

Another Indian gets global MNC role

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Zubair Ahmed (pictured), senior vice-president, Indian sub-continent, GlaxoSmithKline Consumer Healthcare (GSKCH), has been named head of the Asia-Pacific, West Asia and Africa regions for the proposed joint venture between the company and pharmaceutical firm Novartis' over-the-counter (OTC) business.

In April, GSK and Novartis had said they'd be bringing their consumer health care businesses in a JV, to operate under the GSKCH name and be run by the management belonging to the latter, headed by Emma Walmsley. GSK would own 63.5 per cent of the new venture, retaining full control of operations in India and Nigeria.

Ahmed, who joined GSKCH in 2007, would in his new role oversee a little over 100 countries, a significant step up from the three markets of India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh he currently handles.

"The role expansion has been announced as a part of the integration planning process for the proposed JV with Novartis," GSKCH stated on Wednesday. Ahmed, it added, is to take over his new role following closure of the deal, expected in the first half of 2015. Ahmed, 60, joins a growing band of Indian-origin executives who are either heading international companies or taking plum assignments abroad. In the past month and a half, Ramesh Tainwala, chief of operations at Samsonite, was promoted to the position of global chief executive (CEO). Manu



Anand, India head at snacks and beverage maker Mondelez, was elevated to president, regional category team, chocolates, for the Asia-Pacific (Apac) region. Hemant Bakshi, executive director, home & personal care, Hindustan Unilever, was promoted to executive vice-president (EVP) at Unilever Indonesia. And, Colgate's India managing director (MD), Prabha Parameswaran, was elevated as president of its Africa and Eurasia division. Parallely, agricultural inputs major Monsanto elevated Shilpa Divekar Nirula as MD & CEO of the Indian subsidiary, beside additional charge of operations at Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka.

In a recent interaction, Tim Cofer, who is EVP & president at Mondelez, said: "India is important not only from a business point of view but also for its human resources. There are 35-40 Indian leaders within the Apac region at Mondelez and this number is growing."

A GSK spokesperson did not specify who would take over as the India MD of GSKCH once Ahmed took up his regional assignment.

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