

Lupin to expand Ghotawade plant to target Europe, US

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PUNE: As the biosimilar market is evolving in Europe and US, pharma major Lupin has started expansion of its Ghotawade plant in Pune. While the current facility is spread across 5.5 acres, it will be expanded to 9 acres.



Sharing their plans, Cyrus Karkaria, President, Biotech Division, Lupin, said that 6 biosimilars are in active development state and the plant has the product development capabilities across microbial and mammalian platforms. The biosimilars include Etanercept, Pegfilgrastim, Ranibizumab, Denosumab, Pertuzumab and Aflibercept, which are in various stages of development. These six biosimilars have a combined market size of \$33 billion.

WHAT ARE BIOSIMILARS?

■ A biosimilar is a biological medical product that is almost an identical copy of an original product that is manufactured by a different company.

■ Biosimilars are officially approved versions of original 'innovator' products and can be manufactured when the original product's patent expires.

Karkaria added that Etanercept was approved in March this year in Japan and launched subsequently. "In Europe, the second-largest

Karkaria.

Speaking on the cost factor of biosimilars, Karkaria said the entire process of development of biosimilars goes to different stages including approval, certifications, clinical trials which adds to the cost.

He also added that along with commercialisation partnerships, the company is open for external financing and co-development models, to save costs.

Lupin's biotech facility of Pune is cleared by Japanese and European Union drug regulators.

The Lupin Biotech Group has a talent pool of close to 300 people comprising 11 per cent PhDs and 63 per cent post graduates.

BIOSIMILAR MARKET

market for Etanercept, Lupin is expecting approval in March 2020 and plans to commercialise it by Q1FY21. It would take about three months to set the pricing," added Karkaria.

He said that the company plans to file two biosimilar drugs Etanercept and Pegfilgrastim in the US market by the fourth quarter of FY20.

"Currently, the clinical trials of both the drugs are in advanced stages," added

