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Ashland opens new Care Specialties Technical Center in Mumbai

Adds to Ashland's global network of research and development laboratories dedicated to the personal and home care markets

Mumbai, India - Ashland Specialty Ingredients, a commercial unit of Ashland Inc., today dedicated a new Care Specialties Technical Center in Mumbai, India, to better support producers of personal and home care products in India and Southeast Asia. The state-of-the-art facility at Jaswanti Landmark, located in the heart of Mumbai, will serve as a focal point for the research and development (R&D) work Ashland conducts on behalf of customers, with operations in the region. Activities at the new facility will center on bringing new personal and home care innovations to market and providing technical support that may be required to meet consumers' rising expectations for higher-performing products.

Presiding over the opening ceremony, John E. Panichella, group operating officer and president, Ashland Specialty Ingredients, said with approximately 15-percent year-over-year growth in personal care expenditures, India is a market that increasingly requires the formulating expertise of Ashland's technical team.

"Looking at the number of requests for assistance from companies in India over the past several years, it is obvious there are a number of advantages, for both Ashland and our customers, with a local technical team in Mumbai. Today, we dedicate the new Ashland Care Specialties Technical Center to all of the companies in the region who have asked for our help in driving new products to market - products that will better support changing consumer needs in India, the Philippines, Singapore and Malaysia," he said.

Principle among the activities in Mumbai is collaboration with marketers and manufacturers on new product innovations directed at consumer needs in the region. In addition, the Mumbai technical team will provide preservative efficacy studies and general formulation support upon request. The center will also serve as headquarters for key account managers in India and as a base of operations for distributor training and technical seminars.

"The opening of our Care Specialties Technical Center in Mumbai reflects our vision of aligning our R&D resources to support our customers' innovation in personal and home care in this emerging market," said Linda Foltis, vice president, R&D, Care Specialties. She added that the Mumbai facility has dedicated formulation laboratories to hair, skin, oral and home care; controlled environment laboratories for measurement science to support claims substantiation; a microbiology laboratory for preservative optimization and micro challenge test; consumer science laboratories including a hair salon; a laboratory designed for customer collaborations; and a fully equipped training room.

Global network

The Mumbai technical center expands Ashland's global network of R&D and technical support facilities dedicated to the advancement of personal and home care products. The new facility and 10 others around the world include centers of excellence in the United States, France, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and China, and technical laboratories in Germany, Turkey, Brazil, Mexico and Argentina.

According to Nandkumar Dhekne, vice president, Asia Pacific, Ashland Specialty Ingredients, adding a technical center in Mumbai will prove beneficial for the Indian and global market. "With some of the most sophisticated technical talent residing right here in Mumbai, we expect the Mumbai technical center to serve customers well in India and Southeast Asia. We also anticipate that the Mumbai technical center will simultaneously generate great ideas that will be channeled back into our global innovation funnel. We look forward to serving our customers in the region, but more than that, we look forward to contributing new ideas that lend credence to personal and home care products of distinction wherever they are needed," he said.

With close to 2 billion consumers in the region, India and Southeast Asia are home to one of the fastest-growing populations in the world. Ashland is committed to making the strategic investments necessary to develop innovations that reflect the trends and requirements of personal and home care trends in this area. The opening of the Mumbai technical center is part of the company's commitment to serving this need and reinforcing its market leadership as a global ingredients innovator.

About Ashland Specialty Ingredients

Ashland Specialty Ingredients offers industry-leading products, technologies and resources for solving formulation and product performance challenges in key markets including personal care, pharmaceutical, food and beverage, coatings and energy. Using natural, synthetic and semi-synthetic polymers derived from plant and seed extract, cellulose ethers and vinyl pyrrolidones, Ashland Specialty Ingredients offers comprehensive and innovative solutions for today's demanding consumer

and industrial applications.

About Ashland Inc.

In more than 100 countries, the people of Ashland Inc. (NYSE: ASH) provide the specialty chemicals, technologies and insights to help customers create new and improved products for today and sustainable solutions for tomorrow. Our chemistry is at work every day in a wide variety of markets and applications, including architectural coatings, automotive, construction, energy, food and beverage, personal care, pharmaceutical, tissue and towel, and water treatment. Visit ashland.com to see the innovations we offer through our four commercial units - Ashland Specialty Ingredients, Ashland Water Technologies, Ashland Performance Materials and Ashland Consumer Markets.

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