

# Sun Pharma open to buys in Europe, says Chairman

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Sun Pharmaceutical Industries Ltd is open to acquisition opportunities in Europe and globally as it seeks to add products and extend its geographical reach, Chairman Israel Makov said.

"We can look at Europe, we can look at other areas of the world," Makov said. "You know, you have a list of priorities, but eventually you have a list of opportunities too. While we may have geographical priorities, you naturally have a list of opportunities that come along the way."

The drugmaker, which gets

more than 80 per cent of its sales from the US and India, is looking for acquisitions in Europe including a possible takeover of German generic-drug maker Stada Arzneimittel AG, people familiar with the matter said in August. Sun has sought to raise about \$1 billion for a European deal and executives toured Europe to meet with potential targets, Bloomberg reported at the time. Makov declined to comment specifically on whether Sun is considering a Stada acquisition.

Sun has followed a strategy of acquiring under-performing or unprofitable companies and merging their

operations into the Mumbai-based drugmaker. Sun bought controlling stakes in 10 companies in the past 14 years, including the acquisition of a majority stake in Israel's Taro Pharmaceutical Industries Ltd.

## SPECIALTY FOCUS

The company would like to become a major global player in the specialty-pharma business, said Makov, who, as former chief executive officer of Teva Pharmaceutical Industries Ltd helped turn that company into the world's biggest generic-drug maker. "We are looking both for companies that will enhance our

specialty-pharma focus and our geographical reach."

Sun shares have risen 49 per cent in the past year, giving the company a market value of Rs 76,600 crore.

Sun, which owns 61 per cent of Taro, said August 13 that its seeking to take the Yakum-based company private by buying the remaining shares at \$39.50 apiece in a deal approved by Taros board. Minority shareholders voiced opposition to the deal, saying Taro is worth more. The stock has gained 18 per cent since the August announcement to \$48.48 as Taro said second-quarter sales rose 16 per cent to \$161 million.

Industry