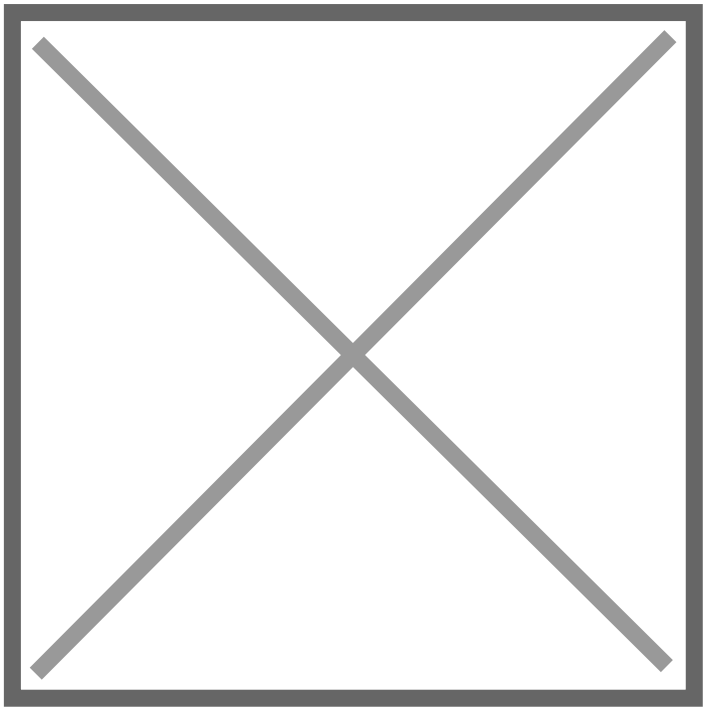
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Fidelity buys 5% stake in Ess Dee Aluminium

Fidelity International has picked up five percent equity in Ess Dee Aluminium, one of India's leading provider of pharma packaging solutions. The fund has invested close to Rs 40 crore in the company's stock that pegs its enterprise value at around Rs 800 crore.

Confirming the development, Sudip Dutta, CMD, Ess Dee Aluminium, said, "It is a reflection of the confidence that global financial institutions are showing in the company," he said adding that other funds, including Blackstone, have evinced interest to be a part of Ess Dee. "ICICI and Marc Faber, the famous Asian financial commentator, already hold around 3.5 percent and 4 percent equity, respectively, in Ess Dee," he said. The other investors include Nimesh Kampani and Jagdish Master of Enam. The Rs 130-crore Ess Dee Aluminium has an ambitious growth agenda.

The company is planning to invest $40-45 million to set up a plant in Dubai and also looking to acquire a company in South Africa. Ess Dee has recently set up a plant in Sikkim, which is offering tax benefits and now, company is looking at expanding overseas. Overseas expansion will be funded partly through internal accruals and if need be, the company may consider FCCB route. Enthused by a fast-growing pharma and the FMCG packaging market, Ess Dee has been on a capacity ramp up mode during the past one year.

Ess Dee Aluminium has already invested over Rs 100 crore in setting up a thermo forming films plant for the pharmaceutical industry in Daman. The new plant will also offer cost-effective aluminium foil-based laminates to food and FMCG sectors. Many products that Ess Dee intends to make are import substitutes and will facilitate expansion of usage. The company faces a situation where demand for packaging products outstrips supply. Fresh capacities are needed to wipe out the backlog.

Praj bags Rs 65 crore contract from Belgian firm

Praj Industries has bagged the second phase contract for the wheat and beet based bio-ethanol plant for Biowanze SA, a subsidiary of CropEnergies AG
(a Sudzucker Group Company), through De Smet SA Engineers & Contractors, EPC contractor engaged by Biowanze for the project. The contract value is close to Rs 65 crore (Ã¢â??Â¬11.502 million).

The second phase involves supply of equipment for the core bio-ethanol process plant comprising liquefaction, fermentation, multi-pressure distillation, dehydration and vinasse evaporation.

