

NuFFooDS

perspectives on science & business
Spectrum

Volume 4 | Issue 6 | February 2017 | ₹100
www.nffoodsspectrum.in

52 pages including cover

PHARMA to NUTRA

A definitive shift



Latent market in India for nutraceuticals **29**

'Fat Tax' may make Indian traditional food costly **35**





Dr Sanjay Agrawal

Leading Pharmaceutical Consultant and Editor-in Chief of IJM Today

Latent market in India for nutraceuticals

India is one of the nations across the globe where the market of nutraceuticals and dietary supplements is growing enormously. Nutraceuticals and dietary supplements are sold in India under the name of Fast Moving Healthcare Goods.

Nutraceutical ingredients are nutrient rich components that have beneficial medicinal qualities, which improve human health and provide prevention from diseases. The nutrition value of traditional foods increases with addition of nutraceutical ingredients. Nutraceutical ingredients are used in cosmetics, dietary supplements, food and beverages on a wide range. Medicinal properties of nutraceuticals are used in health beneficial products.

The rapid advances in science and technology, increasing healthcare costs, fast changing lifestyle, ageing population and rising interest in attaining wellness through diet are fuelling the interest in nutraceuticals. Today, it is one of the fastest growing segments of food industry and is already becoming a crucial part of the diet. With the growing popularity among consumers, the nutraceutical market is expected to double in the coming years. Nutraceuticals today has become one of the booming markets in India with fast moving health goods, over the counter, and fast moving consumer goods companies jumping into the bandwagon.

The nutraceuticals sector is a dynamic, evolving sector that offers exciting opportunities to merge scientific discovery with growing consumer interest in health-enhancing foods. Nutraceuticals will continue to have great appeal because they are convenient for today's lifestyle. The greatest challenge still remains in the public policy and regulatory areas, which will encourage research and development of products that provide health benefits

and permit truthful, non-misleading communications of these products while protecting public health and maintaining public confidence.

A large number of Ayurvedic products are sold as nutraceuticals or dietary supplements in the country



today although there is no reliable statistics of the size of the market and the product classification. The need for such basic data is very important considering the fact that these products belong to direct to consumer segment. India, therefore,

felt the need for bringing a set of standard regulations in production and marketing of nutraceuticals as there has been a big spurt in the number of these products with exaggerated health claims.

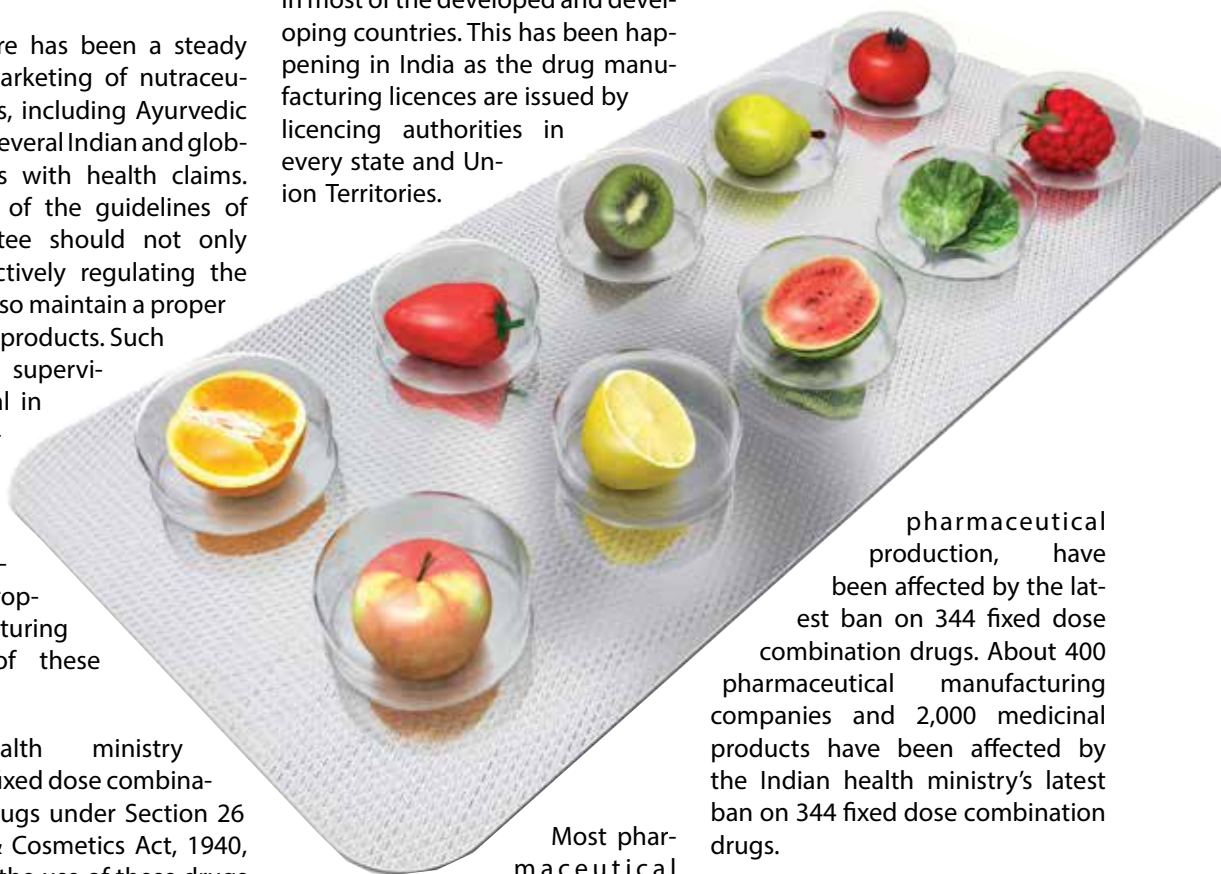
Nutraceuticals are natural or bioactive chemical compounds that are promoted and marketed, across the globe, claiming to be health promoting and disease preventing products with some medicinal properties.

