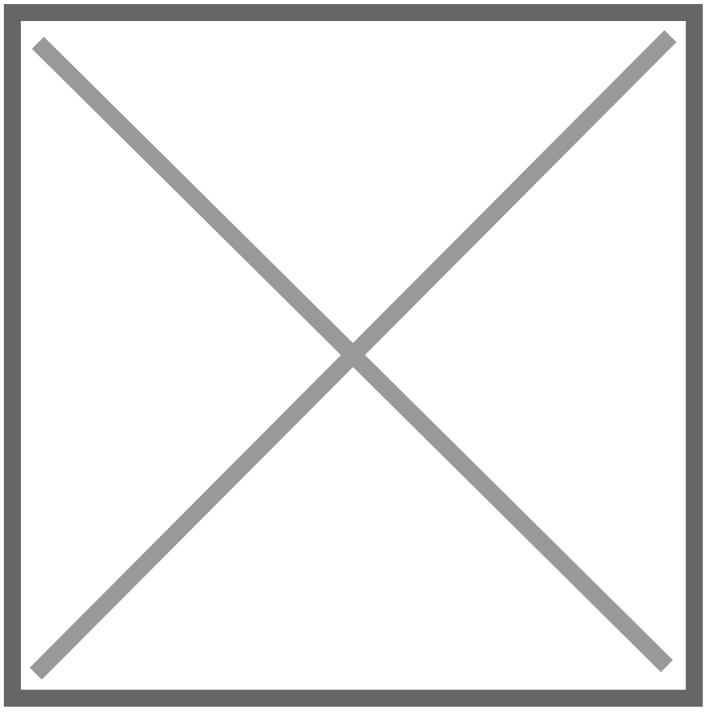
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"Airlifting of infectious substances risky"

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"Airlifting of infectious substances risky"

Airlifting of infectious substances is not an easy task. It's a challenging and difficult game as infectious substances are those which are known or are reasonably expected to contain pathogens that are defined as micro-organisms including bacteria, viruses, rickettsiae, parasites, fungi and other agents such as prions and these pathogens can cause disease in humans and animals.

"In air transportation of infectious substances, regulations (vary from region to region), permit requirements (differ from country to country) and customs (paper work discrepancies) still come in the way," said Ajit Pal Singh, operations manager, India, World Courier India Pvt Ltd. He was speaking at "Drug Discovery to Clinical Trials", an international conference organized by IBC in Mumbai. "There are solutions to overcome these problems. They include training through locally endorsed training provider and establishing a good partnership i.e. choosing the right courier company that matches one's needs. A courier company has to follow guidelines specified by different regulators," Singh stated.

Infectious substances or dangerous goods are classified into nine categories namely explosives, gases, flammable liquids, flammable solids, oxidizing substances and organic peroxides, toxic infectious substances, radio active materials, corrosives and miscellaneous dangerous goods, of which some are again classified into divisions.

BD Directigen EZ Flu A+B Test okayed

BD Diagnostics, a segment of BD (Becton, Dickinson and Company), announced that the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has granted 510(k) clearance for the BD Directigen EZ Flu A+B Test. This two-step, rapid influenza test is able to clearly differentiate between influenza A and influenza B in fifteen minutes or less.

The BD Directigen EZ Flu A+B test features two distinct windows on a single device to differentiate influenza A and influenza B with maximum efficiency. The test offers convenient room temperature storage. Commonly used oral medications, such as throat drops, nasal sprays and ibuprofen, have shown no interference with test results in analytical evaluations. It is compatible with multiple transport media, and has been validated for use with multiple specimen types. This saves laboratories the additional time and resources required to validate alternate transport media and specimen types.

The release quoting Michael Towns, vice president, worldwide medical affairs, BD Diagnostics Ã¢â?¬â?? Diagnostic Systems stated, "Rapid diagnostics are extremely important in that they allow healthcare providers to rule out other respiratory infections, confirm a case of influenza, and select the appropriate treatment in a timely manner."

PerkinElmer to focus on health sciences

PerkinElmer announced its intention to divest the fluid sciences business segment to increase the strategic focus on its higher-growth health sciences and photonic markets.

As part of the divestiture process, the company has signed a definitive agreement to sell its aerospace business to Eaton Corporation for approximately $333 million, subject to regulatory approval and customary closing conditions.

The company also reported that it is in discussions to sell its semiconductor and fluid testing businesses. All of the planned divestitures are expected to be completed in the fourth quarter of 2005 with aggregate proceeds of approximately $400 million from the sale of the fluid sciences business segment. Health sciences markets include genetic screening, environmental, service, biopharma, and medical imaging. Photonics markets include sensors and specialty lighting.

Oxford Immunotec, Millipore co-develop microtitre plates

Millipore Corporation and Oxford Immunotec Ltd. will co-develop specially designed microtitre plate for use in clinical diagnostics kits. The new plate advances the simplicity, cost-effectiveness and performance of Oxford Immunotec's proprietary T-SPOT technology.

Both the companies entered into this partnership in September 2004. At present, the plates are in production phase. Under the terms of the agreement, Oxford Immunotec has exclusive rights to use the plates for in vitro diagnostics with its T-SPOT assay kits.

According to an official release, this is the first 8-well strip-based plate customized for use in Enzyme-Linked Immunospot (ELISPOT) methodology compared with typical 96-well plates. It is more economical for users to select the number of wells they require and reduce waste as a result. Utilizing Millipore's market-leading ELISPOT technology with Immobilon-P membrane, users can rely on the quality and accuracy of the product.

Oxford Immunotec will incorporate the plate into a second generation of its T-SPOT.TB test kit. It is set to replace the 100-year old skin test currently used to diagnose this resurgent disease. Incorporating the new plate will provide greater flexibility and improved performance, while lowering the cost of administering the test.