The Ã¢â??Â¬5.4-billion Sudzucker Group, with 44 sugar factories spread across Europe, is the largest sugar producer in Europe. CropEnergies AG is also one of the leading producers of bio-ethanol in Europe.

The contract in the first phase included license, basic engineering and other services for their proposed 300,000 cubic meters bio-ethanol complex at Wanze in Belgium. The first phase of the order value was Ã¢â??Â¬2 million (approximately Rs 11 crore), a press release said.

Anil Deshpande, president, European operations, Praj Industries, said, "Europe is experiencing growth in ethanol plant installation. Praj has already made headway in the European ethanol Industry with orders from British Sugar and Suedzucker Group in Western Europe as well as from companies in Eastern Europe for technology and critical equipment. Going forward, we see a lot of potential, particularly in light of the recent endorsement of the Biofuels Policy by the European Council."

Shimadzu to expand its India operations

Considering the proposed rise in budget allocation for the public sector R&D in the country, Shimadzu Corporation, a leading global supplier of high quality instruments in quality control and research and development laboratories is keen on expanding its operations in India.

Speaking to BioSpectrum, Wataru Tajima, deputy managing director, Shimadzu Analytical (India) Ltd, said, "We are now in the midst of expanding our Delhi office. We wish to build the Delhi office as an information hub to disseminate information i.e. about government funding that will help the organization in future." He further said, "The government's Budget for science and technology in 2005-06 was about $6.8 billion. And the projected Budget for 2010- 2011 would be about $ 48 billion. This will support the growth of the government sector, upgrading of education facilities and basic sciences. We do not want to miss this huge opportunity in the life sciences space, a booming sector in India."

Sartorius takes stake in Stedim Biosystems

Sartorius AG, a global provider of laboratory and process equipment, has signed a binding agreement with the biopharmaceutical supplier, Stedim Biosystems SA, a company listed on the Paris stock exchange. Under the terms of the agreement, Sartorius acquires a substantial stake in Stedim and combined its biotechnology division with Stedim's business. Sartorius will pay Ã¢â??Â¬43 per share. Upon completion of this transaction, Sartorius will become Stedim's majority owner controlling the combined company.

Through the combination of the Sartorius and Stedim biotech businesses, Sartorius is substantially strengthening its position as a technology provider to the fast growing biopharmaceutical market. Stedim's board supports this deal. The overall transaction, which is subject to approval by Stedim's shareholders and to regulatory clearance, is expected to be completed in summer 2007. The combined company will be named "Sartorius Stedim Biotech S.A."
French-based Stedim is the pioneer for disposable bag systems for biopharmaceutical applications. Besides being a market leader in this segment, Stedim also has a product segment consisting of door systems for aseptic transfer technology and a unique proprietary freeze-thaw technology. Both of these technologies offer significant growth potential in the biopharmaceutical industry.

Waters' Synapt System wins Pittcon Editors Gold Award

For the second time in three years, Waters Corporation has won the 2007 Pittcon Editors Gold Award for the best new product at the Pittsburgh Conference on Analytical Chemistry and Applied Spectroscopy (Pittcon). In 2004, the Waters ACQUITY UPLC System took home the gold and this year it was the Waters Synapt High Definition MS (HDMS) system that won the top prize at the 58th annual conference held in Chicago. The instrument made its debut in front of more than 20,000 analytical scientists and corporate executives attending Pittcon, the largest annual exposition on lab science.

Used in small molecule research, protein characterization, metabolite identification and bio-pharmaceutical applications, the Synapt HDMS system is the first mass spectrometer of its kind to combine high efficiency, ion mobility based, measurements and separations with high performance quadrupole, time-of-flight mass spectrometry, a press release noted.

"Synapt is designed to create new possibilities for scientists and researchers who want to take their research to the next level," said Dr Rohit Khanna, vice president, worldwide marketing, Waters Corporation.

