DBT-BIRAC Supported 'Virafin' from Zydus Gets Emergency Nod For Treating Moderate COVID-19 Infections In Adults

(91.15 % of patients treated showed RT-PCR negative by day 7 and the treatment significantly reduces the hours of supplemental oxygen in the patients)

Supported under DBT-BIRAC COVID 19 Research Consortium for clinical trials

Posted On: 24 APR 2021 12:10PM by PIB Delhi

Drug Controller General Of India (DCGI) gave a restricted emergency use approval to the Zydus Cadila's 'Virafin' for treating the patients showing moderate COVID-19 symptoms. Virafin is a pegylated interferon alpha-2b(PegIFN), which when subcutaneously injected to the patient in the early stages of infection, resulted in their faster recovery.

For the development of Virafin, Zydus appreciated the support provided by **DBT-BIRAC COVID 19 Research Consoritum** through NBM, for conducting the Phase II human clinical trial studies. The studies confirmed the safety, tolerability and efficacy of Virafin. The studies also reported that Viarfin reduces viral load and aid in managing the disease in a better way, such as reduction in the need for supplemental oxygen, thereby reducing the respiratory tension caused due to low oxygen levels.

Speaking on this achievement Dr Renu Swarup, Secretary, **DBT** and Chairperson, BIRAC said, ''The government has been committed to provide all possible facilitation to our industries to work towards mitigation strategies and interventions against COVID-19 pandemic. The emergency nod provided to Virafin is another milestone which is a boon for the medical facility providers. I highly appreciate the efforts put in for this achievement."

Excited about this announcement, the Managing Director of **Cadila Healthcare Limited**, Dr. Sharvil Patel added "The realisation that we can to provide a therapy that reduces viral load substantially when given earlyand can aid in better disease management. It comes at a critical time for patients, and we will continue to give them access to the critical therapies as we together fight against COVID-19."

Phase III clinical trial studies reported that a larger proportion of patients when administered subcutaneously with Virafin turned out to be RT-PCR negative by day 7, apart from faster recovery as compared to other anti-viral agents.

About DBT: The **Department of Biotechnology** (DBT), under the Ministry of Science & Technology, promotes the use and application of biotechnology in the areas of agriculture, healthcare, animal sciences, environment and industry. It is focused on attaining new heights in biotechnology research, shaping

biotechnology into a premier precision tool of the future for creation of wealth and ensuring social justice – specially for the welfare of the poor. www.dbtindia.gov.in

About BIRAC:Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC) is a not-for-profit Section 8, Schedule B, Public Sector Enterprise, set up by Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Government of India as an Interface Agency to strengthen and empower the emerging Biotech enterprise to undertake strategic research and innovation, addressing nationally relevant product development needs.www.birac.nic.in

About Zydus Cadila: Also known as Cadila Healthcare Limited is an Indian multinational pharmaceutical company headquartered in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India primarily engaged in the manufacture of generic drugs.For more information, log on to: http://www.zyduscadila.com/

****

RP/ (**DBT**)

(Release ID: 1713722)