstrates its capabilities in this sector.
  - **Biopolymers:** Praj is exploring opportunities in biopolymers, a field with immense potential for sustainable material production.
  - **Energy Transition & Climate Actions (ETCA):** The global focus on clean energy solutions presents significant opportunities for Praj. The company is developing modularization solutions for setting up plants in sectors like blue and green hydrogen, green ammonia, and waste-to-energy.

Praj's commitment to bio-based solutions and its expansion plans position the company as a frontrunner in building a sustainable future and achieving clean energy goals.

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## *Dr. Reddy's Launches Groundbreaking Cancer Drug Toripalimab in India*

Dr. Reddy's has launched Toripalimab (Zytorvi) in India, marking a significant advancement in cancer treatment. Toripalimab is claimed to be the first and only globally approved immunology drug for recurrent or metastatic nasopharyngeal carcinoma (RM-NPC), a rare head and neck cancer. This launch makes India the third country to have access to this next-generation PD-1 inhibitor. Clinical studies have demonstrated that combining Toripalimab with standard chemotherapy reduces the risk of disease progression or death by 48%. It is also approved as a monotherapy for patients with disease progression after platinum-based chemotherapy, addressing a critical unmet need for Indian patients.

**ASSOCIATION OF BIOTECHNOLOGY LED ENTERPRISES (ABLE)**

Comments and questions are welcome and should be addressed to:

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**FOCUS AREAS**

- Inputs for Streamlining Regulatory Process
- Inputs for Accelerating BioEconomy through Advocacy
- Industry Recommendations for the Union Budget for the Biotech Sector
- Proposing Fiscal Incentives for Biotech Sector
- Strengthening IPR System
- Proactive Member Focus Initiatives
- Kindling & Fostering the Fire of Entrepreneurship
- Catalysing Opportunities for Start-ups and SMEs
- Proposals for Venture Capital Fund
- Encouraging the Biotech Sector through Investment
- Facilitating Partnership through Industry, Academia & Start-up
- Promoting more Incubators in Biotech Clusters
- Working Closely with the State Government & Identify Potential Opportunities for Biotech Development
- Promoting Entrepreneurship & Imparting Skill development for freshers in Biotech
- Support Student Internship Programs & Facilitate Placement
- Promoting Biotech among Budding Biotech Students through various Competitions