

## Sandoz to shut Maharashtra plant by December 2016

### OUR BUREAU

Mumbai, July 10

Drug major Sandoz will discontinue operations at its Turbhe site (Maharashtra) by end December 2016, as part of global plans to optimise its manufacturing network.

The Turbhe sites employs 170 people and manufactures antibiotics and active pharmaceutical ingredients (API), a note from the company said. Sandoz is the generic drugs arm of pharmaceutical company Novartis.

"Sandoz will refocus its manufacturing set up in India as part of its strategy to optimise

its global manufacturing network, while continuing to serve patients in India," the company said. As part of the plan, Sandoz will focus its manufacturing at other sites which employ over 1,300 employees and produce over three billion tablets and 180 tonnes of API annually, it added. The company has two manufacturing facilities at Kalwe and Mahad.

"We made the announcement today to ensure our associates are informed as soon as possible about our decisions and to ensure a transparent process," Vivek Devaraj, Sandoz Country Head in India, said in

the statement. "We are committed to managing the process with care, sensitivity and respect for all impacted associates at Turbhe, to supporting our customers through the transition and to meeting patient needs for access to important medicines," he added.

In 2012, the company had shut down its formulations and API development centres, respectively. Drug companies have in the past shut down plants in India as a fallout of global strategies, mergers and acquisitions. At present, Pfizer's plant in Thane faces an uncertain future.

Company