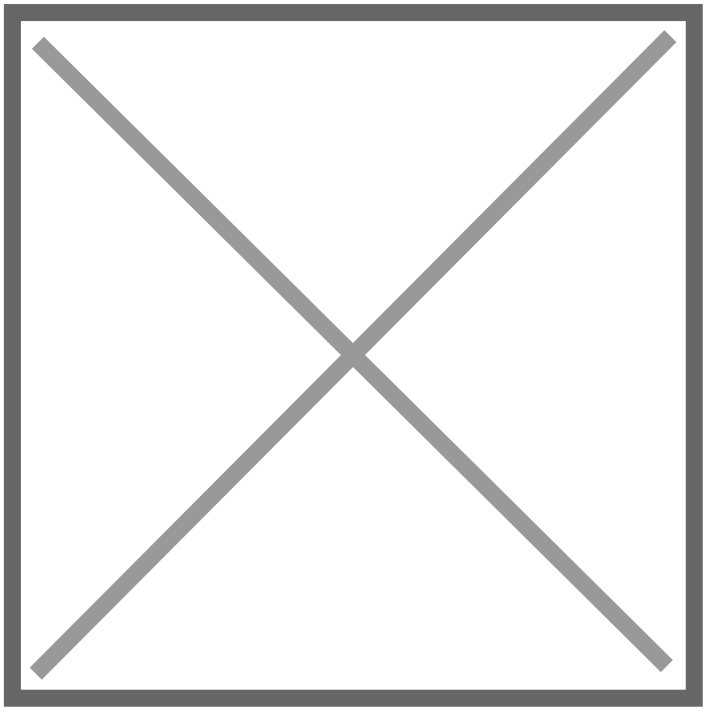
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NACO snips import duties on AIDS drugs

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NACO snips import duties on AIDS drugs



In an effort to cut prices and battle shortage of supply in its on-going national program to fight AIDS, India has scrapped customs import duties for drugs and test kits used to treat the disease.

Nearly a third of India's 2.1 million AIDS sufferers depend on state-run distribution centers for their drugs and there has been acute shortage in supply, said the country's National AIDS Control Organization.

The Central Board of Excise and Customs recently issued the notice to scrap import duties and this will help make raw material import cheaper, which can be used to increase the production of AIDS drugs and testing kits.

Mr BB Rewari of the National AIDS Control Organization (NACO) said to a news agency, "The exemption applies to certain first-line and second-line antiretroviral drugs used to treat adults and children, as well as to certain diagnostic kits and equipment that are used by NACO."