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Bayer, Curadev ink Ã¢â??Â¬250M deal for novel STING antagonists

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Research collaboration and license agreement to treat lung, cardiovascular, inflammatory diseases

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Bayer and Curadev Pvt. Ltd., a drug discovery company based in India, on 23 March 2020 announced a research collaboration and license agreement for Curadev's Stimulator of Interferon Genes (STING) antagonist program.

The collaboration aims to discover new drug candidates for the treatment of lung diseases, cardiovascular diseases and other inflammatory diseases. STING antagonists offer tremendous potential for new treatments as STING is known to play a role in activating the innate immune system in auto-inflammatory diseases.

"In line with our strategy, we continue to deepen our understanding of pathology in disease areas with high unmet medical need and further strengthen our research activities on mechanisms with broader potential, rather than individual indications," said Dr. Joerg Moeller, Member of the Executive Committee of Bayer AG's Pharmaceuticals Division and Head of Research and Development. "We are continuously looking for new breakthroughs to improve patients' lives and Curadev's deep experience working on the STING pathway makes them an ideal partner."

Curadev's small molecule STING antagonist program aims to discover and develop inhibitors of the intracellular stimulator of interferon genes (STING) pathway, which can modulate the immune response associated with various auto-inflammatory diseases. As part of the agreement, Bayer will gain exclusive access to novel molecules from Curadev that are designed to inhibit the STING pathway. The companies will collaborate to optimize and advance these molecules, as well as others

generated during the collaboration, into clinical development.

“Curadev identified STING as a versatile target where both agonists and antagonists can play an important role in diverse disease conditions,” said Dr. Arjun Surya, Co-Founder & Chief Scientific Officer of Curadev. “The agile and collaborative approach of Bayer in building this partnership convinces us that we have found the ideal partner to develop our portfolio of STING antagonists for various disease indications.”

Under the terms of the agreement, Curadev will receive an upfront payment. In addition, Curadev will receive research funding during the research term and might be eligible for pre-clinical, clinical and sales milestones of potentially over EUR 250 million as well as royalties of single-digit percentages of net sales.

The Pharmaceuticals Business Development & Licensing team of Bayer facilitated this collaboration.