

## Gujarat supports scale-up of Covaxin production

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**Ahmedabad based firms Hester Biosciences and OmniBRx have firmed up discussions with Bharat Biotech**



Gujarat Biotechnology Research Centre (GBRC), recently established as an autonomous institute under Department of Science and Technology (DST), along with Ahmedabad based firms Hester Biosciences (poultry vaccine manufacturer) and OmniBRx have firmed up discussions with Bharat Biotech to scale up the COVAXIN technology and to produce minimum 20 million doses per month. Technology transfer agreement has been finalized.

GBRC has been involved in the COVID-19 response from the beginning, providing important research insights on key issues using Genome sequencing.

On the other hand, OmniBRx has entered into the bioprocessing market with the most advanced, efficient and scalable CellBRx range of bioreactors for adherent cell culture bioprocessing. CellBRx bioreactor systems are designed for large scale and cost effective adherent cell culture based vaccine production.

"A triparty consortium has been formed with Government of Gujarat as the lead partner, to explore the prospects of manufacturing the Covid vaccine through technology from Bharat Biotech.

The discussions are currently on-going with Bharat Biotech towards reviewing the infrastructure at Hester, the technology adaption process and the regulatory compliances. Based on the outcome of the review, the next course of action will be determined", said Rajiv Gandhi, CEO & MD, Hester Biosciences.

In addition, financial support is being provided as grant from the government to the tune of approx. Rs 65 crore to Bharat Biotech's new Bangalore facility which is being repurposed to increase the capacity of vaccine production.