GI-Cell, IVI sign MOU to develop next-generation COVID-19 vaccine

Aims to prioritize supply to Korea & developing countries by developing a vaccine that accommodates mass supply, mutation response, safety, patient convenience

From left: Dr. Jae Chan Park, Director of Discovery Team and Dr. Dr. Chun-pho Hong, CEO from GI-Cell; Dr. Jerome Kim, Director General, and Dr. Manki Song, Deputy Director General from IVI at the MOU signing ceremony at IVI headquarters.

SEOUL, REPUBLIC OF KOREA, January 26, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- - To cooperate in clinical development of COVID-19 vaccine candidate
- GI-Cell aims to prioritize supplying to Korea and developing countries by developing a vaccine that accommodates mass supply, viral mutation response, safety, convenience of patients

GI-Cell, an affiliate of GI-Innovation, a biotechnology company for cell therapy development, signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the International Vaccine Institute (IVI) to develop a COVID-19 vaccine candidate.

An MOU signing ceremony was held at IVI headquarters on January 25 with Dr. Myoung-ho Jang, Chairman of GI Group, and Dr. Chun-pyo Hong, CEO of GI-Cell, as well as IVI's Director General Dr. Jerome Kim, and Deputy Director General of Science Dr. Manki Song in attendance. Under this agreement, GI-Cell will work with IVI on the clinical development of its COVID-19 vaccine candidate.

Currently, GI-Cell is developing a COVID-19 vaccine GIC-1114/1114m using GI-COV-VAX, its proprietary protein vaccine development platform. GIC-1114/1114m can not only generate neutralizing antibodies but also induce T-cell responses against SARS-CoV-2 that will hopefully provide better protection against future mutant COVID-19 viruses and is designed to significantly increase the duration of protection. A monkey experiment has confirmed that a single dose induces neutralizing antibody and T-cell responses, which is considered advantageous compared

to other products in terms of public health benefit, convenience, side-effects and cost.

In particular, with the aim of receiving approval on Phase 1/2 clinical trial in the second half of this year, GIC-1114/1114m will be formulated as multivalent subunit vaccine, a method that is relatively safe and easier to store than other COVID-19 vaccine development techniques.

“As a next-generation vaccine combining two antigens, we hope that GI-Cell’s COVID-19 vaccine will be able to address various mutations and mutants. We also hope to overcome the polarization of vaccine supply around the world by producing enough vaccine for 2 billion people,” said Dr. Myoung-ho Jang, Chairman of GI Group and the vaccine’s discoverer. “Through joint research and clinical development with talented researchers at IVI, we will successfully develop a safe and effective vaccine for humanity.”

IVI Director General Dr. Jerome Kim said, “IVI is pleased to partner with GI-Cell to test novel technology to develop a COVID-19 vaccine. The world needs sufficient supply of safe and effective vaccines to end the pandemic and should be better prepared for evolving mutations of the COVID-19 virus. IVI will continue to expand collaboration with partners around the world to accelerate innovative vaccine technology.”

Meanwhile, GI-Innovation, GI-Cell’s parent company that exchanged an MOU with IVI in April last year, is actively conducting R&D activities to develop a COVI-19 vaccine adjuvant based on bilateral collaboration.

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About the International Vaccine Institute (IVI)

The International Vaccine Institute (IVI) is a nonprofit inter-governmental organization established in 1997 at the initiative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Headquartered in Seoul, South Korea, IVI was the first international organization hosted by Korea. IVI has 36 signatory countries and the World Health Organization (WHO) on its treaty, including Korea, Sweden, India, and Finland as state funders.

Our mandate is to make vaccines available and accessible for the world’s most vulnerable people. We focus on infectious diseases of global health importance such as cholera, typhoid, shigella, salmonella, schistosomiasis, chikungunya, group A strep, Hepatitis A, HPV, TB, HIV, MERS, COVID-19, as well as antimicrobial resistance. For more information, please visit https://www.ivi.int

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