

PhRMA objects to compulsory licence idea, shows concern over enforcement of patent laws

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Expressing concerns on many fronts including pending cases of patents in Indian courts and compulsory licence issue, the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA) has urged the Government to create a conducive environment for innovation so that India does not miss out the opportunities in the global competition.

After meeting with ministers, high-level officials, stakeholders including NGOs, PhRMA executive vice-president and the chief operating officer Christopher A Singer said here on Friday that the member companies of the organisation were concerned about many things in India.

“We welcome the Patent law of India but there are many concerns. India has to build on the law with regard to the enforcement. It takes long time to resolve the cases and our companies lose out largely during this period. We have asked the government to find some way out like speedy disposal of cases or chances of injections. The policy makers should recognise the dampening effect of these cases. Another crucial thing was about the data protection so that the companies who spent huge sums on research should not lose out by parting with the data,” he said at a select media interaction.

“India has the potential to emerge as a leader in the pack, with right policies for innovation. It is globally competition and countries like Brazil, Singapore and China are seizing the opportunity and our member companies are going there. India also can be competitive with right policies and better regulatory frameworks,” he said.

On the issue of compulsory licence which is gaining momentum in India, Christopher said that it would prove to be counterproductive including in the domestic industry. “It is not the right option and at best it can impact just one percent of the market,” said PhRMA deputy vice president Nancy Adams.

Specifying that the organisation cannot legally force its members to lower prices of their drugs and the member companies were individually negotiating with the respective countries, the PhRMA leaders said India has to find a mechanism to ensure cheaper prices for drugs and their members were ready to cooperate with the government and other agencies for programmes like insurance coverage to make medicines affordable to Indians.

The delegation of PhRMA, representing a great number of leading MNCs from America, Europe and even Japan, had extensive discussions in Mumbai and Delhi with a host of leaders from the industry, government, NGOs, and also those from different Embassies based in India during their visit aimed at forging more partnerships with the stakeholders in India.