

Indian vaccine firms pledge support to GAVI efforts

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Indian too will contribute towards GAVI's goal of immunizing 300 million children in the world's poorest countries between 2016 and 2020, leading to five to six million lives being saved. The announcements were made on the eve of Pledging Conference being held in Berlin under the patronage of German Chancellor Angela Merkel, as GAVI aims to secure funding to ensure Gavi can reach its ambitious targets.

Panacea Biotec extended its pledge, first made in June 2011, to support all Gavi graduated countries by offering a five-year price freeze on all vaccination programmes started with Gavi support. The price freeze commences from the first calendar year during which a country stops receiving Gavi support.

Taking about the same, Dr Rajesh Jain, JMD, Panacea Biotec mentioned, "Panacea is proud to renew the pledge given on 13th June 2011 to support to all Gavi graduates, by offering a 5-year price freeze to help ensure sustainability of vaccination programmes, started with Gavi support. This pledge represents Panacea's ongoing devotion to social commitments and human welfare, which is rooted in our mission: 'innovation in support of life.' Our company principles of quality, innovation and continuous learning can also be demonstrated through our unrelenting efforts that results in the achievement of WHO prequalification status for our 'fully-liquid' 1 and 10-dose pentavalent presentations in 2013, thereby offering protections against hepatitis B, Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib), diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis."

Biological E is offering a five-year price commitment to Gavi graduated countries for its pentavalent vaccine.

As per Ms Mahima Datla, managing director, Biological E, "We are deeply committed to improving the quality of human life and make immunization our biggest health priority. However, it's also true that access to immunisation still continues to be a challenge. We at Biological E. Will strive to ensure affordability of vaccines is NOT one of the contributing factors, so that countries can focus on sustainability and on overcoming other obstacles that are coming in the way of reaching that last child. So, today, to further our support to GAVI's mission, I am pleased to announce Biological E.'s offer of a 5-â€?year price commitment to GAVI graduated countries. This commitment aims to ensure that graduated countries will have access to

affordable prices that are comparable to GAVI--â€?eligible ones."

Serum Institute of India reduced its price for their pentavalent vaccines supplied to Gavi that is valued at approximately US\$ 50 million dollars over the next two years.

"It is encouraging to see vaccine manufacturers increasingly recognising the importance of sustainable vaccine markets for developing countries," said Gavi CEO Dr Seth Berkley. "The commitments made today will help us make more vaccine doses available at a lower cost and will support countries as they move towards financing and sustaining their own immunisation programmes. This will lead to more children being protected and more deaths being averted."

The other four vaccine majors, GSK, Sanofi Pasteur, Pfizer and Janssen too have committed funding support to the GAVI.

GSK extended its price freeze commitment so that developing countries that graduate from Gavi support will be able to continue to purchase vaccines against pneumonia, diarrhoea and cervical cancer at significantly discounted Gavi prices for a decade after graduation. GSK also reaffirmed that if the company identifies new manufacturing efficiencies that reduce the costs of producing these vaccines, it will pass those savings on to Gavi and its donor.

Janssen reaffirmed its pledge of making its pentavalent vaccine available at UNICEF prices to Gavi graduated countries over the next five years. Janssen also announced the launch of its pentavalent vaccine in cPAD, a compact Prefilled Auto-Disable injection system which helps improve injection safety.

Pfizer agreed to reduce the price per dose for its pneumococcal vaccine, from \$3.30 per dose to \$3.10 per dose for the new 4-dose vial presentation, which is expected to be introduced under the Advance Market Commitment programme in 2016. This new lower price will be extended to all Gavi-eligible and graduated countries until the end of 2025.

Sanofi Pasteur committed to expand the production of yellow fever vaccine to address chronic shortages, and promised to offer Gavi-level pricing for Gavi graduated countries until the end of 2018. The company also announced the expansion of its EPIVAC vaccinator training program in Nigeria, in collaboration with Agence de MÃ©decine PrÃ©ventive.