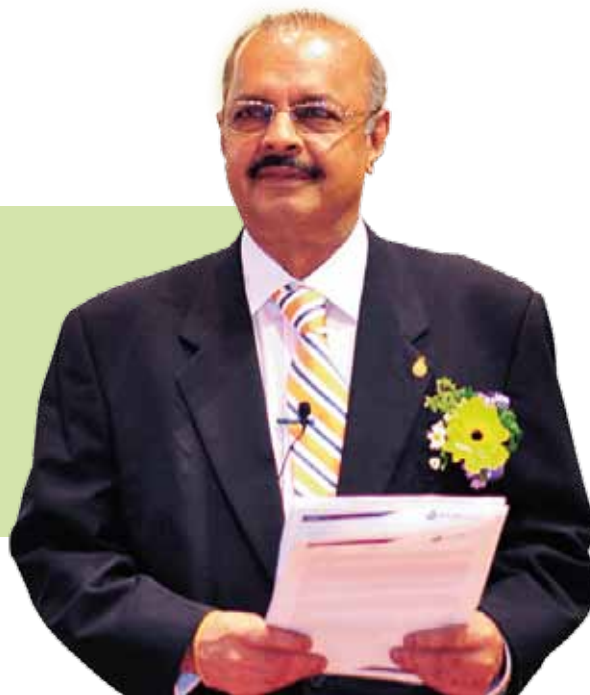


## Dr. Muhammed Majeed Legend of The Visionary with Devotion and Commitment

(An Interview with Dr. Muhammed Majeed-  
The man who introduced Ayurveda to America)



**Muhammed Majeed;** is an Indian- American scientist, philanthropist, and entrepreneur. He is the founder and Chairman of a multinational manufacturer of nutraceutical ingredients and standardized herbal extracts; **"The Sami-Sabinsa group"**. He was born and brought up in Kollam, Kerala, and lost his father during the age of 12. Eventually, his mother Fathima Beevi became his main influence to focus on his studies. He completed his undergraduate degree in Pharmacy from the Government Medical College, Thiruvananthapuram in 1973. In 1975 he emigrated to the United States after working for a short duration of time in Trivandrum. In 1980, he gained his Master's degree in

Industrial Pharmacy from the Long Island University, New York. In 1986 while working for pharmaceutical companies such as Pfizer, Carter-Wallace, and Paco Research, he also pursued Doctorate in Industrial Pharmacy from St. John's University at New York. Dr.Majeed rooted Sabinsa Corporation in New Jersey aiming at importing and marketing generic drugs into the US for the drug molecules coming off patent. Based on Indian botanicals he presented a new line of products into the US market.

He returned to India and established Sami Labs at Singasandra in Bengaluru as a Research and Development facility in 1991. He then merged Sabinsa Corporation

with Sami Labs to be the sales and marketing arm of the organization.

In 2010, Dr.Majeed founded a direct marketing entity called Sami Direct that directly offering clinically approved nutraceutical products. He also introduced the premium beauty brand through Sami Direct called Johara Cosmetics In 1991.

One of the amazing facts about Dr. Majeed is; he holds around 200 US and international patents, and many more are on process. He was honoured with many awards like "Ellis Island Medal of Honor", "Daniel B. Stateman Award" etc. In short, He is nothing but a legend and the true badge of hard work.

Q. Sir, how do you analyse your 30 years of Professional Career in the Pharma Sector?

In short, it was a huge success. It went beyond my expectations. Instead of going with pure Pharma Generics, I chose natural products which became a wise decision and Sami Labs is one of the best health science companies in India having 2 drug approvals that derived from Ayurveda, still totally Allopathic.

Then I started focusing on Natural products inspired by our traditional Ayurveda. As Ayurveda is not standardized, I took Ayurveda at its face value and analysed every product used in the treatment regimen. I subjected it to Scientific evaluation, with the net result showed a lot of products that are 1st class, therapeutically efficacious, and useful for the world market. So, I started exporting them to every continent from 1990 onwards, till today.

