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ASIA EDITION

Dr Parul Ganju wins BioSpectrum Asia Woman Entrepreneur of the Year Award 2022

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A Far-reaching Impact in the life sciences industry- Dr Parul Ganju, Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Ahammune Biosciences



Asia has, indeed, become the new hub for potential growth and innovation, with no signs of losing steam. To appreciate the Asian companies and individuals for their commendable performance and achievements during Calendar Year (CY) 2021, BioSpectrum Asia Excellence Awards 2022 ceremony was held at Lavender Ball Room, Hotel Fort Canning in Singapore on December 2, 2022.

Winner of BioSpectrum Asia Woman Entrepreneur of the Year Award 2022, Dr Parul Ganju, a PhD in skin biology, from National Institute of Immunology (NII), New Delhi co-founded Ahammune Biosciences in 2016 in Pune, with Dr Krishnamurthy Natarajan, Professor, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi. The startup is a resident incubatee company of Venture Centre, National Chemical Laboratory (NCL)'s technology business incubator and its R&D laboratory has been recognised by the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR), Government of India.

After completing her doctoral studies in skin disorders, Dr Parul took a step forward in starting a company focused on treating a debilitating de-pigmentation disorder called Vitiligo.

A big advantage Dr Parul received after starting her startup was a tax exemption. The startup was granted a three-year tax holiday by the government in 2016. After winning recognition and encouragement at several events, she got a patent licensing agreement signed with CSIR-NCL, Pune and CSIR- Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology (IGIB), New Delhi for developing a drug against vitiligo.

For Dr Parul, 2021 was full of development as her team at Ahammune Biosciences filed the first Investigational New Drug (IND) Application with the Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) for approval to conduct human studies with its lead drug candidate for vitiligo.

As a CEO, she has positioned the company as the first drug discovery company in the country to develop a targeted new treatment option for vitiligo. With the transition to the human clinical stage, the company has now developed a space for itself in this domain and is now being approached by stakeholders for possible collaborations.

Besides vitiligo, through her startup, Dr Parul is aiming to target multiple dermatological indications with a deep pipeline of IP-based molecules that modulate cellular pathways underlying skin health and immunity. Under her leadership, the startup has raised Rs 21 crore as equity investment and additional Rs 2 crore as government grants.

Image caption- *Image caption- L-R- Ravi Boratkar, Publisher & Managing Editor, BioSpectrum Asia; Dr Parul Ganju, Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Ahammune Biosciences; and Sophie Asker, Managing Director, GCI Health*