Decisions taken in the 51st Meeting of the Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC) held on 10th February 2005.

The 51st Meeting of the Genetic Engineering Approval Committee was held on 10th February 2005 in the Ministry of Environment and Forests under the Chairmanship of Shri Suresh Chandra, Special Secretary & Chairman GEAC

DECISIONS

1.0 Permission for manufacture and marketing of Diphtheria, Tetanus and Perturisis and Hepatitis- B combination vaccine (DPTH) by M/s. Shantha Biotechnics Ltd. Hyderabad.

1.1 The above product was approved by the GEAC in its 44th meeting held on 14th July 2004 for conduct of phase III clinical trials in India.

1.2 The Committee gave an opportunity to the Company representatives to provide the necessary clarification. On the issue of the source of DPTw, it was clarified that the four components required for the make of the combination vaccine are being manufactured indigenously by Shantha Biotechnics. For development of the DTPw vaccine, the company has imported three strains from Egypt. The indigenous product has been cleared by CRI, Kasauli vide certificate dated 11/05/04 after going through the strain credential, batch summary protocols and testing of the product at Kasauli. Necessary pre-clinical studies on the same batch have been carried out and the same have been approved by RCGM vide letter dated 12/07/04.

1.3 To a query on the status of approval of DTPw developed indigenously by the company, it was clarified that currently clinical trials are in progress and the report will be submitted to DCGI in March 2005. The Company also clarified that the DTPw earlier imported from PT Bio Parma, Indonesia has been withdrawn and the agreement between the two companies has been cancelled.

1.4 On the issue of the containment facility, it was clarified that at present four operational units manufacturing Hepatitis B, Diphtheria, Pertussis & Tetanus antigens are available. A Joint committee comprising of the State and Central Drug Administrations has inspected the facility and license for manufacture and marketing has been issued. The facilities at the unit have also been approved by the IBSC.

1.5 The Committee after satisfying itself that the explanation received is supported by documentary evidence approved the proposal for manufacture and marketing of the combination vaccine in India.

2.0 Permission for manufacture and marketing of the bulk and finished formulation of r-human Erythropoietin (r-h-EPO) by M/s Intas Pharmaceuticals Ltd. Ahmedabad.

2.1 The above product was approved by the GEAC in its 42nd meeting held on 12th May 2004 for conduct of phase III clinical trials in India. On the present request for manufacture and marketing of recombinant Erythropoietin in India, the Committee considered the comments received from CDRI, Lucknow and noted that CDRI has recommended the proposal based on detailed examination of the process, results of the clinical trials and adequacy of containment facilities.

2.2 After detailed deliberations and taking into consideration, the views expressed by the expert members and recommendation of CDRI, the Committee recommended the manufacture and marketing of recombinant Erythropoietin by the company.

3.0 Permission to Import Erythropoietin (EPREX- with HSA, EPREX-without HSA and Neorecormon) for Test Analysis by M/s Wockhardt Ltd. Mumbai.

3.1 The Member Secretary briefed the Committee on the queries raised in the GEAC meeting held on 8.12.2004 and the justification given by the company for the proposed import and non-revalidation of the GEAC clearance.

3.2 The Committee noted that the justification given by the company "the approval granted vide letter dated 19th July 2000 did not stipulate any limit for validity of clearance" is not acceptable as Rule 13(ii) of the 1989 Rules clearly mandates that the GEAC clearance needs to be revalidated after four years in the first instance followed by revalidation after every two years. Since the company has obtained permission for manufacture and marketing under Rules 1989, other provisions of the Rules would also be applicable to them.

3.3 After detailed deliberation, the Committee decided that the request for import may be considered only after the Company has obtained the revalidation of the GEAC clearance. The Committee was also of the view that in the absence of a valid approval, manufacturing activities cannot take place during the interim period i.e. until the GEAC clearance is revalidated. The Committee, therefore, advised the Member Secretary to issue necessary directions to the Company in this regard.

3.4 In view of the above, decision on the request for import of r-Erythropoietin for test analysis was deferred.

4.0 Import of Denimax 399S from M/s Novoenzyme Denimax by M/s Lumis Biotech Ltd. Mumbai from Denmark.

4.1 The Committee noted that in the previous meeting, the Company had indicated that the purpose of import is for value addition and subsequent export. It was categorically stated that the product with or without value addition would not be used within the country. However, the undertaking submitted by the Company is contradictory to the application submitted by the company and claims made by them in the previous meeting. The Committee also noted that in case of import for the purpose of sale and use within the country, the compliance of environmental safety, disposal method and environmental effect of the cellulase and its byproduct have not been clearly explained.

4.2 The Committee gave an opportunity to the Company representatives to clarify the above issues. It was clarified that the application submitted by the Company, was with reference to the present consignment approved by DGFT for the sole purpose of value addition and subsequent export. However, in future such consignments may be used within the county after value addition.

4.3 After detailed deliberations and taking note of the fact that the undertaking given by the Company does not clearly indicate the purpose of import, the Committee accorded approval for import of the consignment containing Denimax 399S approved by the DGFT

vide license dated 19.01.2004 for the sole purpose of value addition and subsequent export subject to the following conditions:

a) The DGFT would monitor the quantity of import and subsequent export after value addition.

b) The DGFT should direct the Company to follow 'Rules 1989' and obtain approval of GEAC prior to such imports in future.

5.0 Permission for import and marketing of L.G. Leucostin Injection (r-human Granulocyte colony Stimulating factor) filgrastim by M/s. L.G. Life Sciences Pvt. Ltd. New Delhi.

5.1. The Committee noted the decisions taken by the GEAC in its meeting held on 13.10.2004 and 8.12.2004 and the reasons for deferring the decision on the proposal. The Member Secretary briefed the Committee on the recommendations received from DBT regarding the additional information on gene sequence, virus freedom characterization, bio-reactor parameters, purification methods, and other details related to certification etc. submitted by the Company.

5.2 After detailed deliberations and taking into consideration the recommendations of DBT, the Committee approved the proposal for conduct of Phase III clinical trials.

6.0 Permission for Manufacture & Marketing of r-human Epidermal Growth factor by M/S Bharat Biotech International Ltd. Hyderabad.

6.1 The Committee noted that the response of the company to queries raised by the GEAC in the meeting held on 12.1.2005 is not adequate for taking a final view. It was noted that the company has not replied to the first query regarding the reasons for the reduction in protein content in the accelerated stability studies of the product when activity of the product is going up. Out of the total patients tested, detailed break up of the controlled cases and experimental cases have not been indicated. The Committee was of the view that the above details may be obtained from the Company.

6.2 After detailed deliberation, decision on the proposal was deferred.

Date of the Next GEAC Meeting: The next GEAC meeting would be held on 4th March 2005 instead of 9th March 2005.

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