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"Indian companies can play a major role in shaping of global pharma and biopharma industry"

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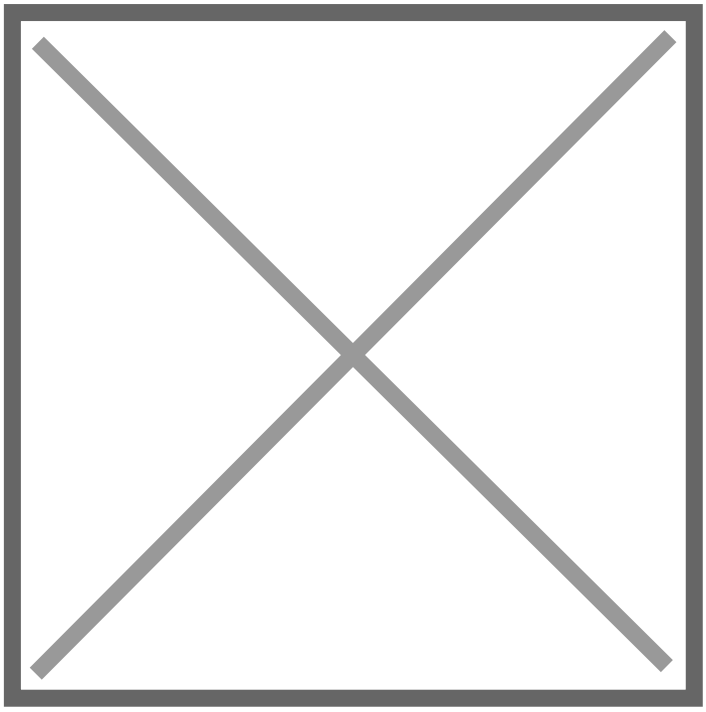

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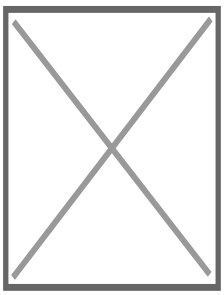

-Jeremy Layman, vice president, sales and marketing, Asia Pacific, West Pharmaceutical Services, Australia

West Pharmaceutical Services is a key player in the supply of components for injectable pharmaceutical primary packaging and associated delivery systems. In an e-mail interview to BioSpectrum, Jeremy Layman, who was recently in India, spoke about the opportunities in India and the Asia Pacific countries. Excerpts of the interview:

How do you see the market opportunities in the Asia Pacific region in general and India in particular?

The market dynamics for Asia-Pacific are rapidly changing from being a net importer of formulated pharmaceuticals and biopharmaceuticals to becoming a net exporter. Many countries, China and India in particular, have already advanced manufacturing facilities to produce pharmaceuticals and biopharmaceuticals locally and, in this way, can avoid the need for expensive imports. However, India is already beyond merely import substitution and is the basis of a thriving hub to produce pharmaceuticals and biopharmaceuticals for export to the regulated markets of North America and Europe.

India has the infrastructure, capital, manufacturing capacity, education system and that special "entrepreneurial cleverness" to become a major global source of generic and biogeneric pharmaceuticals. India is preparing itself to play a major role as the regulated markets become more accepting of biogenerics. And, of course, it does not stop there; already Indian companies are well advanced with their own R&D projects particularly in the biopharmaceutical space that will challenge the traditional powerhouses of pharmaceutical R&D in N America and Europe.

Who are the other global players providing products like stoppers, vials and seals of international standards?

West Pharmaceutical Services is the global leader in the supply of primary packaging closures for injectable pharmaceuticals. Our expertise built over many years and our global reach as well as factories in many parts of the World including Asia, makes West Pharmaceutical Service s a compelling "partner" for pharmaceuticals and biopharmaceuticals companies. In addition to products, our support for our customers includes a comprehensive knowledge of standards and regulations internationally, laboratory testing to support registrations and a desire to contribute to the success of our customers, both in their local markets and on the international stage.

How do you see the competition for your products from both Indian companies as well as from other global companies?

West Pharmaceutical Services is careful never to underestimate its competition and, indeed, has a healthy respect for its competitors locally and internationally. Even so, knowledge and expertise cannot be acquired easily; years of experience, innovation and market leadership means we are confident that West Pharmaceutical Services can best meet the changing needs of customers for primary packaging, technical support and risk management. Really, it's about focus; West Pharmaceutical Services is focused on very specific product groups in very specific industries and our goal is to always be a more valuable "partner" to our customers than any of our rivals.

Considering the growing biopharma market in India and China, what are your future plans in terms of expansion in these two big markets?

We recently announced an investment of $80 million to set up two manufacturing facilities in China. We hope to be able to announce similar initiatives in other countries and, in particular, in India where we have a great respect for the local industry and the investments and programs being implemented in order to make India a formidable supplier of biopharmaceuticals globally. You have in India, domestic companies that have the energy, commitment and entrepreneurial cleverness to play a major role in the future shaping of the global pharmaceuticals and biopharmaceuticals industry.

West Pharmaceutical Services' purpose is to support its customers to achieve their goals globally and locally. We already have strong relationships with many Indian manufacturers and we hope to make appropriate investments that will enable us to play an even bigger role in supporting the industry in India in the future.

Narayan Kulkarni