

## WHO praises India's NRA for vaccines

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**Dr Margaret Chan**  
Director-General



In a message to the BRICS health ministers' meeting, Dr Margaret Chan, director general, World Health Organization (WHO) congratulated the union minister of health and family welfare, Mr Ghulam Nabi Azad, on India's recent success in passing the vaccines assessment test conducted by the organization. The meeting, which was held on on January 11, 2012 at New Delhi saw the participation of health ministers of countries like Brazil, Canada, India, Russia, and South Africa.

Speaking from Geneva, Dr Chan said that the WHO requirements are stringent and the assessment of national regulatory capacity is rigorous. "Regulatory oversight was declared functional, opening the way for the prequalification of individual

vaccines and their international marketing. This success provides yet another example of how BRICS countries, in their drive to achieve domestic excellence, are contributing to better health throughout the developing world. BRICS countries occupy a unique and inspiring place in the international health community," explained Dr Chan.

"These countries offer an alternative model for health development, where partners are not givers and takers, haves and have-nots, but true fellow-travellers. Not so long ago, BRICS countries faced the same problems shared by most of the developing world today i.e. huge health needs among huge populations at a time when budgets are shrinking and costs are soaring," added the WHO chief.

Dr Chan also mentioned that BRICS countries have world-class researchers and academic institutions. These assets are contributing to drug discovery and development, especially for the neglected diseases that mainly affect the developing world. "These countries have tremendous manufacturing capacity. These countries have become the principal source of generic medicines and several public health vaccines on the global market. BRICS countries have changed the dynamics of this market, getting prices down and improving the reliability of supplies," Dr Chan further stated.