**PRESS RELEASE**

 **HLL Lifecare Ltd floats subsidiary arm**

 **Integrated Vaccine Complex to be commissioned in 36 months**

**Thiruvananthapuram, April 28:** Close on the heels of the Centre clearing the Rs 570- crore Integrated Vaccine Complex (IVC) in Tamil Nadu, HLL Lifecare Ltd, a mini-Ratna PSU, has floated a wholly-owned subsidiary -- HLL Biotech Ltd -- to execute the project that aims to boost the country’s vaccine security.

The first phase of IVC, which would come up at Chengaipattu in Tamil Nadu’s Kanchipuram district, will be completed within 36 months. With an annual capacity of 585 million doses, it will manufacture pentavalent combination (DPT plus Hep B plus Hib), BCG, measles, Hepatitis B, Human Rabies, Hib and Japanese Encephalitis (JE) vaccines in the first phase.

“The total project cost of IVC is Rs. 570 crore, of which 28 crore has already been released. We have also started on-site preliminary works at the 100 acre area. Project office has started functioning with sufficient staff including the project officer,’’ HLL chairman and managing director Shri M Ayyappan said, adding: “Our project office has started functioning with sufficient staff, including the project office.”

The project, cleared by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) on April 26, was announced in the previous budget, and is intended to be a milestone in bolstering India’s vaccine security.

“This is a project of national importance as it would ensure the uninterrupted supply of vaccines for the Universal Immunisation Programme (UIP) at affordable prices. Another task of the project is to ensure vaccines in emergency situations and considerably reduce the country’s dependence on import of vaccines for diseases like JE,’’ the HLL CMD said.

In the first phase, IVC will have capacity to produce 100 million doses each of pentavalent, measles, Hib, and BCG vaccines. It will also have capacity for 140 million doses of Hep B, 20 million doses of human rabies and 25 million doses of JE vaccines.

The state-of-the-art WHO-pre-qualified facility, the first of its kind in the public sector, will also have capacity to manufacture futuristic Meningococcal, rotaviral, dengue and pneumococcal vaccines in its multi-bacterial and multi-viral facilities to meet any epidemic or pandemic situations, Shri Ayyappan pointed out.

IVC also seeks to develop a strong R&D base, apart from manufacturing and supplying 75 per cent of the vaccines required for the UIP.

``We are determined to meet the deadline set by the Union Government as it signifies a huge recognition for the HLL, which has successfully diversified into several areas from being the leading contraceptive manufacturer in the country.  It shows the government has reposed its faith in us again,’’ he said.

The Thiruvananthapuram-based HLL, formerly Hindustan Latex Ltd, is the market leader in contraceptives with 70 per cent share and ranks amongst the top manufacturers globally. It has diversified into various areas, including project consultancy and healthcare products, legitimising its credentials for the vaccine complex.

HLL has already completed revamping of the public sector vaccine manufacturing unit, Central Research Institute (CRI), at Kasauli in Himachal Pradesh.

The Central Government has also entrusted HLL with the task of revamping Bacillus Calmette-Guerin (BCG) Vaccine Laboratory, Guindy, and Pasteur Institute of India (PII), Coonoor, both in Tamil Nadu, and allotted Rs 213 crore for the purpose. The licences of these three units were temporarily suspended after these were found to be lacking on quality parameters.

HLL, which has set a target of becoming a Rs 10,000-crore company by 2020, also runs hospital chains, diagnostic clinics, and hospital management as well as MRI centres across India as part of a total healthcare public sector undertaking.

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