

Revac-B vaccine launched

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Hyderabad: Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam, Scientific Advisor to the Defence Ministry, on Thursday launched Revac-B, a vaccine developed for Hepatitis B by the Hyderabad-based Bharat Biotech International Limited (BBIL) using the recombinant DNA technology route.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Kalam said he wanted to see Indian scientists coming out soon with vaccines to combat malaria and HIV.

Dr. G. Padmanabhan, Emeritus Professor, Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bangalore, and the guiding spirit in the development of Revac-B, said the demand for Hepatitis B vaccine was up to 200 million doses. A number of modern vaccines alone could save the country's million of poor against infectious diseases in the coming decades.

As MNCs were unlikely to show interest in developing remedies to diseases specific to the tropics, Indian scientists alone should assume the responsibility of tackling the problems in the shortest possible time, he said. Revac-B has been dedicated to Dr. Padmanabhan.

Dr. Krishna Ella, Managing Director of BBIL, which has been promoted by NRI scientists, said that Revac-B was developed in a record time of two years, using *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*, otherwise known as 'baker's yeast'.