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Bangalore: In line with its strategy to expand the company's industrial footprint in India, Royal Philips Electronics commenced operations at its first greenfield manufacturing facility for imaging systems in the country. Located in Chakan, near Pune, 200 kilometers east of Mumbai, the Philips Development and Manufacturing Center will play an essential role in Philips' commitment to locally develop and produce meaningful products and solutions that help improve access to healthcare for people in India and other growth geographies.

With this multimillion euro investment, Philips has reinforced and optimized its production capacity in India. The facility will focus on diagnostic and interventional imaging solutions, initially developed for the Indian market and then for global markets. These solutions will primarily target cardiology (catheterization lab) and radiology (general X-ray) applications. The first products to be manufactured in the facility will be diagnostic X-Ray systems and the Allura FC - Philips' first India developed catheterization lab. The Allura FC is used in the diagnosis and minimally-invasive treatment of cardiovascular disease, one of the leading causes of death in India. Both products are aimed at the value segment in India and abroad.

"This plant is an example of how Philips can combine its technology strengths and market knowledge to manufacture products for a healthier India," said Mr Rajeev Chopra, managing director & vice chairman, Philips India. "The Pune facility is producing X-ray and cath-lab equipment backed by Philips quality that is affordable for tier-two and tier-three towns and rural markets."

The Pune facility was specifically designed with manufacturing flexibility in mind so that it can quickly adapt to changing market and product needs. Many of the products and components developed in Pune can also serve the needs of mature markets looking to replace or upgrade entry-level diagnostic devices.

"The opening of the Pune manufacturing facility is further proof of Philips' commitment to innovation in India," said Gene Saragnese, CEO Imaging Systems at Philips Healthcare. "In order to make a difference in this market, we need local expertise, low-cost manufacturing capacity and close relationships with our customers. Equally exciting, several demanding customers in global markets are already using our 'Designed and Made in India' products, and the feedback is very positive."

Philips conducted in-depth research to understand the on-the-ground requirements in India and worked closely with healthcare partners to gain better insight into their 'Made in India' needs. This research indicated that several factors, including low operating costs, energy-efficiency, easy serviceability and support for high patient volumes, are critical to increasing healthcare access in India and thereby improving patient outcomes. The Pune facility will deliver this type of 'Designed for India' product, enabling healthcare providers in the country to provide care to those communities who have not had access to high-quality healthcare in the past.

"India and other growth geographies have unique needs," said Mr Krishna Kumar, president, Philips Healthcare India. "We must meet the criteria that healthcare professionals demand in these growing markets, such as durability, dealing with interrupted power supplies, limited radiology technician time per patient, fast and easy-to-read diagnostic output, and affordability. Our 'Designed and Made' in India products tick all these boxes."

In 2008, Philips initiated the expansion of its industrial and commercial footprint in India with the acquisition of Alpha X-ray Technologies and Meditronics, leading manufacturers of cardiovascular X-ray solutions and general X-ray systems, respectively. This enabled Philips to expand its portfolio and deliver lower cost products that meet the growing needs of customers in India and other global markets.