Q. What made you start units in India? What was the major cause behind that?

It was an important decision to come back to India to set up my own Research and Manufacturing Division. Most of our products are made or cultivated in Andhra, Tamil Nadu

& Karnataka and I found a place where I can cultivate world-class products in India. I used the methods like contract farming and through that, I was able to come back to India and develop an opportunity for Indians. It was a major advancement in my business. In fact, the business of Standardised Herbal Extract was not a business for me.

I opened a window towards a new opportunity for India and I became a model for many companies that are performing good in the market now. Even though, I lead this sector holding major market shares.

Q. Kindly mention your achievements in the field of phytochemistry?

193 US and international patents that I gained shows my achievements in the field of phytochemistry and within three months, it would cross 200. I have more than 200 patents and 1600 staff working in India and 200 working abroad for my companies.

Q. Do you have any formulation division?

I am actively into the formulation division mainly in the nutraceutical segment. I make

formulations for major companies such as Dr. Reddys, GSK, etc, in nutraceutical and cosmeceutical segment. We don't have formulations for the Pharmaceutical segment.

Q. In your opinion what are the difficulties of establishing a unit in Kerala?

To be frank, I never tried for that. Rather talking about the difficulties, we can talk about the right opportunity, that could enable me setting up a research centre in Kerala.

Q. Medicinal flora in Wayanad and Palakkad districts are vast and diverse. Does Sami Labs have any plans for utilizing that?

That would require Government intervention. I am also a member of "The Medicinal Plants Board" of India. I can make the recommendation to classify the available resources by concerned scientists. I had raised some of the issues and recommended for meetings in every 3 months. Because usually, it takes a long time to meet Medicinal Plants Board. They are receptive to that idea. Now it is time we are about to meet again. I will see, if something can be done.

Q. What is happening to the Herbal raw materials of our country?

Finding herbs for Ayurveda is very difficult now. What will we do if people start to substitute? Mother nature has given plenty of resources to us. Humanity misused, abused and profusely spend it. Now Curcumin is replaced by synthetic materials which are another face of business greed. Curcumin can be made worldwide since it is available everywhere. Curcumin synthetic is a greedy idea by some Indian Companies for monetary benefit. That was caught as it was not having any clinical documentation. The pharmacological effect of synthetic Curcumin will not be the same as that of a natural Curcumin. Nevertheless, they are never equal to the natural curcumin. Mother nature creates everything in a unique fashion. The man cannot produce that in the labs.

Q. In most of the formulations, about 50% strength of Curcumin is utilized for preparing Nutraceutical capsules. Now Piperine is mixed with it. Will it increase the bioavailability and absorption of Curcumin?

I have done this formulation year back. But in Kerala, it is not

following as they are not looking at the rational and scientific reasons. In fact, I have published one book recently which tell you "How Piperine is made from Black Pepper?", "How you should use 2.5 to 5 mg per tablet and what it does for the nutritional items that you take?". It is also because of the ignorance that Piperine is not added. Only very few people have observed these products critically. Curcumin is an insoluble material. But insoluble does not mean it is poorly bioavailable. Because, you test solubility in a dissolution flask, 0.1NHCl or any other medium your stomach cannot stimulate that. The stomach has an entirely different atmosphere which contains enzymes and mineral complexes and many other biochemical reactions occur in the stomach. Actually, the Curcumin that you take, within the first 5 to 10 minutes, converts and gets biotransformed into molecules like tetra hydro curcumin, octa hydro, hexahydro curcumin and so on. So, until today, no one has ever found out all the metabolite products that curcumin makes in the body. While curcumin is making tetrahydro, octa hydro, hexahydro, and dihydro, it also makes other derivatives. So, Curcumin is not a molecule which you should worry about the bio-availability, as it is a self-bio transforming molecule which has anti - oxidant, anti - cancerous, anti - arthritic properties. It is the biotransformed molecule that does all these.

People do not read much about these, especially in Kerala where we use turmeric in most of the dishes. One may think "What difference might curcumin make?". In reality, the turmeric that we use in curry will not provide much help. It is the active ingredient which is helpful.

