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Boehringer Ingelheim and pharma major Lupin Limited announced another strategic alliance to co-market Empagliflozin, a novel sodium glucose co-transporter-2 (SGLT-2) inhibitor in India.

Boehringer Ingelheim and Lupin had earlier signed a partnership for Co-Marketing Linagliptin in October 2015. The inclusion of Empagliflozin is a significant addition to the partnership.

SGLT-2 Inhibitors are a novel class of drugs that were launched across the world in the last couple of years. According to the agreement, Lupin will market and sell Empagliflozin under a separate brand name Gibtulio which will be promoted by Lupin's specialty field force. Boehringer Ingelheim will continue to sell Empagliflozin under the brand name Jardiance through their existing sales force and network.

Gibtulio and Jardiance tablets are indicated as an adjunct to diet and exercise to improve glycemic control in adults with type 2 diabetes mellitus. They are available in 10 mg and 25 mg strength.

The Indian diabetes market is valued at INR 9,003 Crore, growing at 19.5% (IMS MAT July 2016). The market has been driven largely by the entry of newer drugs like DPP-4 Inhibitors over the last 6 years and the SGLT-2 Inhibitors are expected to outgrow & outpace the market faster than before.

The SGLT-2 Inhibitors were first introduced in India in March 2015 and the total SGLT-2 Inhibitors market is valued at INR 113 Crore and growing at 880.17% (IMS MAT July 2016). India is known as the Diabetes capital of the world with 69 million people being diabetic - 5% of the country's population and an estimated 1.02 million deaths are caused due to high blood sugar in India. Type 2 diabetes is expected to increase to 87 million by 2030.

Lupin is the 4th largest company in the Anti-Diabetes segment and currently has 6.7% market share of the overall Diabetes market. Lupin also has the distinction of being the only company in the Anti-Diabetes Market with a contemporary portfolio comprising of Oral Anti-Diabetes Drugs (OAD) and Injectable Drugs like Conventional Insulin and Insulin analogues. Lupin's Anti-Diabetic portfolio contributes 11% to its India formulations sales.

Announcing the launch, Mr. Shakti Chakraborty, Group President, India Region Formulations, Lupin said, "We are happy to expand our partnership with Boehringer Ingelheim to combat the growing menace of Diabetes in India. I believe our entry into the fast growth SGLT-2 Inhibitors market with the launch of Gibtulio will further strengthen our overall Diabetes portfolio and consolidate our position as a market leader and the fastest growing player in the TOP 5 in the Anti-Diabetes segment within the Indian Pharmaceutical Market."

Mr. Sharad Tyagi, Managing Director, Boehringer Ingelheim India said: "We are pleased to strengthen our partnership with Lupin for the sales and promotion of Empagliflozin. This partnership shows our commitment towards addressing challenges in diabetes management in India by providing broader access to innovative medicine. Through its research and scientific excellence, Boehringer Ingelheim India will continue to introduce innovative products to address the unmet patients' needs amidst the growing Indian diabetes epidemic."