

Printer Friendly VersionWEB LINK - <http://www.expresspharmaonline.com/20070930/market05.shtml>**Events****A clinician's perspective**

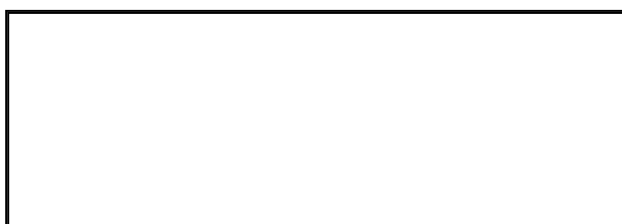
*A two - day conference conducted by International Business Conferences (IBC) saw researchers in full swing discussing and debating issues close to their profession. **Garima Arora** reports*

The Indian pharma industry is worth \$10 billion and is growing at a phenomenal rate of 8-10 percent per year. In wake of the product patent regime, Indian pharma companies have very rightly come to realise the importance of R&D. From R&D spends being one percent of the total turnover today we see companies admitting to spending a whopping 8-10 percent. "Moreover, pharma companies globally spend \$8-10 billion on clinical trials. India, which accounts for \$20 billion of outsourced research, is expected to grab \$2 billion over the next decade," asserts Ravi Krishnamurthy, Conference Producers, IBC. In line with this trend, IBC organised a two-day conference on drug discovery technology anti-inflammatory and pain management. The conference, which was held at the JW Marriott Hotel, Mumbai saw many industry leaders and stalwarts coming together for a series of interactive and interesting sessions.

The opening technical session was by Dr R B Smarta, Managing Director, Interlink Marketing Consultancy on drug discovery business perspective where he gave a walk through of the science appeal, strategic direction to drug discovery market, business perspective and future business dimension of the topic. (Dr Milind Antani, Head Pharma Life Science & Healthcare, Practice Group and Senior Associate, Nishith Desai Associates, spoke on regulatory policies and methods of implementation in drug discovery technology with special highlights on case studies. Antani spoke extensively on status of IPR in India and safe clinical practices. This session was followed by an interactive panel discussion on industry vs intellectual property rights with Milind Antani as chairperson and with inputs from Smarta. The panel discussion gave the delegates an opportunity to voice their concerns on various issues pertaining to IPR and also get their questions answered.)

The second session of day one after a power lunch was by Dr C N Ramchand, Director, Research & Development, Kemin Technologies on role of probiotic PB6 and the cyclic peptide surfactin in combating different inflammatory conditions. Ramchand spoke extensively on pre-clinical and clinical studies with special reference to inflammatory bowel disease. The closing session of day one was a presentation by Dr C T Rao, Vice-President, R&D (Medicinal Chemistry), Sun Pharma Advanced Research Company spoke on inflammation therapeutic strategies for TNF Inhibition.

The opening session of the day two of the conference was a paper by Dr Prakash V Diwan, Head, Pharmacology, IICT on inflammation: Pharmacotherapeutic approaches who spoke comprehensively on new developments in treatment of inflammation and challenges ahead. This was followed by a presentation on pre-clinical development of anti-inflammatory drugs by Dr Kalyanasundram, CSO, Strand Life Sciences. "The conventional serial approach to designing molecules has a low hit rate and is time consuming. An integrated approach (in-silico, in-vitro and in-vivo) has a potential to improve this performance tremendously," said Dr Kalyanasundram





The next technical session saw a presentation by Dr Anurag Varshney, PhD, Senior Research Scientist, Electrophysiology, Ranbaxy Research Laboratories R&D III on managing pain; looking through the ion channels. This was followed by a presentation on assessment of pain clinically in clinical trials Dr Bhaskar HN, Sr Clinical Research Physician, Clintrac International. Dr Mukul Jain, Head, Pharmacology & Toxicology Zydus Research Centre, Cadila Healthcare presented a paper on multi-targeted drugs as novel anti-inflammatory agents. The closing session was a presentation by Dr Ramani Iyer, Actis Biologics on discovery and development of novel biological for rheumatoid arthritis with special focus on numerous case studies.

"The presentations bought out an interesting India versus global perspective," said Dr Punit Srivastava, Senior Research Scientist, new drug discovery research, Ranbaxy who was a delegate at the conference. "For us clinicians it's all the same. The conference has really helped create awareness about a number of issues that we otherwise seem to ignore," he added. "The conference was very well organised. It gives us an opportunity to meet and exchange ideas," reckons Srivastava's colleague Dr Anurag Varshney. It was not only the delegates that found the conference educational. The speakers also felt that such conferences should be organised as it helps clinicians update their knowledge on various topics. "Issues like IPR is a very dynamic area. And clinicians should be educated about them continuously. Safety issues in labs is a very neglected issue. I was surprised to find out how much our researchers flout safety guidelines," said Milind Antani.

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