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â??We anticipate demand for pharmaceutical packaging products to increase in the foreseeable futureâ?•

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Mehul Chawla, Regional Business Leader â?? Life Sciences, Protective, Fluorine Products, Honeywell Advanced Materials, India shares more details about Honeywellâ??s role in the Indian pharma sector.

For more than three decades, Honeywell's solutions and services have helped the world's leading drug manufacturers and biomedical firms enhance operations and build more effective, profitable businesses and improve patients' lives. Honeywell's cutting-edge technologies, specialty chemicals and advanced materials help create the future of medicine and medical devices, improve information transparency and tracking to support timely, accurate and safe healthcare delivery, and streamline manufacturing and distribution of medical products to patients. Mehul Chawla, Regional Business Leader – Life Sciences, Protective, Fluorine Products, Honeywell Advanced Materials, India shares more details about Honeywell's role in the Indian pharma sector.

Edited excerpts-

What kind of role does Honeywell play in the pharmaceutical packaging?

The global pharmaceutical packaging industry has been growing rapidly and, at the same time, adapting to the evolving needs of a dynamic market. Changing consumer needs, stricter regulations, and mounting cost pressures call for solutions that offer room for drug manufacturers to maneuver. Pharmaceuticals need to be produced, stored, filled, sealed, packaged and transported under conditions that ensure their integrity and maintain safety.

For the last four decades, Honeywell has been involved in the development and manufacture of pharmaceutical packaging material. Honeywell plays a significant role in the pharmaceutical value chain by acting as a trusted packaging partner for all its customers. From initial assessment, package design, and testing to product launch, Honeywell offers a range of solutions to support packaging throughout the drug development process.

What are the products offered by Honeywell in the pharmaceutical packaging?

Honeywell's healthcare packaging business includes the Aclar flagship line of barrier films for pharmaceutical packaging. The products help pharmaceutical companies lower total packaging costs, improve flexibility of operations, and increase overall profitability. Honeywell and the Aclar portfolio have been the trusted choice for pharmaceutical packaging, helping drug companies meet increasing barrier and shelf-life requirements.

Aclar Accel: Honeywell has expanded its portfolio and introduced a new line of fluoropolymer films called Aclar Accel. This offering from the Aclar family of moisture barrier films addresses the market need for different price point options, combined with faster delivery times. The Aclar Accel product family contains both Aclar Accel 1700 (1.7mil / 43 µ) and Aclar Accel 5400 (5.4 mil/137µ). Aclar Accel 1700 (1.7mil / 43 µ) provides an answer for cost-effective transparent films in the high moisture barrier range and is an appealing alternative to High Barrier (HB) PVdC. Aclar Accel 5400 (5.4mil/137µ) is designed for opaque laminates and offers improved total cost effectiveness as compared to Cold Form Foil (CFF).

Aclar Edge: Honeywell recently introduced Aclar Edge, an innovative pharmaceutical packaging solution for oral liquids for human health and sterile injectables for animal health applications. Aclar Edge bottles and vials range in sizes from 100 ml to 500 ml and can be configured in threaded or crimped finish

Honeywell has recently unveiled Aclar Edge pharmaceutical packaging solution. What are its unique features?

Glass bottles pose many challenges to the pharmaceutical industry as they are susceptible to cracking and breaking, inorganic leachables, and glass particulates. Aclar Edge is a novel technology that overcomes these issues and can improve drug product stability, purity and, ultimately, patient safety. Designed with Honeywell's novel and proprietary multi-layer extrusion blow molding technology, Aclar Edge bottles and vials preserve shelf-life and efficacy for a large variety of challenging liquid dosage forms, while significantly improving user safety during handling and administration.

These bottles and vials provide a moisture barrier performance that is comparable with glass and an enhanced oxygen barrier compared to other polymeric containers. In addition, Aclar Edge offers impact resistance and up to 75% weight reduction versus glass. It offers significant operational advantages by eliminating glass breakage, minimizing drug particulate contamination, and reducing transportation cost. Unlike most plastic bottles used for liquids, Aclar Edge significantly reduces the risk of leachables from the container closure systems.

How will Honeywell's state-of-the-art global packaging laboratory at the Honeywell India Technology Center (HITC) boost the Government's self-reliance policy?

Honeywell is a global leader in the pharmaceutical packaging industry. In alignment with the Government's Make in India vision, we announced the launch of a state-of-the-art global packaging laboratory at the Honeywell India Technology Center (HITC) in Gurgaon, Haryana. This lab has enabled us to continue to meet the evolving requirements of the Indian pharmaceutical packaging market, support regional partners, and focus on providing superior technical services to customers. Honeywell is working closely with customers at every step of the product development cycle.

How do you see the market for Aclar Edge product growing in India in the next five years?

Pharma companies and public health activists have raised several concerns about a possible shortage of vials, which will create a serious bottleneck in the distribution of COVID-19 vaccine once it is developed. This has translated into a huge challenge and an opportunity not only for vaccine makers but also for their partners. India's position within the global pharma segment has strengthened over the years as part of its vision to become the world's pharma hub. Given the expected growth of the pharmaceutical packaging market and the advent of COVID-19, we do anticipate demand for Aclar Edge and similar pharmaceutical packaging products to increase in the foreseeable future. We are confident that we can expand our production capabilities to meet demand. With our new packaging lab at HITC Gurgaon, we are in a strong position to meet our regional customers' current and anticipated requirements.

Do you see a potential for export of Aclar Edge pharmaceutical packaging solution?

Aclar Edge complies with USFDA standards and is suitable for domestic and export markets. Once commercial production begins in early 2021, Aclar Edge will be available globally.

What are your plans for promoting this product in Indian as well as international markets?

Commercial production of Aclar Edge will start in Q1 2021 for non-sterilized or gamma-sterilized formats. As of now, pre-production samples of Aclar Edge are available for customer evaluation.