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“We are working on supplements for inflammatory, neurological diseases”

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By **Manbeena Chawla** | April 8, 2020



we-are-working-on-supplements-for-inflammatory-neurological-diseases

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NuFFooDS Spectrum interacted with Dr Muhammed Majeed, Founder & Chairman, Sami-Sabinsa Group.

Sami-Sabinsa Group has announced the launch of its new manufacturing facility at Pharma SEZ Industrial Area, Hassan, Karnataka with a planned investment of Rs 200 crore. The first phase of the plant will house a 40,000 square metres world-class Active Nutraceutical Ingredients (ANI) manufacturing unit, with an annual capacity of 300 tons and will be completed by September 2020. The second phase is targeted for 60,000 square metres. The full facility will be functional by 2021. To find out more about this facility and the company's future plans, NuFFooDS Spectrum interacted with Dr Muhammed Majeed, Founder & Chairman, Sami-Sabinsa Group.

Edited Excerpts

What are the key ingredients to be manufactured at the new facility?

The new facility for which we have just broken ground at Hassan, Karnataka will be our 8th manufacturing unit, in addition to the facilities in Dobaspet, Nelamangala (two units), Hyderabad (two units), Kunigal, and in the USA. It will be a world-class Active Nutraceutical Ingredients (ANI) manufacturing facility. We are not revealing the innovative products to be launched at this time, but be assured we are extremely enthusiastic about some new developments. Suffice it to say we will continue our pioneering track record. Also, the new unit, when operational, will play a pivotal role in boosting our exports further, will help to double our revenues, and provide employment to around 400 qualified workers in the fast-growing industrial region of Hassan.

Which specific therapeutic areas have you been targeting through your active nutraceutical ingredients?

Building upon the vast knowledge available from India’s ancient medical system of Ayurveda, the Sami-Sabinsa Group uses modern research techniques to develop products that offer solutions to health problems. We offer various active ingredients targeting specific therapeutic areas. For example, the prevalence of diabetes is increasing globally at an alarming rate, mainly due to our lifestyle and food habits. India has a large population of prediabetics and people with premature diabetes, which is affecting people at a much younger age than previously. The Sami -Sabinsa Group offers specific ingredients to lower blood glucose levels and is also developing products which help in combating metabolic syndrome, a cluster of conditions that, occurring together, increase the risk of heart disease, stroke, and type 2 diabetes. We have scientifically evaluated the ingredients and many are being clinically evaluated for their beneficial effects. The major ingredients in this category include pterostilbene and water soluble extracts from Pterocarpus marsupium (pTeroSol, Silbinol), extracts from Emblica officinalis, aka Indian gooseberry (Saberry) patented and standardized for beta glucogallin, standardized extracts from Gymnema sylvestre (GS4 Plus), and Momordica charantia to name a few. In addition to these we have products like ForsLean and GarCitrin for healthy weight management, which is beneficial since obesity increases the chances of developing type 2 diabetes. Then, cancer is a rapidly growing health problem in both developing and developed countries of the world. Despite the involvement of major pharmaceutical organizations in developing new drugs to treat various forms of cancer, mortality rates are steadily increasing. Curcumin is a unique molecule with a multipronged approach that appears to have an inhibiting effect at all stages. The positive aspect is that curcumin is lethal to cancer cells and leaves the normal cells in the body unharmed. The Sami- Sabinsa Group’s Curcumin C3 Complex, an extract of turmeric (Curcuma longa) containing 95 per cent curcuminoids, has been extensively studied as an anti-cancer molecule, as reported in published studies. The effects of C3 Complex in eradicating several forms of cancer cells, as well as preventing metastasis (movement of cancer cells from one tissue to other), are well documented. Recent clinical data suggests that C3 Complex may be used as an adjunct therapy along with chemotherapeutic drugs to increase their efficacy and also reduce the side effects.

Due to the widespread nature of targets in cancer, C3 Complex has been found to play a majorrole in managing various forms of cancer. Human studies conducted on patients suffering from pancreatic cancer revealed that curcumin can be used as a potent adjuvant along with

drugs like Gemcitabine. Other types of cancer for which C3 Complex has shown promise include multiple myeloma, colorectal and breast cancer, among others. Other ingredients that have anti-cancer activity include ellagic acid, green tea, and many more.

What are the latest outcomes of R&D at Sami Sabinsa in the health science and nutraceuticals space?

The Sami-Sabinsa Group is constantly working on developing innovative products. Currently some of our R&D activities are directed towards lowering metabolic syndrome. We are currently carrying out clinical trials to evaluate our ingredients. Non-alcoholic fatty liver disease, caused by several factors, including obesity, is a major cause of liver failure in recent years. It is characterized by the accumulation of fat accompanied by infiltration of inflammatory cells and cellular damage, which can progress to cirrhosis, liver failure, and liver cancer. Non-alcoholic steatohepatitis (NASH) is considered as the hepatic manifestation of metabolic disorder and is closely associated with type 2 diabetes, obesity, insulin resistance and systemic inflammatory state. We have carried out research to develop a combination product to reduce the progression of this liver disease. Apart from nutraceuticals, we have a strong base in the probiotic segment with our patented, shelf-stable LactoSpore Bacillus coagulans MTCC 5856, which has been clinically evaluated for irritable bowel syndrome. We are also working on supplements in the therapeutic area of inflammatory and neurological diseases.

Are you seeking any academic collaborations to enhance the nutraceuticals market in India?

We tend to be collaborative and have been working with a few pharmacy colleges and other post graduate institutes in India.

What are the major growth plans for the coming years?

Since inception 31 years ago, the Sami-Sabinsa Group has experienced healthy growth. The company is growing consistently at around 25 per cent Year-Over-Year (YOY). The upcoming ANI

plant at Hassan will contain two phases and a total of seven manufacturing blocks, which will be sufficient to cater to the group’s future export requirements. This is part of the Group’s strategy to expand existing ingredient growth and focus on innovative new products. The new unit, when operational, will play a pivotal role in boosting our exports further and helping us to double our revenues. The company has generated a consolidated sales revenue of Rs 1200 crore for the FY 19-20. We intend to reach Rs 3000 crore in the next five years. We are also exploring to step into Brazil and Russia in the coming times.

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