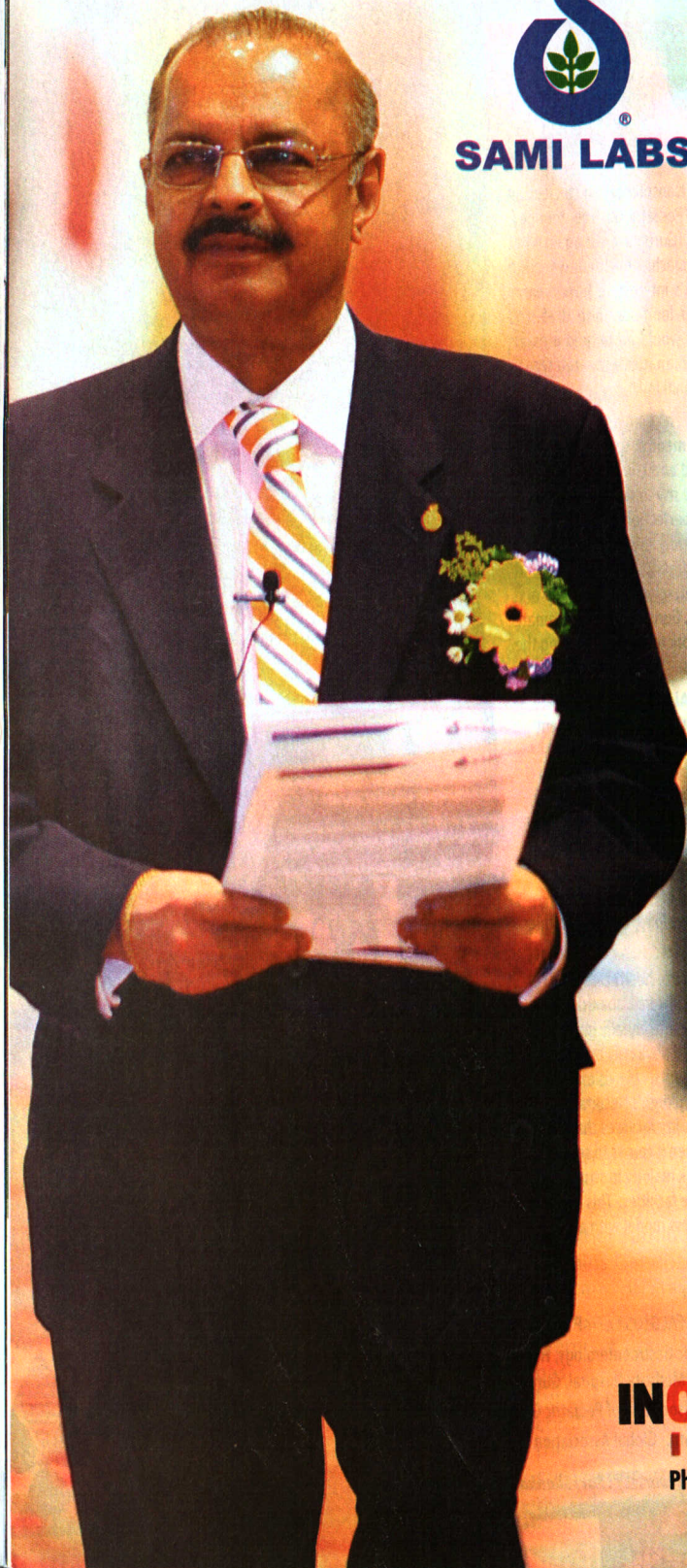


The journey of Dr. Majeed is very interesting as is the separate growth trajectories of Sabinsa and Sami Labs. We try to get into Dr. Majeed's mind to find the reasons for Sami Labs's success and the way forward.



- **When a student flies abroad to hone his or her skills, it is a given that the talent is lost to India? What made Dr. Majeed come back to India?**

I believe training and studies overseas broadens the mind and knowledge which was especially true in the 1970s. Even during my studies or employment with Pharma companies such as Pfizer, I realized that my roots were back in India. But I still longed to make an impact in the country where I studied and worked with a concept that is completely Indian. Being a pharmacist by profession and with an intense interest in herbal products, I ventured out to offer Ayurvedic line of products in the US where there was neither a tradition of use nor the existence of belief in these products. Once I created this strong foothold in the US for my business, I became aware that I had more unfinished business in India. Some of this journey is captured in a book, "Stepping Out of The Brain Drain" written by authors totally independent of me wherein they state returning migrants are a "win-win" situation!

- **People trained in western medicine do not often look at traditional medicine practices? What influenced and prompted this Kerala born doctor to tap the native wisdom to address the complex needs of today?**

People trained in western medicine are not aware of traditional practices of medicine and this ignorance impels them to avoid considering alternative medicine. Modern medical education does not include a course on the healing properties of herbs in its curriculum. This is very strange especially considering that several successful pharma products were predicated on the discovery of new cures from plant-based products. Let me just cite the examples of Paclitaxel and Camptothecin which were enormously successful by themselves and also served as progenitors of more analogs. Being a native of Kerala and naturally imbibed in a tradition of using herbs for health, I felt a need to establish the role of herbal products in a population where it was considered black-magic.

