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Merck unveils solid dose formulation lab

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Singapore: According to Merck's press release, the facilities at the lab were built to provide services and application assistance to the pharmaceutical industry, for classic pharmaceutical clients working on solid dose formulations.

In his inaugural remarks, Dr Claus-Dieter Boedecker, MD and head, Merck Millipore India, highlighted the need for the new facility. "India is one of the largest exporters of pharmaceutical products to North America and the European region. Between 2009 and 2013, exports from India registered an average growth of 24 percent; almost unaffected by the overall economic situation. India also has the highest number of US FDA approved facilities outside the US, of which, most have approvals from authorities in Europe, Canada and Australia."

"The quality standards achieved by Indian pharmaceutical companies, however, have been overshadowed by the recent spate of quality concerns. These could adversely affect export performance going forward. Additionally, speed is of essence in the field of generics. With the new facility, Merck intends to deliver on both these parameters. Created with the needs of the industry in mind, the facilities provide service and application assistance to those working in solid dosage formulation," he opined further.

Merck's objective of setting up the Lab is primarily to assist clients, using advanced excipients from the Merck Millipore portfolio, with pre-formulation studies.

Mr Benoit Gourdier, head of sales, Asia, Process Solutions, summarized the lab's purpose,

He said, "The new formulation lab greatly reduces costs and helps build in-house capability. The adage, 'Time is Money', has never been more relevant than when speaking of the generic pharma industry. By setting up the formulation lab, Merck Millipore intends to sharpen its clients' competitive edge by providing faster solutions to formulation design problems thereby reducing costs."

Additionally, the lab will offer the possibility of inviting clients for hands-on training sessions and demonstrations of new technologies in solid dose formulation.

The formulation lab is expected to engage in a continuous exchange of technologies and experts from Merck Millipore sites across the world to bring the latest developments in excipients and technology to formulation scientists in India.

Mr Peter Salazar, head, Pharm Chemicals Solutions, Merck Millipore India, gave an overview of the capabilities of the new formulation lab.

He explained, "A large number of active drugs have problems of low solubility and low permeability. Incidentally, the majority of active ingredients under development have the same problems. These are, therefore, not only difficult to formulate, but in the absence of an appropriate technology, need to be used in high concentrations in order to be effective. Merck Millipore offers a range of solutions for these bioavailability issues through the formulation lab."

"With the new facilities at the lab, Merck Millipore hopes to add value to its customers by providing alternatives to customers for new application fields. Enhanced product performance studies and comparison studies can now be conducted at the lab. We will also offer hands-on training to clients in specific areas of application," he concluded

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