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AP Drug Control Dept to have 4 new regional testing labs with DFID funding

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<http://www.pharmabiz.com/article/detnews.asp?articleid=55850§ionid=>

UK Government's Department for International Development (DFID) has offered financial assistance to the Drugs Control Department of Andhra Pradesh to set up four regional Drug Testing & Analytical Labs with modern facilities besides upgrading the existing two labs into world class level.

DFID has sanctioned Rs 16 crore for the upgradation of existing labs and setting up of new ones.

Additionally, under NHRM scheme, the department will get Rs 10.5 crore through the state government's initiative. This, along with state budget allocation, will be used for the establishment of testing laboratories, said RP Meena, director general of Drug Control Administration, Andhra Pradesh.

The new regional laboratories will be established at Warangal, Vishakhapatnam, Vijayawada and Karnool. The department has already given a proposal to the state government in this connection, he said.

The project has been chalked out keeping in view of the current delay in sample testing in the state. The drug inspectors who take samples from the areas of their jurisdiction can in future entrust them with the regional labs. Now even from the border districts, the samples collected are sent to either Vijayawada or to Hyderabad for testing which requires several months to release the report. "The labs will be helpful for the entire traders of the state. The testing capacities of the existing labs in Hyderabad and Vijayawada will be increased by modernizing into world class level. The equipment and instruments in the labs are poor and more manpower is required," he said.

Further the project envisages employment opportunities for scientific staff. In the project report submitted by Meena to the government he mentioned the creation of one hundred posts of junior analysts. The recruitment process, for which the department has sought the permission of the government, will take place soon.

Regarding capacity, he said currently both the existing labs have the capacity to conduct 300 sample testing per month. But, more than 4500 samples are tested in one year in the laboratories. With the upgradation of the labs it is hoped that the capacity of one lab can be raised to 300 per month so that they would be able to test more than 25000 samples per year. The capacity of the upcoming regional lab will be to test as many as 3000 samples per year.

By using the DFID fund, which is generally given for developmental work in health sectors in tribal areas, the department will construct new buildings and purchase vehicles, mobile phones and other requirements of the staff. Further ministerial staffs will be recruited. The existing lab buildings in Hyderabad and Vijayawada will be expanded to 1100 sq feet. For these two buildings alone, Rs 3 crore have been set apart.

The director General's project envisages a plan of upgrading the training centre at Vijayawada for which an estimate of Rs 30 lakh was provided for in the proposal.