

2008

## Year of the Entrepreneur

**INSPIRED** by the opportunities that exist in the life sciences industry at this point of time *BioSpectrum* has named year 2008 as “Year of the Entrepreneur”. Beginning with the first issue of the year we will bring you a series profiling prominent entrepreneurs from the Asia Pacific region. The first in the series has three hot and happening companies from Singapore. We talk to the CEOs of MerLion Pharmaceuticals, S\*BIO and CordLife to find out where they are leading their organizations in 2008 and beyond

# Singapore's Enterprising 3

(L-R) Steven Fang, CEO, CordLife,  
Dr Tony Buss, President and CEO,  
MerLion Pharmaceuticals, Dr Jan-  
Anders Karlsson, CEO, S\*BIO



Mr STEVEN Fang, CEO, CordLife has to his credit negotiating the merger with Cytomatrix that led to establishing of CordLife Limited (previously known as CyGenics). His work experience includes stints at Sterling Withthrop, Baxter and Becton Dickinson, with business development assignments in Malaysia, Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, Vietnam and the Philippines. He shares with *BioSpectrum* the journey so far and what he is looking ahead to. Over to Mr Fang:



Mr Steven Fang,  
CEO, CordLife

#### ACHIEVEMENTS

The first and foremost is relocating the Singapore facility to the new and larger facility. Second important milestone for us is regional

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# On course to become APAC's largest cord blood banking facility

expansion, with the launch of Jakarta facility. On financial front, the cord blood banking business revenue saw year-on-year increase including revenues from the client's annual storage fees. By end of September 2007, we had more than 11,000 cord blood units stored in our banks. The other major achievement is restructuring of CordLife Limited. After restructuring, Cytomatrix, which holds the patented technologies, is now a wholly owned subsidiary of CordLife.

### The company

CordLife, a division of CordLife Limited, a healthcare company listed in Australia collects, processes and stores cord blood stem cells, which may later become potential source material for life saving treatments. Its laboratory in Singapore where the company stores cord blood units is the first and only AABB (American Association of Blood Banks) accredited private cord blood banking facility in South and Southeast Asia. The Ministry of Health in Singapore also licensed it.

#### LOOKING AHEAD

You will see significant amount of investments in brand building and creating awareness programs for the services, we provide in the coming months in India and Indonesia.

India and Indonesia will take our major focus in the coming years – particularly India market. The facility in India is set to be operational early this year. It will be the most advanced facility of its kind in India and one of the largest facilities in Asia. We have plans to open up 30 offices spread across India. We are opening up collection centers in Indonesia as well. These undertakings require huge investments and management bandwidth. At present, the company has about 100 people. We are looking at doubling the headcount by next year.

Australia is relatively small market in terms of awareness and is highly price sensitive. The market is limit-

ed as the competition level is high. We are looking at consolidation of business opportunities in Australia. At the same time, a strong branding exercise is underway to position us well in the medical community there in Australia.

We are consolidating business opportunities in Australia and exploring options in Malaysia, Vietnam and China. Our Singapore and Hong Kong operations are profitable. We want to build the company to be the largest cord blood banking facility in the region.

#### FUNDING GROWTH

If we look backwards, we have raised quite a good amount of funds. The company has strong cash reserve in excess of \$ 8.5 million (AUS \$10 million). As on date, we have invested in the range of \$20-\$25 million (AUS \$25-30 million) in setting up facilities in the region. The revenue for the year ending June 30, 2007 from cord blood banking services was \$4,749,812.29 (AUS \$5,517,000) as compared to \$3,098,767.95 (AUS \$3,597,000). This is an increase of 53 percent.

The business model of the company provides not only the upfront revenue but also regular annual revenue. It is also important to note that, we have zero percent defaults year-on-year. We expect a significant growth in the coming three-to-five year span in volumes as well as revenue.