HYDERABAD

Access to DRDO drug 2-DG will improve in weeks: Dr. Reddy's

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DRDO invites more pharma firms to take up its production

Availability of 2-Deoxy-D-Glucose (2-DG), the drug developed by DRDO lab INMAS and approved for use as adjunct in treatment of moderate to severe COVID-19 patients, is set to improve in the weeks ahead with drugmaker Dr. Reddy's Laboratories ramping up production.

"I expect a very significant ramp up in the second half of June and subsequently in July," said Deepak Sapra, CEO (API and Services) of Dr. Reddy's.

Stating that the company is licensee of DRDO, for the product launched last month following emergency use authorisation from the Drugs Controller General of India, he said in a matter of weeks the capacity will be enhanced to meet requirements of lakhs of patients.

MRP ₹990 per sachet

Mr.Sapra, who was speaking at a webinar on 2-DG organised by the Federation of Telangana Chambers of Commerce and Industry on Tuesday, said the drug, however, would continue to be made available only on prescription and used in a hospital setting. The MRP of the drug is ₹990 per sachet (oral powder 2.34 g).

Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) Chairman G. Satheesh Reddy said defence R&D is not just about arms and equipment but also about working on soldier support systems and the drug is the result of such efforts.

EoI for tech transfer

Mr. Reddy said the DRDO has issued an expression of interest (EoI) seeking participation of more players from the pharma industry, including to take the product to international markets. According to the EoI document, it is proposed to offer transfer of technology (ToT) of 2-DG to Indian pharmaceutical firms for production. A ToT fee of ₹25 lakh is payable by industry to DRDO at the time of signing of licensing agreement.

Senior Scientist and Lead Developer-2DG at the Institute of Nuclear Medicine and Allied Sciences Anant Narayan Bhatt said 2-DG is an anti-viral and anti-inflammatory drug developed by INMAS. In the mid-1990's it was conceived as an adjuvant to radio-therapy and the phase I and II clinical trials were conducted in reputed cancer hospitals. In 2004, the technology of 2-DG synthesis was transferred to Dr. Reddy's, while in 2014 DCGI recommended the drug for manufacturing and marketing by the pharma major for use in the treatment of patients with Glioblastoma Multiforme.

FTCCI president Ramakanth Inani stressed on efforts to make the country self sufficient in pharmaceuticals and engineering products.