

ANDREW WITTY/GLAXOSMITHKLINE

We are actively looking at growing organically and inorganically

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The world's second largest drug maker by sales, **GlaxoSmithKline Plc (GSK)**, is actively looking at buying firms in India as part of its growth strategy, chief executive officer (CEO) **Andrew Witty** said in an interview. Witty was in India on Monday, his first visit to the country after taking over as CEO. Edited excerpts:

Are you emphasizing a major shift in your business model in India?

India continues to be a critical market for GSK. Our Indian model was always a combination of branded generics and innovative brands and it will continue to be so. We tried different approaches and the success has been phenomenal. We have introduced several new vaccines, a few even produced here, and there will be more from our development pipeline.



ABHIJIT BHATLEKAR/MINT

Growth strategy: *Witty says the firm will always have its key focus on the branded business and will also look at external research collaboration.*

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GSK India has a cash reserve of at least Rs1,500 crore. How do you plan to leverage this money?

We continue to look at opportunities to use cash on our books. As part of our strategy, we are actively looking at growing organically and inorganically. These opportunities will be evaluated based on a variety

of factors, including the strategic nature of the fit.

Is GSK in talks with some Indian drug makers to acquire them?

I will be dishonest if I say that the company is not looking for acquiring assets in India. But we are not interested in pure generics play and such models followed by Ranbaxy (Laboratories Ltd) and Dr Reddy's (Laboratories Ltd). We may look at opportunities including brands

in pharmaceuticals and consumer healthcare that would offer real value for money.

Many top drug makers have few products in the pipeline and there aren't many high-value molecules coming out of their drug discovery activities. Will GSK face similar difficulties by focusing mainly on its branded business?

We are confident that our current research spend of £3.95 billion (around Rs27,018 crore) a year is capable to support our branded business portfolio. The company has at least a dozen late-stage molecules coming up for the market. GSK will always have its key focus on the branded business. We will also look at external research collaboration.

Many of your rivals have started a separate generic business model in India.

Almost all pharmaceutical companies have adopted a slightly varying model to approach the branded generic business. GSK's strategy is about access and making high-quality medicines available to the maximum number of patients. And this strategy is here to stay.

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