- **Time and again Dr. Majeed underlines the ancient wisdom of Ayurveda? How easy or difficult has it been for him and his group to get the advanced countries to accept and embrace these solutions. It would be interesting to know how Dr. Majeed and his team were able to bridge the communication gap.**

You can convince people if you show evidence. My journey through this was not easy or pleasant. First of all, when I started my business in the USA, the herbal products needed standardization and needed to be delivered in a form consumable such as tablets, capsules etc. Quality, batch to batch consistency are all prime criteria too. There is another arduous phase wherein you need show scientific and medical evidence in terms of biochemical studies on enzyme and cell systems, studies on animals to show efficacy and finally results from clinical studies. None of these beats the personal experience. When someone takes C3 Complex for their joint pain and finds relief, that is the best convincing argument. Next time they get a joint pain, they would think twice before using an NSAID or a steroidal medication with its own complications. If you are having a throat pain due to infection, it is easy to treat with turmeric extract than going through a course of antibiotics. In this context, University of Michigan study revealed that C3 Complex is safe up to 12 grams per dose. Accidental over consumption of herbal results in no damage and you will not say the same on a prescription drug. I am not deprecating pharma drugs but would reiterate the position of herbal products in human health.

- **Dr. Majeed seems to be the biggest advocate for Curcumin. Sami Labs and Sabinsa have presented alternatives for Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease, Weight Control and as an Adjunct to Chemotherapy with Curcumin C3 Complex. Why is Curcumin such a potent herb? What is it that Curcumin has that makes it so effective?**

Curcumin is an excellent anti-oxidant and anti-inflammatory. Many of the

IN CONVERSATION WITH

I MUHAMMED MAJEED

Ph.D, Chairman and Managing Director, The SAMI-SABINSA GROUP

A Researcher, a Scientist and an Entrepreneur who pioneered in bridging Ayurveda and Modern Medicine to benefit millions of lives across the globe. Dr. Majeed played a significant role in 'nutraceuticals' and 'cosmeceuticals' industries, across the globe to provide 'total health and wellness,

In the late 80s, Americans were in pursuit of both 'look good and feel good' factor, which eventually gave birth to a new industry that focused on contributing to 'health and wellness'. Around the same time, Dr. Majeed a native of Kollam in Kerala, India immigrated to the USA in 1975 with a mere US \$ 8.00 in his pocket, a mind full of dreams, and inspiration from his mother. He completed his Ph.D. in Industrial Pharmacy from St. John's University, New York while working in the R&D Divisions of well-known pharma companies like Pfizer Inc, Carter Wallace and as Head of Research at Paco Research, New Jersey, USA. He always was aware that 'Ayurveda' had the answers for the ailments Americans were suffering from and to convince them, he went deep into the science of herbs, used cutting-edge technology of Industrial Pharmacy to convert them into modern nutraceutical form. Thus, began the journey of Dr. Majeed's success in the field of health science.

Transition From A Researcher To An Entrepreneur With A Scientific Mind

After 14 years of working with reputable names in the American pharmaceutical industry, Dr. Majeed first set up Sabinsa Corporation in New Jersey, USA in 1988. Sabinsa's mission was to provide alternative and complementary natural products, using innovative approaches to human nutrition and well-being. In 1994-95, Dr. Majeed introduced a program in the US, named Sabinsa on Wheels (SOW) inviting 25 companies for a detailed scientific presentation of the products. He traveled along the American landscape propagating his products trying to convince Americans, who started to accept him, duly recognising his vision. Ever since then Sami-Sabinsa has strong sales & marketing presence in US, Australia, China, Europe, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Philippines, South Africa, South Korea, UAE, Vietnam and India with state-of-the-art manufacturing facilities and ISO 22000 & NABL certifications.

In 1991, Dr. Majeed set up Sami Labs Ltd in Bangalore, India, which does ground-breaking research work in unlocking the mystery of herbs, extracting their goodness, and gifting the world with better health, by combining ancient knowledge of Ayurveda and modern science. Its research facility in Bangalore has over 120 scientists involved in specialized work in areas of Phytochemistry, Organic Chemistry, Biochemistry, Tissue Culture, and Plant Biotechnology.

Credible Science

Dr. Majeed also researched and scientifically validated the values of medicinal plants which are not mentioned in the Ayurvedic texts. For instance, Tetrahydrocurcuminoids (C3 Reduct®) is a product derived from turmeric. The novelty behind Tetrahydrocurcuminoids is that although it is from turmeric with several of its beneficial properties, it is without the characteristic yellow color. It can be used as a cosmeceutical for its potent skin brightening properties as well as a nutraceutical for its antioxidant potential. Curcumin C3 Complex®,

Gugulipid®, BioPerine®, Citrin®, and Saberry® are some other innovative products which Sami Labs markets globally. Manufacturing of the standardized herbal extracts happens in India with marketing arms all across the globe, namely the US, Australia, China, Europe, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Philippines, South Africa, South Korea, UAE, and Vietnam.

