

Novavax, Bharat Bio to develop flu vaccine

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Hyderabad, Mar. 6: Novavax Inc, a Nasdaq-listed pharma and vaccine products and technologies major, and Bharat Biotech International Ltd (BBIL), a Hyderabad-based manufacturer of vaccines and bio-therapeutics, have entered into a strategic alliance to pursue the rapid development of avian flu vaccine for India and ASEAN markets.

Speaking to newsmen on Monday, the BBIL Chairman and Managing Director, Dr Krishna M. Ella, said that under the terms of the agreement, Bharat Bio would fund all pre-clinical and clinical development and work with Novavax on optimal manufacturing processes. The company would take care of the commercialisation of the vaccine at its Hyderabad manufacturing facility.

In turn, Novavax would receive unrestricted access to all pre-clinical and clinical data and also a royalty on all sales.

According to him, the partnership materialised under the guidance and support of the Department of Biotechnology.

"The partnership would help India develop a highly efficacious vaccine against pandemic flu and stand at the forefront in developing a prophylaxis against it," Dr Ella said.

According to the Novavax President and CEO, Dr Rahul Singhvi, Bharat Bio would use Novavax's proprietary virus-like particles (VLP) technology to develop, produce, and distribute a vaccine against H5N1 and other strains of avian influenza. The alliance between Novavax and Bharat Bio would be overseen by a steering committee chaired by Dr Richard Klausner, eminent scientist and former Executive Director of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation