

AiMeD welcomes promotion of domestic manufacturing of Medical Devices in country

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The Union Cabinet recently approved the schemes for promotion of the Domestic Manufacturing of Medical Devices in country



The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister, Narendra Modi has approved the following schemes recently for promotion of the Domestic Manufacturing of Medical Devices in country:

- The scheme on Promotion of Medical Device Parks for financing Common Infrastructure Facilities in 04 Medical Device Parks with financial implications of Rs. 400 crore.
- The Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme for promoting domestic manufacturing of medical devices with financial implications of Rs. 3,420 crore.

Applauding the Govt. and thanking the Prime Minister during a video conference Rajiv Nath, Forum Coordinator, AIMED on behalf of the Indian Medical Device Industry said "We congratulate the Government wholeheartedly for approving the much needed schemes for promotion of the Domestic Manufacturing of Medical Devices in country and thanked the Prime Minister for recognition of the need to have self-sufficiency in India in Medical Devices."

He appraised the Prime Minister of the steps being taken by DoP & NPPA & DoCA in addressing the accessibility to raw material issues which were holding back manufacturers from fully utilising their production capacities as well as the need for local administration at various states to recognise the need for medical devices to be treated as an essential product and no steps to be taken to hamper movement of men and materials to produce or sell them but instead to facilitate the import of raw materials and components by cargo airfreight if passenger flights were restricted as well as by continuing courier services.

“We are more than hopeful that these schemes announced would help boost local manufacturing and will accelerate medical devices manufacturing as a 'Make in India' enabler, make quality healthcare accessible and affordable for common masses, enable placing India among the top five medical devices manufacturing hubs worldwide and help end the 80-90 per cent import dependence forced upon us and an ever increasing import bill of over Rs 38,837 crore”, he opined

Such a visionary move by the Govt. will help address Indian National Healthcare security concerns – the inadequacy of which is being exposed in ongoing crisis to address the Coronavirus pandemic preparedness but the domestic industry was rising to the challenge to meet the health care needs of the country whether masks, gloves, sanitizers, injection syringes or ventilators and oxygen lines.

He stated, we further await policy announcement on the below vital issues of Indian Medical Devices Industry:

- must ensure consumers are not hurt by shortages by monitoring of prices at import or at ex-factory level and of the MRP and proactive steps taken to regulate prices but not overly so that it leads to further shortages and become non remunerative for manufacturers and traders.
- Need to Regulate all Medical Devices under a Patients' Safety Medical Devices Law separate from Drugs to protect patients and aid responsible manufacturing.
- Restriction on Import of Pre-owned Medical Equipment
- While we thank the Govt of deploying 5% Cess on some imported devices to encourage employment and Make in India of Medical Devices, to address 70-90% import dependency we seek a protective nominal tariff protection policy as done for mobile phones to ensure a vibrant domestic industry & competitiveness and price stability driven by competing domestic players
- Need to incentivize Quality in Healthcare Products in public healthcare procurements by preferential pricing for Q1 e.g. ICMED (QCI's Indian Certification for Medical Devices) instead of L1 (lowest price) to ensure patients access acceptable quality.

The Prime Minister was highly concerned about the highly contagious coronavirus infection which had extended its imprint to 283 cases in India on Saturday and had sought cooperation from Pharma Associations – IPA, IDMA, BDMA etc, AIOCD and Medical Devices Association AiMeD during the all India VDO Conference.

With the rapidly growing number of positive infected coronavirus cases in India, one of the major challenges the country is needlessly facing are avoidable shortage of safety masks made worse by anxious civilians hoarding medical supplies though these are not prescribed for healthy individuals and need to educate them.

Public is panicking and hoarding up masks and other equipment, leaving limited supplies for health care professionals who need the gear the most. We are creating an avoidable supply chain diversion from supplies to Healthcare workers who are at greater coronavirus risk. Who will protect those who protect us?”, Rajiv Nath said.

We are ramping up capacity utilization with assistance of Govt. to address raw material bottlenecks of alcohol, non-woven material and assure availability but appeal to consumers not to buy needlessly and hoard products”, added Mr. Nath.

Another critical issue is with demand rising more than 10 times by this individual consumers rush , the country is not only witnessing surge in prices of medical masks and hand sanitiser but the domestic market is now flooded with sub-standard and low-quality products as some retailers and unorganised mask manufacturers are cashing in on the virus terror.

Mr. Shinde President of AiOCD affirmed to the Prime Minister that together with AiMeD Association of Indian Medical Devices Industry we have pledged to not charge beyond MRP and assure the government to work against profiteering and black marketing and hoarding.

“The government has thankfully quickly taken some much needed drastic and bold steps to curb the unethical behavior in the market, but lot needs to be done by all of us – Manufacturers, Traders & Consumers to address the challenge of avoiding shortage of masks for the healthcare professionals and of Sanitizer to the Consumers and ensure availability at reasonable prices and quality products to jointly fight Coronavirus.” Concluded Mr. Nath.