

Unceasingly surging pharma sector in UP

The health sector in Uttar Pradesh has taken a prime spot in recent years, especially the pharma sector. The nation's second-largest economy is now focusing on developing itself as a pharma hub. The exponential growth in pharma exports, expanding manufacturing base, and development of more parks and clusters are changing the paradigm of the pharma industry in Uttar Pradesh.

Swelling exports

India is 2nd largest pharmaceuticals market in Asia, accounting for nearly 3% of the global pharmaceutical industry by value. India exports 20% of global generics, making it the largest provider of generic medicines globally. Also, India is the 4th largest medical device market in Asia, standing amongst the top 20 markets globally.

Home to 16.5% of India's population, Uttar Pradesh is the biggest market for pharmaceuticals. The pharma sector in the state is robust and thriving. The sector has registered a 38.2% growth in exports for FY 16-19. The objective is to encourage local production, promote research and development, and improve the availability of affordable medicines to citizens.

UP has strong distribution networks for healthcare products and medicines with Pharma & Medical Devices investment size worth approx. INR 3000 crores (licensees' data from FSDA, Aug 2020).

The export story of the UP pharmaceuticals industry can also be expressed in stats. The export of bulk drugs and drug intermediates grew from 62.35 million USD (FY 2018-19) to 77.97 million USD (2020-21). Also, the export of drug formulations and biologicals grew from 58.59 million USD (FY 2018-19) to 86.45 million USD (FY 2020-21).

Uttar Pradesh is also home to various medicinal plants and herbs. The state contributes a significant amount to national exports of these items.

Expanding Manufacturing base with Pharma Parks & Clusters

The pharma sector has seen significant growth in the past decade. With the installation of major Pharma Parks, and grooming the existing pharma clusters, the state is expanding its pharmaceuticals manufacturing base. Uttar Pradesh has approx. 400 Formulation units, 41 Bulk Drug units, 91 Cosmetic Units, and 122 Medical Devices Manufacturing Units. The state is proud owner of nine pharma clusters in Gautam Buddha Nagar (136 units), Ghaziabad (70 units), Kanpur Nagar (41), Lucknow (55), Meerut (45), Moradabad (37), etc. The diverse flora and fauna and infrastructural plus points aid in the visionary approach of the state government to make UP a major pharma hub. The state's location, presence of major national and international airports, road network, and industrial corridors support the thriving pharma industry.

The state has earmarked 2,350 acres for setting up mega manufacturing parks. These pharma and biotech plants are being developed in Lalitpur, Pilibhit, and GB Nagar districts. The state got its first Pharma Park in October 2023. The proposed Park will be established in Lalitpur. The Uttar Pradesh State Industrial Development Authority has initiated the survey process. It is spread over 1472 acres across five villages in the Lalitpur district. This is a transformative project of one of the most backward regions of the state, Bundelkhand.

Another medical devices park is underway in Sector 28 of the Yamuna Expressway Industrial Development Authority in Greater Noida. This will position the state as a leading medical hub in South Asia.

Strong Distribution and R&D

Demand for pharmaceuticals is derived from people's demand for health. Affordable and high-quality medicines for all have been a prime objective of the double-engine government. This dream became a reality with the launch of Pradhan Mantri Janaushadhi Pariyojna centres across the nation providing access to generic medicines to the locals. Presently, Uttar Pradesh has nearly 1594 Pradhan Mantri Janushadin Pariyojana Centres and more than 1 lakh pharmacists. There are about 118861 retail pharmacies state-wide.

The workforce of the pharma industry in the state is highly qualified as well. Currently, the state has about 131 colleges providing B Pharma degrees and about 75 colleges providing M. Pharma degrees.

Talking about the research and development of new drugs, the state has 18 world-class pharma research institutes. CSIR- Central Drug Research Institute, Lucknow is one of the premier research institutes of India which was envisioned to drive and lead technological independence. This is among the 39 laboratories that are functioning under the aegis of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research of India.

The King George's Medical University, located in Lucknow, is among the top three medical universities in India. Other than this, the National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education & Research, Raebareli, Indian Institute of Toxicology Research, Lucknow, National Botanical Research Institute, Lucknow, and National Institute of Biologicals, Noida are some examples.