Asia has been nursing a reputation as a leading producer and exporter of electronics and other technologically sophisticated products in the world. According to the World Bank’s World Development Indicators online database, East and Southeast Asia accounted for more than 40% of the world’s combined GDP for exports of manufactured products in 2007. According to business research and consulting firm, Frost and Sullivan, Asia’s pharmaceutical market was valued at US$144 billion in 2007 and is expected to hit US$159.1 billion in 2008, growing at a rate of 10.5%. This forecast is set to make Asia’s drug manufacturers prominent players in the global pharmaceutical industry.

Other updates on the pharmaceutical trade in Asia include:
- Singapore is currently the hub for pharmaceutical manufacturing in Southeast Asia for Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (API). It also has some of the world’s most technologically advanced and state-of-the-art pharmaceutical manufacturing facilities. According to the Economic Development Board of Singapore (EDB), Singapore’s pharmaceutical manufacturing output rose 63.1% year-on-year in 2008.
- India is the fourth largest manufacturer of drugs in the world, home to more than 80 United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved facilities, a record held for any country outside of the US.
- Malaysia is developing a strong pharmaceutical production
base. According to Frost and Sullivan, more pharmaceutical manufacturers are looking to outsource or in-license their operations to Malaysia. The value of Malaysia’s pharmaceutical industry is expected to exceed US$1 billion by 2009 and reach US$1.4 billion by 2012, growing at over 11% a year.

Pharmaceutical giants are outsourcing a significant portion of their manufacturing and clinical research activities to Asia because of lower production costs, a highly educated workforce, growing expertise in chemical research, rising productivity and globally competitive prices.

“The growth in worldwide demand for affordable and safe pharmaceutical products has undoubtedly increased competition. Asia has core manufacturing competencies and a growing cost-effective, skilled manpower base, meaning that there are potential fruits to be reaped for the pharmaceutical manufacturing industry,” said Ms Michelle Lim, general manager of Reed Exhibitions.

She added: “As globalization drives the demand for affordable generics, there is pressure on pharmaceutical manufacturers to minimize costs and remain profitable; at the same time, these manufacturers need to meet international quality standards that will allow them to export their products to overseas markets.”

Reed Exhibitions is pleased to work alongside ISPE, the society of choice for 25,000 pharmaceutical manufacturing professionals in more than 90 countries. The ISPE Singapore Conference, held in conjunction with INTERPHEX Asia 2008, is Asia’s most comprehensive pharmaceutical manufacturing conference with one special focus track on Pharma Project Lifecycle and seven industry tracks covering topics from regulatory to Quality by Design (QbD). One highlight of the ISPE Conference are visits to some of the world’s most technologically sophisticated pharmaceutical plants which are located in Singapore.

INTERPHEX Asia 2008, held from June 2 – 3, 2008, and the ISPE Singapore Conference from June 1 – 3, 2008, at the SUNTEC Convention Centre, will showcase pharmaceutical manufacturing products, technologies and services from more than 80 international suppliers from 14 countries worldwide. The event will also be the meeting ground for international suppliers, industry regulators and pharmaceutical manufacturers to network, exchange views, as well as explore collaborations and business opportunities.

“The International Society for Pharmaceutical Engineering (ISPE) Singapore Conference is a broad-spectrum conference in Asia where senior professionals from the whole pharmaceutical processing chain representing the region will congregate and address the latest regulatory, technological and practical issues,” said Gus Abdallah, former president of the ISPE Singapore Affiliate. “With a panel of more than 35 international and regional speakers, the ISPE Singapore Conference offers ideas and solutions that can help Asian manufacturers remain competitive by improving operations, ensuring quality and meeting international standards.”

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