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Boehringer Ingelheim witnesses highest ever annual investment in R&D in 2020 at 3.7 Bn EUR

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For 2021, Boehringer Ingelheim expects to achieve a slight year-on-year increase in net sales on a comparable basis



Germany-based pharmaceutical firm Boehringer Ingelheim stepped up its investments in R&D significantly in 2020 in pursuit of innovative medicines and therapies for diseases for which no satisfactory treatments are available. In particular, efforts to research potential COVID-19 related therapies were accelerated. The company spent 3.7 billion EUR on R&D, 7 per cent more than in the previous year. This represents the highest annual investment in R&D in the 136-year history of the research-driven biopharmaceutical company.

2020 was overall a good year for Boehringer Ingelheim, although the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic were omnipresent. On one hand, the Company discontinued the development of an anti-inflammatory AOC3 inhibitor for the treatment of patients with moderate to severe non-proliferative diabetic retinopathy, while on the other, Boehringer Ingelheim started two Phase II trials for treatments of borderline personality disorder and major depressive disorder and had positive results from a Phase II clinical trial in patients with cognitive impairment associated with schizophrenia.

Also, the company completed several acquisitions in 2020 to selectively expand its portfolio. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and a more challenging industry environment with increasing price pressure in several key markets is expected to have an impact on Boehringer Ingelheim's results in 2021.

Assuming that the approved vaccines and other medicines currently undergoing the approval process help curb the COVID-19 pandemic, the company expects strong general market growth for prescription pharmaceuticals.

For 2021, Boehringer Ingelheim expects to achieve a slight year-on-year increase in net sales on a comparable basis. The company anticipates a significant increase in R&D investments for new medicines and also expects to continue its high level of commitment to research on medicines that will help alleviate the effects of the COVID-19 disease.

As far as India is concerned, through 2020, across therapy areas, the company deployed several digital outreach initiatives and was able to cover over 39,000+ HCPs through various digital initiatives, aiming to take the number to 40,000+ in 2021.

In January this year, Vani Manja was appointed as the Country Managing Director of Boehringer Ingelheim India. Formerly the Global Head of Boehringer Ingelheim's Go-To-Market and Business Steering organization in Germany, Vani has now assumed the responsibility for the company's businesses in India and neighboring markets.

She joined Boehringer Ingelheim in the US in 2011, working across Strategy & Operations, Marketing and Sales leadership roles before moving to Ingelheim in 2016 as Regional Business Manager for Japan. Her global experience in healthcare spans nearly two decades across McKinsey & Company, Becton Dickinson and Boehringer Ingelheim, and is characterised by strong global mobility and cross-functional leadership assignments across healthcare and management consulting.

"Boehringer Ingelheim India aspires to be amongst the top five multinational pharmaceutical companies in India over the next few years. We have been enabling access to our innovator products to patients across India and the neighbouring markets in the diabetes, cardiovascular, stroke and respiratory diseases segments. Our plan in these therapy areas is to build sustainable partnerships to ensure an ecosystem of access and care for patients. We have initiated action in that direction. In addition, Boehringer Ingelheim India's Animal Health business, which focuses on advanced, preventive health solutions for Pets and Poultry, aims to more than double the sales over the coming five years. I am looking forward to working with our customers, partners and leaders in healthcare to improve the lives of patients through innovative therapies, after all the years of remotely following the huge strides India has taken towards developing healthcare", says Vani, in a recent interaction with BioSpectrum India.