



## Briton to head Indian drugs giant

**BY LAUREN MILLS**

BRIAN TEMPEST, a veteran of Britain's pharmaceutical industry, is to take over as chief executive at Ranbaxy, India's largest drugs group, becoming one of the first non-Indians to head a leading company on the subcontinent.

Tempest, who runs Ranbaxy's pharmaceuticals division based in New Delhi, joined the group in 1995, having worked for Glaxo and Fisons. He will take over from DS Brar, Ranbaxy's chief executive for the past five years, who is due to leave the company in July.

Tempest is aiming to drive forward Brar's ambitious plans to build Ranbaxy into an international, research-based pharmaceuticals group.

Tempest said: "The strategy of the company remains the same - to be a research-based pharmaceuticals company with annual sales of \$5bn by 2012. We have sales of approximately \$1bn now and we expect to become the fifth-largest generic drugs

company in the world by 2008/9."

In a further management change, Malvinder Singh will become a full-time director and replace Tempest as president of the pharmaceuticals division. He is one of two sons of the previous chairman, Parminder Singh, whose family is the largest single shareholder in Ranbaxy, with a 32 per cent stake.

There has been speculation in Indian business circles that the Singh clan was instrumental in Brar's departure in a bid to tighten its hold over one of India's leading companies.

Tempest added that the management changes would not affect Ranbaxy's recently agreed research alliance with GlaxoSmithKline.

In December, Ranbaxy was named as one of seven generic drugs manufacturers being sued by the National Health Service over alleged price fixing of antibiotics in the late 1990s. Ranbaxy and the six other firms have denied the allegations and are contesting the case vigorously.