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Lifting HCQ export ban: A boon or bane?

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India is capable of producing 40 metric tons of HCQ every month



India has eased restrictions on the export of anti-malarial drug hydroxychloroquine (HCQ) that is now being used as a possible treatment for COVID-19.

In order to ensure adequate domestic supplies of the drug, India had initially banned its exports. Later on, when more than 10 countries requested the supply of HCQ, India had to make a decision.

US President Trump had called Prime Minister Narendra Modi, requesting him to supply the anti-malaria drug as the number of cases continue to rise in the US.

According to the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA), India is capable of producing 40 metric tons of HCQ every month. The Department of Pharmaceuticals and Ministry of External Affairs is yet to decide on the allocations of the drug to different countries. Meanwhile, the government has placed orders for the drug supply to Ipca laboratories and Zydus Cadila.

On the other hand, the industry is appealing to the government to reconsider this lifting of the ban. Eventually, an escalation in domestic demand might lead to a shortage in the drug supply in India.