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Avesthagen to start clinical trials

Biotechnology firm Avesthagen is going to initiate clinical trials of its biosimilar drug AVDESP in India by next month, which is used in the treatment of specific types of anemia. "We will be doing a trial according to the Indian government regulations for Biosimilars..." said Avesthagen Chairman and Managing Director Viloo Morawala Patell.

PTI



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Avesthagen to start clinical trial for Advesp

NEW DELHI: Biotechnology firm Avesthagen is going to initiate clinical trials of its biosimilar drug Advesp in India by next month, which is used in the treatment of specific types of anaemia. "We will be doing a trial as per the Indian government regulations for biosimilars..." Avesthagen chairman and managing director Viloo Morawala Patell said. Advesp is likely to be launched in India by the end of 2010 and in Bric countries such as Brazil, China, Russia by 2011, she said, adding that the company will launch the drug in the European Union and North America in the next phase.

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C Achuthan
Director (Gvt appointed)
Satyam Computer

It is a difficult task. Over eight years of accounts have to be looked at. However, we

are hopeful of completing accounts restatement by this year-end. Global audit majors KPMG and Deloitte are working on restating the accounts and the process would, hopefully, be completed by end-December this year.



A K Dasgupta
Managing Director
Life Insurance Corp

We intend to launch some more innovative products in 2009-10 irrespective of whether

the equity market rebounds or not. These products could be on either platform, linked or non-linked. LIC has also decided to increase the sale of unit-linked product Market Plus-1 as the market conditions were favourable.



Aditya Agarwal
Director
Emami Group

The Union petroleum ministry as well as the ministry for new and alternative energy

must work out on a solution to make all bio-diesel projects in India viable. Or else, all investments will go to waste. We will take up plantation of bio-fuel crops and other edible and non-edible oil seeds on 100,000 acres.



Viloo Morawala Patell
Chairman
Avesthagen

We will be doing a trial as per the Indian government regulations for biosimilars. The total

market for the drug is around \$4 billion and we are at present talking to various pharmaceutical companies and negotiating licensing deals with a few pharmaceutical companies, including some multinational firms.

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LINOPINION PUBLIC RELATIONS

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Avesthagen has received the go-ahead for clinical trials of a biosimilar for Darbepoetin alfa, which is used in the treatment of specific types of anaemia, like that associated with chemotherapy and dialysis.



LINTAS

LINOPINION PUBLIC RELATIONS

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SMARTBYTES



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*Chairman
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Avesthagen

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PTI

Cipla calls off marketing alliance with Avesthagen

Nina Mehta
MUMBAI

CIPLA has terminated its marketing agreement with Avesthagen and is looking at selling its 5.8% stake in the Bangalore-based company. "We are looking at different alternatives (for the stake sale), but it all depends on valuations," Cipla CMD YK Hamied told ET.

Cipla terminated the agreement due to Avesthagen's alleged failure to meet targets. Under the agreement, Avesthagen was supposed to develop the biosimilar products and Cipla would have used its strong marketing force to commercialise and market it. Cipla was, however, not happy with the progress of Avesthagen's research.

The Mumbai-based generics major is, however, clear that it wants a presence in the biosimilar space and is close to finalising a deal with a Chinese partner. "Our Chinese partners are coming to Mumbai on Tuesday and we will be finalising the details then. Our homework is already done and only the implementation is left. Our first biosimilar product in the cancer space will be commercialised by the end of 2011," Mr Hamied said.

Cipla is keen on partnering with a Chinese player for its biosimilar venture since the Chinese are strong in this space. The products will be developed in China and manufactured in India, Mr Hamied said. "Indian companies are strong in chemical research, while Chinese companies are experienced in biologic research. Such a collaboration is a good mix," said an industry analyst. Cipla's termination of its agreement with Avesthagen has resulted in the biotech company going it alone in the Indian market. When contacted, Viloo Morawala-Patell, chairperson of Avesthagen,

PARTING WAYS



- **Cipla terminated the agreement due to failure to meet targets**
- **As per the pact, Avesthagen was to develop biosimilar products and Cipla would use its strong marketing force to commercialise and market it**
- **Cipla is now keen on partnering with a Chinese player for its biosimilar venture**

told ET: "We are going to market products in India by ourselves, but we are looking at partners for international distribution. We expect our first molecule to hit the market by September 2010." The company is in fund-raising mode and will be closing its rights issue next week. "BioMerieux and Godrej, two existing investors, subscribed to the issue along with others," Ms Morawala-Patell said. The company, however, declined to give details on the size of the rights issue.

nina.mehta@timesgroup.com

SC rejects Roche plea against Cipla drug

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Friday rejected Roche India's special leave petition (SLP) seeking to stop Cipla from selling the generic version of the Swiss drugmaker's cancer medicine Tarceva, reports **Khomba Singh**. SC's decision allows Cipla to continue selling its low-cost medicine in the country. Roche India moved the apex court to challenge a decision of a division bench of the Delhi High Court (HC) in April not to grant an interim injunction against Cipla, in public interest as the Indian drugmaker was selling the medicine at a far lower cost compared with Roche India. This had allowed Cipla to sell its drug in the country and the Delhi HC had also fined Roche Rs 5 lakh for not sharing its patent information with the Indian patent office. Roche received the patent for the drug in India in 2007. Cipla, which has challenged many patent applications of global pharma majors in the country, filed a post-grant patent for the drug last year. Cipla decided to launch its drug in January even as a decision on its patent opposition at the Delhi HC is pending. Confirming the court ruling on Friday, a Roche India spokesperson said: "The SC also asked the Delhi HC to expedite the case."