

Hilleman Laboratories' Thermostable technology now extends its support towards other vaccines

New Delhi, 24th April 2015: Global vaccine research and development organization, Hilleman Laboratories, today announced the extension of its thermostable formulations to other vaccines, reaffirming its promise towards closing the immunization gap in India. Hilleman Laboratories' unique technology has shown remarkable advancement towards containing the life-threatening disease by creating safer and more effective vaccines. With this move, the company plans to support India's aim of achieving 90% coverage through its expanded program by 2020.

Last year, Hilleman Laboratories had initiated research and development of thermostable formulations of oral rotavirus vaccine, which offered longer stability of the vaccine even in varying temperature across diverse environment. The development of a combination of highly thermostable vaccine as well as cheap and easy-to-administer delivery has made the rotavirus program an important initiative. Hilleman Laboratories now endeavors to replicate this achievement to other vaccine programs for improved affordability as well as increased access.

On the occasion of World Immunization Week, **Dr. Davinder Gill, CEO, Hilleman Laboratories** said, *"India is the world's largest manufacturer of vaccines, but it is really sad that the country has the largest number of unimmunized children at close to 7 million. The current state of immunization in the country is quite heterogeneous, with different states having achieved varying levels of protection through vaccination. The country needs a consistent access to technology which can help immunize children against fatal diseases."*

While commending Government of India's initiative, Mission Indradhanush, Hilleman Laboratories believes it can play a key role in supporting this program through its robust heat stabilizing technology that will help in distributing life-saving vaccines without the requirement of large bulk shipments, expensive warehousing and costly, difficult-to-maintain refrigerated shipping paths from the manufacturing plant to the patient.

"However, the road to immunity is not free from obstacles. The major challenges characterizing immunization in India are accessibility and affordability. Many isolated parts of the states do not have access to vaccines and are therefore highly susceptible to Vaccine Preventable Diseases (VPDs). Besides, lack of trained manpower, infrastructure and well-equipped logistics hinders effective implementation of full coverage plans." added **Dr. Gill**.

Hilleman Laboratories aims to not only increase access but also make vaccines affordable. In this, the company calls for cooperation and support from vaccine manufacturers and also like-minded stakeholders who can together work towards a cost-effective solution. Hilleman has been consistently working in this direction with the aim of bridging existing gaps in a significant way.

World Immunization Week is a part of the Global Vaccine Action Plan by the World Health Organization (WHO) and will be held from 24th to 30th April 2015.

About Hilleman Laboratories:

Hilleman Laboratories is a first-of-its-kind joint-venture partnership formed between Merck & Co., a global research-driven pharmaceutical organization and Wellcome Trust, a global charitable foundation dedicated to human and animal health by supporting the brightest minds.

Hilleman Laboratories has been named after renowned scientist and father of modern vaccine Dr. Maurice Hilleman. His dedication to making a difference through the practical application of vaccine research and delivering vaccines to people in need forms the core mission of Hilleman Laboratories.

Operating on a not-for-profit principle, Hilleman Laboratories aims to become a preferred partner for Low Cost Vaccine Manufacturers and the 'global voice' for vaccine development and usage for public health in the developing world. For further information please visit: www.hillemanlabs.org

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