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Biocon to supply colon drug in bulk to US firm

Our Bureau
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Direct link to the News/Story:-

<http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/2010/05/25/stories/2010052553530200.htm>

Biocon Ltd on Monday said it has signed a long-term agreement with US biopharma company Optimer Pharmaceuticals Inc. to commercially manufacture the bulk or active pharma ingredient fidaxomicin. The financial details were not given.

Fidaxomicin, among a new class of antibiotics called macrocycles, is being developed by Optimer to treat serious colon infections such as Clostridium difficile infection and is said to be nearing commercialisation after two phase-3 trials. The infection causes diarrhoea, inflammation and sometimes death.

“This long-term agreement is an important step in establishing a stable supply of fidaxomicin in the event it is approved,” said Mr Pedro Lichtinger, President and CEO of Optimer. “For the past five years, Biocon has been an important partner in our fidaxomicin development programme and we look forward to continuing the relationship.”

Ms Kiran Mazumdar Shaw, Chairman and Managing Director of the Biocon Group, said this was another recognition of Biocon's capabilities as an R&D partner and its global-scale manufacturing capabilities.

Biocon has one of the largest Asian manufacturing capacities at its two Bangalore plants; it recently acquired Gulf Oil's API plant in Hyderabad and also created additional capacity by buying out Cuban CIMAB's stake in Biocon Biopharmaceuticals Ltd.

Biocon also supplies human insulin in bulk to Bristol Myers Squibb.

Biocon's expertise in fermentation technology and the team's prior analytical development work with fidaxomicin made it suitable to produce the drug in bulk, the release said.

The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that CDI affects nearly five lakh people in the US annually. It