

## **Bharat Biotech in JV with Acambis for JE vaccine**

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BHARAT Biotech International, a leading biotech player, has entered into a manufacturing and marketing agreement with British company Acambis Plc to develop and commercialise ChimeriVax-JE, a vaccine used for the treatment of Japanese Encephalitis.

Acambis develops vaccines for the treatment and prevention of infectious diseases and is based in Cambridge. It also operates from Massachusetts.

Bharat Biotech would be involved in the fill and finish processing of the vaccine at its facility in Hyderabad. The bulk vaccine would be manufactured at Acambis' facility in Massachusetts. Bharat Biotech will market this product in the Indian sub-continent as well. Though the initial agreement is for five years, this partnership is expected to be continuous with other details being worked out.

Addressing a press meet to announce the tie-up, Bharat Biotech International president V Krishna Mohan said phase-three trials for the vaccine would begin in November 2005 and are expected to be completed in February. After approval from Indian government's National Regulatory Authority, the vaccine would be ready for release by June 2006.

The company expects to generate Rs 15 crore of revenues from this product. "The market demand can be anywhere between one million to a 100 million dosages. It is difficult to pinpoint as there is no specific data available," he added.

"Our product has no animal tissue or allergens and requires only a single dosage. We will price it competitively," said Dr Mohan. Bharat Biotech is equipped to make 1,000 to 5,000 doses a month.