

Cipla targets US with Glaxo's Advair

Cipla shot to prominence a decade ago by selling AIDS drugs for \$1 a day in Africa. The Indian generics maker is seeking a bigger slice of the US market with cheaper medicines for asthma and HIV. Cipla's top target is a version of GlaxoSmithKline's asthma treatment Advair. It plans to submit an application to the US Food and Drug Administration this year for an aerosol version, Chairman Yusuf Hamied said in an interview. While the US patent on the drug expired in 2010, Glaxo still has protections on the inhalers used to deliver it, and the US is making generic drug makers prove their devices are as good. "Generic Advair — if Cipla gets it through — will change the face of Cipla," Hamied said, without specifying when he expects to start selling his version in the US or if his company could be the first to do so. Hamied's goal is to make Cipla a significant player in the US by 2020, with 20 per cent of sales coming from there, compared with about nine per cent now. In the HIV market, he plans to bring cheaper copies of top-selling Gilead Sciences medicines to the US. Mumbai-based Cipla had global sales of about \$1.6 billion last financial year. **BLOOMBERG**

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