

Japan firms keen to collaborate with Indian pharma

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Singapore: Japanese companies are keen to collaborate with pharmaceutical companies in India. A delegation of pharmaceutical firms from Japan's Toyama prefecture was in New Delhi on June 13 for a meeting with the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) in India. Toyama prefecture is an industrial cluster on Honshu Island of Japan.

Mr Yasuhiko Shioi, president, Kokando leader of the Japanese pharmaceutical delegation to India indicated that Japanese companies were keen to collaborate in trade and technology development.

Addressing the FICCI meeting, he said Indian and Japanese companies could also undertake joint market research and product development for world market as also jointly develop new technologies.

Dr Shoichiro Hamano, president, Hamano International, gave a presentation on 'Pharmaceutical Business in Toyama'. Toyama is recognized as the 'Cluster City of Pharmaceutical Industry' in Japan. "We are looking for long term partnerships with Indian companies. There is immense scope of exporting Japanese products to Indian market and similarly Indian products can be traded in the Japanese market," he said.

There are 89 pharmaceutical manufacturers with approximately 9,000 employees in Japan. Their annual pharmaceutical output is \$ 76 billion.

While making a presentation on 'Overview of Indian Pharmaceutical Industry', Mr Daara Patel, secretary general, Indian Drug Manufacturers' Association (IDMA), said pharmaceutical is a knowledge-based industry and India is one of the world's largest and most developed in this sector. He highlighted that India's growing respect and legal or regulatory framework for IPR, favorable economic policies and availability of huge talent pool for sustaining and growing operations are making India an attractive choice for global pharma companies for investment, tie-ups, mergers and acquisitions.

Because of patent expirations of blockbuster drugs, Indian firms are expected to actively participate in the production of generic version of these products. Indian companies are also ready with generic version of biotech drugs. Therefore, India will be able to maintain a large basket of quality affordable generics with assured safety and efficacy.

Mr Patel stated that generics market in Japan stands at \$3 billion growing at 8 percent in a total market of 120 billion. The Japanese government has been highly receptive to generic substitution. India is eager to support Japan by providing affordable quality generics with assured safety and efficacy. India's Commerce Ministry has set up the India-Japan Pharma Alliance (IJPA) in Japan under the aegis of Pharmexcil, which was co-founded by IDMA. The increase in generic dispensing is about 20 percent on a year over year basis.

Mr Atul Shunglu, assistant secretary general, FICCI, said, "India's pharmaceutical sector is gaining its position as a global leader, poised to grow from \$21.7 billion currently, to \$36.7 billion by 2015. Also, globally, it ranks fourth in volume terms and 12th in value. The Indian pharma sector produces 600 generic brands, 600 therapeutic categories, and manufactures more than 500 different APIs. While generics continue to dominate the market; patent-protected products are expected to constitute 10 per cent of the pie till 2015. Several multinationals are already set to launch patented drugs across India." He assured the delegation that the synergy between large Indian consumer market and technology and manufacturing strength from Toyama can bring a win-win situation.