

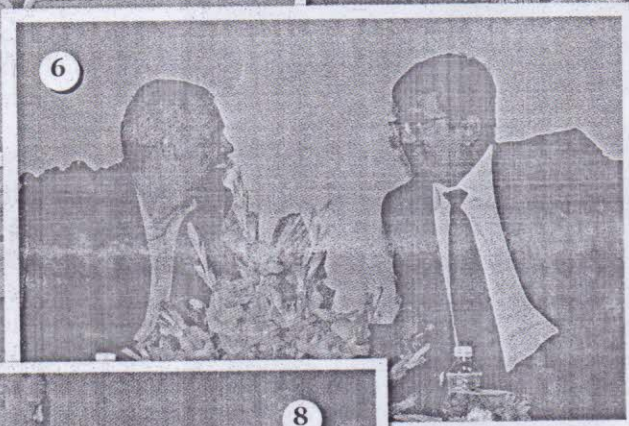
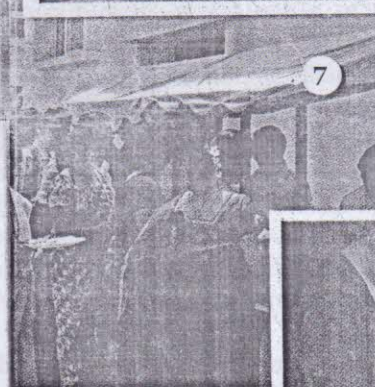
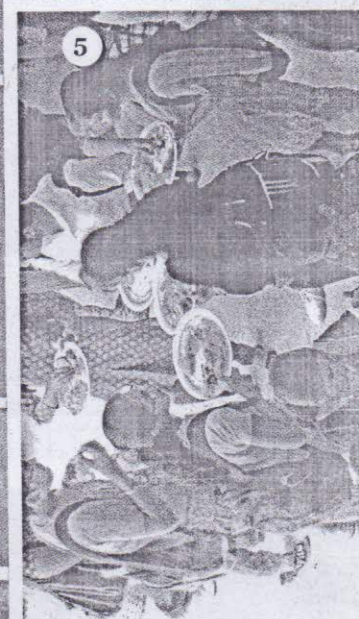
THROUGH THE KALEIDOSCOPE

Student Lecture

@ Oxford, Bangalore



Pics by: Saplash Chaudhuri and Sural Desai



1. Chief guest, Mr B M Vijay Shankar, additional managing director of KBITS, lights the lamp during the inauguration ceremony.
2. Mr Naraimha Raju, executive director of The Oxford Group of Educational Institutions, honours Mr B M Vijay Shankar.
3. From L to R: Mr Narayanan Suresh, group editor of BioSpectrum, Mr Narasimha Raju, Mr BM Vijay Shankar and Ms Elsamma Thomas Varicatt, principal, The Oxford College of Science with the Top 20 BT Schools Survey issue of BioSpectrum released at the event.
4. Mr Ravi Dasgupta of Biocon takes questions from the students at an interactive session.
5. Students gather for lunch.
6. Mr Narayanan Suresh and Mr BM Vijay Shankar at the inauguration ceremony.
7. Faculty from different schools enjoy the lunch break.
8. Ms Andrila Dasgupta of Novozymes, picks the winner for the lucky draw.
9. A packed auditorium during the day.
10. Mr Satya Dash of ABLE, interacts with students during lunch break.

Industry interaction takes centerstage at lecture

BioSpectrum kicked-off its Student Lecture Series 2011 with an event at The Oxford College of Science in Bangalore. An account of industry leaders addressing the students about career options in biotechnology

In an effort to bridge the gap between the student community and the biotechnology industry, *BioSpectrum* recently organized the first of its student lecture series in association with The Oxford College of Science, Bangalore. The event was the first of a series of lectures to be held in colleges across India.

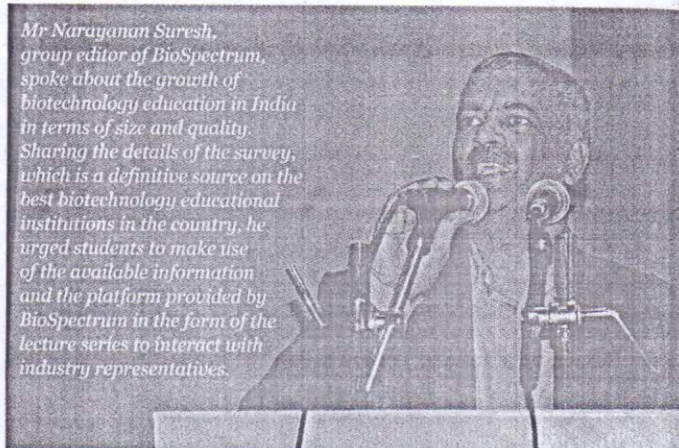
Titled 'Getting started on the career ladder', the event brought together biotechnology industry leaders, academicians and students. Over 600 students of biotechnology from different colleges of Bangalore participated in the event. The speakers were from different fields such as government agency, industry association, clinical research organisation and biopharma companies.

