

Greater R&D Collaboration Theme of US-India Biopharma Summit

By a Staff Reporter

BOSTON, Mass. — The recent U.S.-India BioPharma & Health-care Summit 2010, organized by the USA-India Chamber of Commerce

here, attracted over 350 senior biopharma executives, investors and academic leaders, becoming one of the leading biopharma events for senior R&D executives involved with drug discovery and

development, said a press release to **India-West**.

Greater R&D collaboration was the theme of the day, according to Karun Rishi, president of USAIC. Industry leaders rang-

ing from Pfizer's Martin Mackay to Merck's Merv Turner to Sanofi-Aventis' Marc Cluzel to Johnson & Johnson's Paul Stoffels agreed that building trust among big pharmaceutical companies, and with other stakeholders including academics and Indian service providers, is key to harnessing wider networks, improving pipeline attrition and bringing effective drugs to market faster and cheaper.

Sanofi Aventis executive VP and global head of R&D Marc Cluzel announced that Sanofi has been active recently in Asia, signing a deal with India's Glenmark for transient receptor potential vanilloid antagonist molecules, with the Mumbai-based pharma getting \$20 million up front and milestone payments that could bring in \$305 million more. Sanofi also wants to turn its "preferred partners" into "preferred networks," Cluzel said.

Mervyn Turner, chief strategy officer for Merck & Co. called business model innovation the true strength of India. That strength matches an acute need, Turner said, as big pharmaceutical firms understand that truly innovative drugs are innovative only if they reach the right patients.

"We have to think very hard about a number of approaches to innovation in the business model, to surround our products with business and services, and to make sure that the molecules we do discover reach patients all around the world who can benefit from them," Turner explained.

"India has a phenomenal track record in innovating in the business model," Turner said, and cited as an example the Nano, Tata's low-cost, four-passenger car, launched in India in 2009.

"I am quite sure that innovations in the healthcare delivery model will be made in India, and they will turn out to be transportable into other parts of the world," Turner said. Life science companies must develop products that are portable, rugged, unconventional and easy to use in order to succeed in India

and other emerging markets.

Seed innovation in Indian academia has been suboptimal, said Kiran Majumdar, chairman of Biocon. To stay ahead of the innovation curve, Biocon has actively collaborated with John Hopkins. Huge amounts of learning can be shared between the United States and Indian academic institutions, said Majumdar, as she announced endowment scholarships for post-doctoral candidates at the Koch Institute of MIT.



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Karun Rishi, president of the USA-India Chamber of Commerce, addressing the summit.



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