Innovative Biosensors, Cambrex establish manufacturing relationship

Innovative Biosensors (IBI)and Cambrex Bio Science Walkersville, a subsidiary of Cambrex Corporation have signed an agreement for Cambrex to supply cGMP manufacturing services.

IBI develops, manufactures, and markets pathogen tests for infectious diseases within the food safety and human clinical markets. Under the agreement, Cambrex Bio Science will provide cGMP (current Good Manufacturing Processes) production services for the manufacture of IBI's human clinical testing reagents. Production will take place in Cambrex's Walkersville, Maryland facility.

"We are proud to be IBI's partner and believe that their technology has great potential. This is the first agreement where we will supply our cell-based cGMP manufacturing services, usually provided to therapeutic companies, to a client with innovative pathogen detection products. We believe our experience and infrastructure can help Innovative Biosensors jump start the product commercialization process," said Shawn Cavanagh, senior vice president and general manager, Cambrex Bioproducts.

LaVision BioTec acquires sublicenses from Carl Zeiss

The Microscopy Group of Carl Zeiss AG has granted the firm LaVision BioTec GmbH, Bielefeld, licences on several patents, retroactive to August 4, 2005. These patents protect the use of ultra-short laser pulses in the femtosecond range for multiphoton fluorescence excitation in laser scanning microscopy.

The company had acquired the exclusive global rights to this method, including the entitlement to grant sublicenses from the Cornell Foundation, Ithaka, USA, in 2004. After the granting of the sublicenses, LaVision BioTec is currently the world's only manufacturer, apart form Carl Zeiss, which is permitted to offer fs-multiphoton microscopes. Carl Zeiss uses this specimen-protecting technology, which enables a particularly high depth of penetration in the examined object, to generate maximum resolution 3D images in its LSM 510 Laser Scanning Microscopes. La Vision BioTec also operates in the field of laser scanning microscopy and uses this technique for its TriM Scope multifocal 2-photon microscope.

Sartorius acquires Omnimark

Sartorius has acquired a 100 percent stake in Omnimark Instrument Corporation based in Tempe, Arizona, USA. Omnimark distributes special moisture analyzers for quality assurance in the chemical and food industries. The acquisition process was completed on October 1, 2005, according to a press release.

Founded in 1991, the company has been owned so far by a family as the major shareholder, and has become the market leader in the premium moisture analyzer segment in North America. For years, Omnimark has been supplying its customers with Sartorius moisture analysis equipment and has been also offering sophisticated, application-related services in moisture determination. In 2004, the company earned approximately $3 million in sales revenue.
Dr Joachim Kreuzburg, Sartorius Group CEO, assessed this takeover as a relatively small acquisition, which can be quickly integrated into the Sartorius Group, yet is of strategic significance. "Omnimark has an excellent customer base, a high level of applications expertise and a successful direct sales policy. This acquisition strengthens our presence in one of our most important regional target markets and, at the same time, with several of our major customer groups. The objective behind this acquisition is to make Omnimark products and services available on our global Sartorius sales platform," he said.

Biotron Healthcare signs pact with CDRI

Mumbai-based Biotron Healthcare (India) Pvt. Ltd, has signed a licensing agreement with Lucknow-based Central Drug Research Institute (CDRI), a leading institute in India for manufacture of classical PCR and Real Time PCR kit for tuberculosis.

The technology transfer holds significance in the light of the WHO report which states that nearly two billion people are infected by tuberculosis bacilli and eight million people worldwide develop active TB and three million people die annually due to this disease.

Venkatesh Voleti, director Ã¢â?¬â?? sales, Biotron Healthcare said, "The kit will be priced in the range of Rs 500-600. We plan to contact physicians and clinical labs all over the country so as to reach rural people. Adequate training will be provided to the people to achieve good results."

Praj bags Ethanol plant contract from Turkey

Praj Industries, a Pune-based company has bagged an ethanol plant contract from Konya Seker, Turkey against stiff competition from European players. Praj confirmed that the award of contract was worth Rs 36 crore for a 280,000 litres per day bioethanol plant. The project is being set up for production of bioethanol using sugarbeet molasses/syrup as feedstock. The project is expected to become operational by November 2006. Turkey is expected to formally announce its fuel ethanol program in January 2007.

Pramod Chaudhari, chairman, Praj said, "This is a major milestone for Praj paving the way to the European markets where fuel ethanol programmes mandates are being introduced. This order has been bagged by our Sharjah office set up a year ago. The office has already achieved success with bagging of an order from Algeria as well as this order from Turkey".

NI comes with a new class of PACs

To address the growing needs of machine and industrial control system, National Instruments (NI) has created a new class of industrial controllers known as Programmable Automation Controllers (PACs). These industrial grade controllers combine capabilities for logic control, process control, machine vision, and I/O integration Ã¢â?¬â?? all using a single software environment.

The PACs have unique advantages that help organizations achieve savings in terms of manufacturing time, increased productivity and enhanced savings. This is accomplished because of NI's LabVIEW. By simply being familiar with LabVIEW use, engineers are able to address applications involving high-speed control, data acquisition, machine vision based inspection, custom motion control, advanced analysis and reporting, etc.

According to Jayaram Pillai, country head, NI Systems India, "The advancement in automation technologies will bring great benefits to the manufacturing process and the industry itself. In the Indian market context, given the competitiveness of brands that operate on small margins and large volumes, PACs are more relevant due to the immense benefits they offer."

Using PAC technology, enterprises can easily address Advanced Automation applications while availing huge productivity improvements, and long term cost benefits. They can also future proof their investments by allowing them to cope with future system changes/requirements in terms of additional functionality or capabilities.