In India, there has been a steady growth in marketing of nutraceutical products, including Ayurvedic products by several Indian and global companies with health claims. Enforcement of the guidelines of the Committee should not only help in effectively regulating the market but also maintain a proper data of these products. Such regulatory supervision is critical in India considering the fact that there were many incidents of improper manufacturing conditions of these products.

Indian health ministry banned 344 fixed dose combination (FDC) drugs under Section 26 A of Drugs & Cosmetics Act, 1940, as it felt that the use of these drugs is likely to cause risk to patients whereas safer alternatives to these FDCs are available in the market. The ban came into immediate effect and the affected pharmaceutical companies were to stop manufacturing and withdraw the stocks from the market. The wholesalers and retailers were also advised to not to sell the banned products.

Decision to ban these FDCs was based on the recommendations of the Committee constituted by the

ministry. The Committee was of the view that these FDCs have no therapeutic rationale to be in the market and needs to be banned. The ban order was certainly going to hit the revenues and profitability of pharmaceutical companies and trade as these products have been widely prescribed, promoted and often purchased without prescriptions for more than 20 years. Marketing of thousands of FDCs is perhaps unique in India and does not exist in most of the developed and developing countries. This has been happening in India as the drug manufacturing licences are issued by licencing authorities in every state and Union Territories.



Most pharmaceutical companies take advantage of this situation and come up with 'new products' by combining two or more drugs claiming all kinds of therapeutic properties. Once manufacturing licences are obtained from one state authority, the company can market the product all over the country. Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) has been advising state drug controllers for several years that the combination of two or more drugs should be treated as a new drug

and marketing approval of DCGI needs to be obtained after clinical trials. Most of the state licencing authorities (SLAs) have been ignoring this directive causing circulation of too many irrational combinations in the market.

According to a recent Indian press report, less than 1 per cent of the drugs produced in Gujarat state, a state that itself contributes over 35 per cent of India's

pharmaceutical production, have been affected by the latest ban on 344 fixed dose combination drugs. About 400 pharmaceutical manufacturing companies and 2,000 medicinal products have been affected by the Indian health ministry's latest ban on 344 fixed dose combination drugs.

As western diet and lifestyle habits spread in India, related diseases are also increasing like diabetes, cholesterol and hypertension. This is where nutraceuticals are known to play a major role in controlling ill-health condition. The growing Indian nutraceuticals market is attracting the attention of pharmaceuticals players such as GlaxoSmithKline, Dabur India, Cadila Healthcare and Novartis India, according to media reports. **NS**