

Swine flu vaccine is ready: BBL

DC CORRESPONDENT

HYDERABAD

Sept. 30: Hyderabad-based vaccines and biotherapeutics manufacturer Bharat Biotech Ltd (BBL) will start mass production of swine flu vaccine by April or May next year.

Speaking to this newspaper, Ms Suchitra Ella, Bharat Biotech director, said that the company's H1N1 vaccine is ready. "We would go for clinical trials in October or November after getting regulatory approvals," she said.

Apart from Bharat Biotech, Pune-based Serum Institute of India and New Delhi-based Panacea are also producing the vaccine.

Ms Ella said the vaccine would not be available over the counter and would be procured and administered by the government.

The vaccine could be first administered to high risk persons such as doctors, paramedics, children and pregnant women. The company would scale up its manufacturing capacity to 10 to 15 million doses by May 2010.