BioMolecular Therapeutics, a New Global Player in RNAi Therapeutics, Launches Company and Adds Key Advisors

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SEOUL, South Korea, Oct. 19 /PRNewswire/ -- BioMolecular Therapeutics, Inc. (BMT, Inc.), a new Seoul-based RNAi therapeutics company with a proprietary technology designed to reduce significantly deleterious side effects triggered by conventional siRNA, announced that it has launched its global operations. The company is currently developing a novel RNAi therapeutic for age-related macular degeneration (AMD), based on its asymmetric shorter-duplex siRNA (asiRNA) technology, originally published in *Molecular Therapy* in 2009 as a featured article. Early studies suggest that the asiRNA technology will allow the application of RNAi therapeutics in fields where innate immune stimulation needs to be avoided, such as AMD. The goal of an RNAi therapeutic is to target specifically only the gene or genes implicated in the disease. In AMD, activation of the innate immune response could elicit off-target effects, potentially hastening the progression of the disease. Two previous clinical trials using traditional siRNA as an AMD therapeutic were terminated at Phase II and III because of unintended activation of the patients' immune response.

BMT's leadership team includes Dong-ki Lee, Ph.D., the inventor of the company's proprietary technology, and Sun woo Hong, Ph.D., BMT's founding CEO. Dr. Dong-ki Lee is associate professor of chemistry at Sungkyunkwan University in Suwon, Korea, and the recipient of the prestigious Global Research Laboratory grant from the Korean government for the development of novel RNAi therapeutics. Dr. Sun Woo Hong has strong expertise in siRNA and genomics research, and was research professor at Dongguk University in Seoul, Korea. The company has also named two key advisors, Jayakrishna Ambati, M.D., ophthalmologist and professor at University of Kentucky Medical School, and Johannes Fruehauf, M.D., Ph.D., an experienced biotechnology executive and a specialist in RNAi therapeutics.

Dr. Ambati will serve as head of BMT's
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