

***Press Backgrounder:***

**India's Richest Woman and Biotech Entrepreneur  
to Speak at AusBiotech Conference**

*Termed "India's Mother of Invention" by the New York Times, and trained in brewing in Ballarat, Victoria India's Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw has grown a biotech company from an operation in her garage to a billion dollar enterprise.*

*Denied an entry into India's beer making industry, because of her gender, she co-founded Biocon in 1978 and in less than 30 years has created India's Number One biotech company (and Number 16 globally) with revenues of over \$200 million in 2004.*

*Mazumdar-Shaw is the keynote speaker at the AusBiotech annual conference to be held from November 20-2 in Perth. She will discuss biotech opportunities for Australian companies in South East Asia and the Indian Ocean Rim regions.*

**Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw is Chairman and Managing Director of Biocon. In 2004 it's revenue of over \$200 million reflected a 34% increase over the previous year.**

**The growth of India's biotech industry has been equally stellar – growing by 39% from 2003-2004 in a year-over-year revenue and a stock-market value of US\$1.2 billion.**

**Last year Biocon's IPO was oversubscribed nearly 33 times and the listing of the company made Muzamdar-Shaw India's richest woman. With 1,300 employees (600 of them scientists) Biocon focuses on biopharmaceutical clinical research and industrial enzymes.**

**The company has grown from an operation set up in Muzumdar-Shaw's garage in Bangalore to extract from papayas. Today Biocon produces everything from insulin to antibodies.**

**While India has found a berth for itself in IT, the question being posed is whether it can do likewise in Biotechnology. According to Mazumdar-Shaw says that low cost R&D capabilities, speed of innovation and the value of IPRs so generated are going to be key factors in determining success in Biotechnology. "It is inevitable that in this context China and India will vie for leadership position in the region. Whilst India has the "english speaking advantage", China has the "mindset advantage",," she says.**

**"China already has an "early mover" advantage in that it has taken proactive and pragmatic steps in Biotechnology by being a key participant of the Human Genome Project, embracing GM crop technology and encouraging recombinant therapeutics in its healthcare programs. In contrast India is still grappling with ethical and moral**



**issues relating to Clinical research, safety issues surrounding GM crops and debating the merits and ramifications of the Product Patent Regime.”**

**While Singapore has the highest “biotech profile” in the region, Mazumdar argues that India has the edge scientific skill. “The biggest challenge for Singapore has been to match their investments with skilled human resources...countries like India have leveraged their scientific skill to build their biotech sectors but have been able to match it with the required infrastructure. In the long term, a model based on human resources is far more sustainable than one based on hardware.,” she told *Newsweek* in October,2004.**

**Mazumdar-Shaw has an honorary doctorate from Ballarat University for services to biotechnology.**

**For further information contact Tania Ewing on 0408 378 422**