



## **Nicholas Piramal Announces Drug Discovery and Development Agreement with Merck & Co., Inc.**

**Mumbai, India 19<sup>th</sup> November, 2007:** Nicholas Piramal India Limited ("NPIL") (NSE: NICOLASPIR, BSE: 500302) and Merck & Co., Inc., which operates in India through its subsidiary, MSD Pharmaceuticals Private Ltd, today announced a research and development collaboration agreement to discover and develop new drugs for two selected targets provided by Merck.

NPIL will be responsible for carrying out an integrated drug discovery program from hits to leads through pre-clinical candidate selection, followed by Investigational New Drug (IND)-enabling non-clinical studies and human clinical trials demonstrating proof-of-concept primarily for Oncology. Merck will have an option to advance the most promising drug candidates into late stage clinical trials and to commercialize these drug candidates. NPIL will be eligible to receive milestone payments associated with progress in the development of drug candidates of up to \$175 million per target, plus royalties on sales of any products resulting from the collaboration.

Commenting on the collaboration agreement, Dr. Swati Piramal, Director - Strategic Alliances & Communications, NPIL said: "The Merck-Nicholas Piramal research collaboration is a major step in bringing the cross-border synergies to drug development which should have cost, quality and time advantages and should benefit patients worldwide in reducing the burden of disease."

"Merck is excited to collaborate with a company with the discovery and development capabilities of NPIL," said Merv Turner, Ph.D., Senior Vice President, Worldwide Licensing and External Research at Merck. "This agreement furthers our strategy of building global alliances that expand and advance Merck's pipeline, especially in countries such as India with rapidly expanding drug discovery competencies"

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**About Nicholas Piramal India Limited:**

Nicholas Piramal India Limited ("NPIL") is one of India's largest pharmaceutical companies with a growth track record of 30% Revenues CAGR since 1988. The Company is currently ranked fourth in the Indian market with a diverse product portfolio spanning nine therapeutic areas. NPIL's had consolidated Revenues of US \$ 602 million in 2006-07. The Company has R&D capabilities in Discovery Research, Custom Chemical Synthesis, Process Innovation, and Drug Delivery Systems. It has world-class USFDA-approved formulations and API facilities without any 483s.

NPIL has a long track record of successful collaboration with innovator companies. Since early-2000, the Company has made significant investments in Discovery Research and Custom Manufacturing Operations (CMO) for Innovator Companies. Nicholas Piramal has a global CMO footprint across North America, Europe & Asia, and is committed to respecting Intellectual Property.

NPIL is listed in India on the Bombay Stock Exchange and the National Stock Exchange. For additional information or clarifications, please mail [investorrelations@nicholaspiramal.co.in](mailto:investorrelations@nicholaspiramal.co.in) or visit [www.nicholaspiramal.com](http://www.nicholaspiramal.com)

**About Merck & Co, Inc:**

Merck & Co., Inc. is a global research-driven pharmaceutical company dedicated to putting patients first. Established in 1891, Merck currently discovers, develops, manufactures and markets vaccines and medicines to address unmet medical needs. The company devotes extensive efforts to increase access to medicines through far-reaching programs that not only donate Merck medicines, but also help deliver them to the people who need them. Merck also publishes unbiased health information as a not-for-profit service. Merck operates in India through its subsidiary, MSD Pharmaceuticals Private Ltd.

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