

China begins a nationwide 3 month pharma probe

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Singapore: After increasing probes into operations of pharmaceutical multinational operations in China, the country's State Administration for Industry and Commerce has launched a nationwide three month investigations. The Chinese government regulator would be probing the bribery in the country's medical sector by international pharmaceutical firms.

The Chinese government, which is already involved in investigations that target about 60 healthcare companies, launched the latest probe in Chinese industrial and business centers last week.

The State Administration for Industry and Commerce, which aims at reducing bribery in the swiftly expanding industry in China, announced the nationwide investigation following British drug maker GlaxoSmithKline's Chinese pricing scandal.

Several high ranking Chinese officials working for the company are facing allegations of bribing doctors to boost drug sales. Further, companies like Novartis, Sanofi, Lilly, AstraZeneca, UCB and others are facing several allegations, for which investigations are underway.

Officials have said that the investigation will be targeted at price-fixing and other anti-competitive practices that, along with serious fraud and corruption, which are thought to be major issues for the Chinese pharmaceutical market.