Mr Narayanan Suresh, group editor of *BioSpectrum*, kicked-off the event by announcing the results of the 7th *BioSpectrum* Top 20 Biotechnology School Survey 2011. After lighting the ceremonial lamp and releasing the August issue of *BioSpectrum* that features the Top 20 BT School Survey 2011, Mr B M Vijay Shankar, additional managing director of Karnataka Biotechnology and Information Technology Services (KBITS) and chief guest for the event, spoke about using science as a tool for solving problems through different innovations.

He said that the world was standing on the threshold of change and biotechnology was driving this global transformation. Talking to the students about the various initiatives taken by the Karnataka government to aid the student community, he said that the Karnataka government was setting up 12 finishing schools across the state to allow students gain hands-on experience. "These finishing schools will be beneficial for the students as well as the industry," he said. He also spoke on the various hubs coming up in Bangalore that will act as centers of learning for the students.

Mr Narsimha Raju, executive director of The Oxford Group of Educational Institutions, urged students to make use of the opportunities and interact directly with

Mr Narayanan Suresh, group editor of *BioSpectrum*, spoke about the growth of biotechnology education in India in terms of size and quality. Sharing the details of the survey, which is a definitive source on the best biotechnology educational institutions in the country, he urged students to make use of the available information and the platform provided by *BioSpectrum* in the form of the lecture series to interact with industry representatives.



Students listen to the speakers at The Oxford College of Science's auditorium

the people from the industry, which would help them understand the different roles to be played in the industry.

During the interaction sessions, the speakers answered questions asked by students and advised them on their career path. Some of the students were awarded free subscriptions of *BioSpectrum* through a lucky draw. The event was concluded by Mr Narayanan Suresh, who spoke on the need for such interactions between the academia and the industry in order to reduce the disparity.

MANASI VAIDYA

Student Lecture
@ Oxford, Bangalore

Quotes from speakers



Mr B M Vijay Shankar, additional managing director of KBITS and chief guest of the event

Student Lecture @ Oxford, Bangalore

“We are on the threshold of change in the industry and biotechnology is driving global transformation... The Karnataka government is in the process of setting up 12 finishing schools across the state that will allow the students to gain hands-on experience, making them industry-ready. These finishing schools will be beneficial for the students as well as the industry.”

Tips on entrepreneurship

Dr Satya Dash, COO of the Association of Biotechnology Led Enterprises (ABLE), spoke on how ABLE was associated with biotech graduates. “ABLE provides a platform for catalyzing the growth of biotech by helping new start-ups connect to sources of venture capital. The BEST program allows budding entrepreneurs to interact with leaders from the industry and gain an understanding about the process involved in transforming an idea into a product. In the biotech field, the sky is limit, but students should make ample use of the information available to them, to move ahead,” he said.



Market needs on mind

Dr V N Balaji, CSO, Jubilant Biosys, sketched out the entire drug discovery process for the students. “One of the most essential steps involving target discovery was very promising as its complexity provided ample scope for identifying new validated targets. A thorough knowledge of medicinal and organic chemistry along with an understanding of bioinformatics is essential for a career in drug discovery,” he said. Pointing out the disconnect between student knowledge and market requirements, he added, “Collaboration with academic institutions is necessary to help design and incorporate elements required by the industry into the syllabus.”



Interest is key

While discussing the opportunities before students, **Dr Gopal Vaidyanathan**, general manager, Applications, Waters India, had a word of advice for them. “Students should recognize their interests and keep them in mind while making a decision,” he said. “They should talk to people and understand the various opportunities available.” He said setting goals was very important, “but the refinement of goals is a natural progression”. He explained how scientists and engineers work together to produce a finished product and how there were ample opportunities in sales and marketing in this segment.



Going back to basics

Ms Aindrita Dasgupta, senior manager-R&D, Novozymes, gave insights into the growing field of enzyme technology and how it affected our lives. “The synthesis of enzymes involves people from all backgrounds, including microbiology, protein engineering and bioinformatics, which provides plenty of scope to students. A strong command over basics is an absolute necessity and an ability to correlate the theory learned in classrooms and its practical applications is a must.”



Insights on clinical research

Dr Saral Thangam, managing director of Norwich Clinical Services, explained the intricacies involved in clinical research. She explained the importance of clinical research as it was the means by which new medicines were introduced into the market while also elucidating the different job roles in a CRO. “In clinical research, pharmacovigilance is a rapidly growing sector with ample job opportunities. It extends beyond the production of the drug, with continuous research to check the long term efficacy of the drug,” she said.



The HR point of view

Mr Ravi Dasgupta, head of human resource, Biocon Group, helped students understand what the industry was looking for in biotechnology graduates. He stressed on internships and said students should make the most of such opportunities as the experience enables them to ease into the work environment of the industry without too many problems. He also briefed students about the importance of soft skills during the recruitment process. “Communication and inter-personal skills go a long way in helping one survive in the industry and should be taught to students. Students should be able to work in a team alongside other individuals,” he said.