In order to provide the best of both worlds with safe, innovative and beneficial approaches to personal healthcare, Dr. Majeed launched America's Finest, Inc. (AFI) in 1995. AFI offers two complementary lines of dietary supplements: AFI ingredient-specific dietary supplements & Sanutra Wellness condition-specific Global Innovation & Excellence Award 2016 dietary supplements. These innovative lines of dietary supplements combine the rich traditional wisdom with that of the latest scientific research and manufacturing methodology.

Launched Sami Direct In 2010 In India

As 'wellness' started to catch-up in India among the urban population as indicated by the rising number of luxury spas and retail outlets selling health supplements, Dr. Majeed seized the large business opportunity in the country and launched Sami Direct offering unique clinically relevant nutraceutical and cosmeceutical products inspired by Ayurveda. Dr. Majeed's mission is to provide alternative and complementary natural products for human nutrition, well-being & beauty, and to provide a low cost, low-risk opportunity for anyone who wants to start their own health & beauty business. The Sami Direct business opportunity has helped people from diverse socio-economic backgrounds to build their own business, discover extra income, and help them fulfill their dreams.

Dr. Majeed also introduced his Premium Beauty Brand of Sami Direct, Johara® Cosmetics in later years. The scientifically driven ingredients are hand-picked that have evolved from pure science and scripted in many ancient texts across the world. Crafted from years of meticulous research, Johara® is a brand so scientifically driven, that the result can only be the beauty that is pure and real.

Sami Direct is now one of the fastest growing direct sellers of nutraceutical and cosmeceutical products in India. Sami Direct products are sold through Independent Business Owners in India, Malaysia, Bangladesh, and the Middle East. The company is planning to expand into other countries also.

A Firm Believer In Holistic Approach — Farming To Formulation

Dr. Majeed believes that in order to produce rich food supplements, the ingredients should also be of very high quality. To ensure good crops, he has identified small and marginal farmers in Salem and surrounding districts in Tamil Nadu, India who will be able to cultivate organic and sustainable Ayurvedic herbs used to develop dietary supplements. He has given technical assistance to these farmers, trained them in good agricultural practices, sustainable herb collection, and organic farming. Dr. Majeed expresses his concerns about preserving Ayurvedic plants, "Around 460 plants are used in Ayurveda, of

which 400 are on the endangered list. We need an Herbal Security Bill, like the Food Security Bill to pursue this system of medicine in times to come."

Innovations Recognized By The Whole World

Dr. Majeed holds a large portfolio of Intellectual Property, over 260 US and International patents and over 172 plus in the pipeline. A few of Dr. Majeed's patents were adjudged as the "Best Patent" by the Research & Development Council of New Jersey, USA. Sami-Sabinsa has been awarded the Thomas Alva Edison Patent Award thrice from the State of NJ R&D Council.

In recognition of his contributions to the society, Dr. Majeed was bestowed with the prestigious Ellis Island Medal of Honour for Distinguished Americans, whose past recipients include US Presidents and Nobel Laureates.

Dr. Majeed while combining elements of Ayurvedic traditions with modern science introduced Ayurveda to Americans. It's been three decades since he has established the scientific basis of Ayurveda creditably in the West. Dr. Majeed believed the "Make in India" concept since the nineties. A new exports industry of standardized natural extracts has been developed in India due to his persistent efforts.

Michele R Pistone & John J Hoffner quoted Dr. Majeed in their book **Stepping Out of The Brain Drain** as "It is unlikely that anyone but an Indian would have had the knowledge and desire to form a modern company based on India's ancient health system. Nor would the jobs of his 750 employees in India likely exist—not to mention some of the jobs of the 5000 farmer-suppliers — for only a person with knowledge of and experience in the United States or another developed country is likely to have correctly anticipated and assessed the underdeveloped market opportunity that existed in providing Ayurveda-based products to the developed world. Dr. Majeed has provided a service for an untold number of future Indian scientists and entrepreneurs."

Dr. Majeed has to his credit 150 plus articles published, 15 books authored, and 4 book chapters till date.

Pleasure Of Giving

Led by an urge to support the less fortunate, Dr. Majeed decided to embark upon a new mission — a mission to lend his helping hand to the needy — thus launching

Dr. Majeed Foundation in 2004. The Foundation is dedicated to helping educate the underprivileged children in India by supporting through infrastructure, knowledge, hardware, and training. It is an effort to uplift the needy of the new generation so that, they can play an important role in the socio-economic growth of the world. Dr. Majeed recognizes the importance of providing support for education, which is the center stone of the foundation. The foundation focuses on providing scholarships for students who need financial support, irrespective of their caste, creed, or religion.

Thousands of students across the country have successfully completed the training in MS Office & Desktop Application software. Education is a critical requisite for social change, he believes. Education will empower the underprivileged, which is why Dr. Majeed Foundation is focusing on educating the poor and needy. "The mind is a terrible thing to waste?" says Dr. Majeed.