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MTaI urges govt to release stalled imports of medical devices

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Medical Technology Association of India (MTaI) has said that the government should release all consignments of medical devices at the earliest to meet the shortage of equipment for treatment of critical COVID-19 patients.

MTaI represents global medical technology companies with a large footprint in manufacturing, and R&D in India. Many consignments of essential medical devices imported by these companies are held up at various Indian ports since 22nd June 2020.

Consignments of critical medical devices including respiratory management devices like C-PAP machines, High-Flow Nasal Oxygen (HFNO) which are extensively used for COVID19 treatment are also stuck at the customs. Other critical medical device consignments like infrared thermometers, pulse oxymeters, video-laryngoscopes are also facing issues in getting customs clearances.

Mr. Pavan Choudary, MTaI Chairman and Director General said “Only a sample check is carried out in cases where the importer is compliant with all customs norms. However, from the fourth week of June customs authorities have stalled all imports of medical devices saying that a thorough check is to be conducted. This is delaying the supply of critical equipment to hospitals. Many hospitals have been relentlessly following up with our member companies for the supplies.”

“The non-availability of these products not only impacts the hospitals ability to treat current patients but also cripples any effort to expand capacity. As India is witnessing a daily surge in the COVID19 infection cases, the availability of medical device supplies becomes even more important. The government should release these essential medical device consignments after conducting the checks at the earliest,” he added.

MTaI has already sent a representation to Department of Pharmaceuticals, Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs, Customs Office of Chennai and Mumbai in this context.