BD, FIND expand collaboration to improve diagnosis of TB globally

BD (Becton, Dickinson and Company), and FIND (Foundation for Innovative New Diagnostics) have expanded collaboration towards improving the diagnosis of tuberculosis (TB).

Building on their two-year relationship to improve access to diagnostics in the developing world, BD and FIND formed this new collaboration in response to the emergence in many countries of extensively drug-resistant tuberculosis (XDR-TB).

In September 2006, the World Health Organization issued an alert about the threat of XDR-TB and called for the strengthening of TB control worldwide. Rapid, accurate diagnosis of TB will reduce the time spent on inappropriate and ineffective patient treatment, which can lead to further drug resistance.

Through cash and product donations, BD will support FIND's TB program to help strengthen laboratory services in developing countries. BD's commitment includes a cash donation of $100,000 and an in-kind product, training and service donation of approximately $200,000 market value.

Dr Phadke's Lab opts for Millipore's Elix water system

Dr Phadke's Lab, a subsidiary of the Nicholas Piramal India Ltd (NPIL), which specializes in infertility, immunological, histopathology, genetic and microbiology tests and works closely with IVF centers all over the country, has employed Millipore's Elix water systems in conjunction with their Randox analyzers.
The Randox system used by Dr Phadke and his colleagues allows for on-board sample dilution and includes an on-board cuvette washing system. Pure water is key for both of those applications to avoid introducing impurities that may result in false readings. In a clinical setting such as this, a false reading could lead directly to a false diagnosis that would negatively impact a patient's health. Because Wellspring's mission stresses the need for quality patient care, Dr Phadke's lab requires the consistently high quality pure water that can be provided by an Elix system.
The water produced by Elix systems meets the highest standards and ensures consistent quality. Millipore's Elix water systems are fed directly with potable tap water and combine complementary purification technologies to produce water that meets or exceeds Type II water quality (corresponding to analytical-grade water) as defined by CAP, NCCLS/CLSI and ISO 3696/BS 3997. While water passing through the Elix module is purified, ion exchange resins are continuously regenerated via an electrical current applied within the module itself.

Pall expands line of instant aseptic connection devices

Pall Corporation has expanded its line of Kleenpak Aseptic Connectors with two new sizes, 1/4- and 3/8-inch. The new sizes enable vaccine manufacturers to apply the safety and efficiency benefits of instant aseptic connections throughout more of their disposable operations to help speed time to market and comply with good manufacturing practices.

Pall has revolutionized the aseptic connection process by shortening the time needed for connection from 15 minutes to seconds when it introduced its 1/2-inch Kleenpak Connector. The addition of the two new Kleenpak Connector sizes increases flexibility to implement aseptic connections in more applications to improve disposable processing efficiency. This is especially important to complex vaccine production, which often requires a greater number of connection steps, a press release says.

Dr Helene Pora, marketing director, Pall Life Sciences, said, "Advances in aseptic connection are making disposable processing a more viable and profitable option for vaccine manufacturers. Pall has championed single-use technologies and will continue to expand its product offering so that more manufacturers can reap the benefits of disposable processing in even more applications."

Rockwell, E+H alliance provides total process automation solutions

Rockwell Automation and Endress+Hauser demonstrated the progress in their strategic alliance designed to deliver process-manufacturing solutions and develop next-generation process control technologies, at the 11th annual ARC Forum in Orlando

recently. Formed in December 2004, the alliance aims to provide comprehensive solutions for plant engineering, operations and management to customers with a mix of process and discrete automation tasks, using Endress+Hauser's measurement devices and the Rockwell Automation integrated control and information architecture. The collaboration has focused on three key strategic initiatives: technology innovation, integrated asset management and coordinated engineering services.

The two have been promoting field device tool/device type manager (FDT/DTM) technology that provides a single interface to devices residing on multiple field and control networks. They also support a range of standard bus technologies and have several board level positions, including the HART Communication Foundation, Fieldbus Foundation, FDT Group and ODVA.