

Thursday, August 19, 2004

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Bangalore-based, GangaGen Biotechnologies Pvt Ltd (GBPL), the Indian subsidiary of GangaGen Inc, a Delaware Corporation, has made significant progress in the pre-clinical development of potent phages targeting *Staphylococcus aureus* and plans to seek approval for clinical evaluation early next year.

The company has acquired over 1,000 clinical isolates from patients suffering from infection due to burns and wounds with the help of major hospitals in Bangalore and Hyderabad and built a large library of 400 potentially therapeutic bacteriophages that eliminate these pathogens, most of which are resistant to available antibiotics.

GangaGen has also developed proprietary lysis-deficient bacteriophages that have distinct advantages over the natural, wild type phages. Lysis-deficient phages have been used to develop novel, proprietary whole-cell vaccines against pathogenic bacteria. GangaGen R & D has led to the filing of four patents and several more are under preparation, said Dr. J Ramachandran, president, GangaGen Biotechnologies.

GangaGen, a pioneer in biopharmaceutical R&D, focused on the development of novel therapies against antibiotic-resistant bacterial infection for medical, veterinary, agricultural and environmental applications. Its other subsidiary GangaGen Life Sciences Inc (GLSI) located in Ottawa, Canada, develops phages for food safety by eliminating bacterial infection in animals and the environment. GLSI is targeting *E. coli* 0157:H7 in cattle and manure. Phages capable of killing *E. coli* 0157:H7 have been developed and are under evaluation in animals.

GangaGen plans to be a major player in the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of nosocomial which are hospital-acquired infections, secondary infections following surgery and topical infections that occur with burns and wounds. It also plans to develop phage therapies to treat enteric infections as well as upper respiratory tract infections caused by bacterial pathogens. The company intends to target all the major diseases in the developing world including tuberculosis as future plan of action, stated Dr. Ramachandran.