Q. What about the bioavailability increasing properties of Capsaicin which is now common in many preparations?

Capsaicin increases the thermogenesis and thus percutaneous absorption. The best dosage is 0.025 % capsaicin. But a lot of people use 0.050% that will burn the skin. Capsaicin is also wrongly used with Diclofenac. In this country, we have all types of irrational combination of medicines. Many of them are harmful rather than helpful. Indian FDA comes in once in a while and clears some out. Then again people start making other irrational combinations. Therefore, utilizing Capsaicin along with Diclofenac is similar to trying to kill somebody. Capsaicin has a major problem in terms of gastric irritability. It is an irritant on the skin. The gastric mucosa cannot take the heat of Capsaicin. So, such combinations must be closely monitored during treatment.

Q. It is a trend now adding Capsaicin to many external preparations.

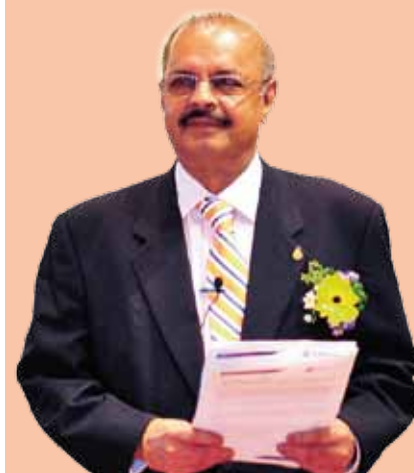
It is a major problem. 0.025% is the recommended and approved dosage by FDA across the globe. It is a bad way of thinking that, if 1 is good then 10 is better. By doubling the dosage cause trouble and you lose the real activity in that case. Overdosing is a major problem for sure.

Q. What about the increase of lifestyle diseases in our country especially in Kerala?

No 1 is the cardiac issues. No 2 is cancer which is of the higher rate in Kerala compared to any other state in the country. No 3 is Iatrogenic diseases. Man-induced diseases. Irrational drug combinations are prescribed without educating the common man, "How to use drugs" and the most important is the multiplication of superbugs from the hospital. If you put it all together, you have the third largest disaster category in the world for health with regards to the health of the people. People should be educated about proper drug usage. If you are prone to a family history of diabetes, you can take precautions at an early stage. I am traditionally from a Diabetic and Cardiac disease family. Fortunately, I took precautionary methods at an early stage. Certain precautions and health educations are necessary, and I did that. People should be educated and aware of preventive measures.

Q. In a recent study in Ernakulam it is reported that around 40% of the people are suffering from high Cholesterol, especially leading to cardiac complaints. Any precaution to be taken other than exercise.

Up until 2 years back, India was considered as the number 1 nation to give you good health. Now it has changed. There are different types of Cholesterol and its indications also vary. If VLDL is high, you have a problem. If LDL is high, you have a problem. HDL is supposed to be cleaner. Today in 2018, it has changed. The significance of HDL is not established yet. The reason is, there are different types of HDL. Higher molecular weight HDL is clean, but lower molecular weight is not clean. The classification is HDL - good, LDL - bad, VLDL - ugly, Upper lipoprotein - deadly cholesterol. Nobody in India tests deadly cholesterol. This should be tested, and the value should be below 30. This will help us to decide how the Cardiac diseases are progressing. Kerala is also growing as the capital of diabetes. This is because of the rice-eating habits. While you keep your rice eating habits, certain modifications can be done to avoid the wrath of diseases. Here people are only eating and not exercising or taking any precautionary measures to control it.



*Dr. Muhammed Majeed during his short period of the visit in Kerala had narrated the way he selected to become a giant leader in the field of Nutraceuticals through resources from traditional Ayurveda, apart from the subject he studied during graduation. It will be a marker for all budding professionals to take up new avenues in the development of a system suited to their career. This technical discussion is an eye opener for budding entrepreneurs who are willing to take up innovations for the creation of a healthy world.*