

DoP to convey concerns of industry over proposed FTAs, TPPA to commerce ministry

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Wednesday, August 10, 2011, 08:00 Hrs [IST]

The Department of Pharmaceuticals (DoP) will take up issues with the Commerce Ministry regarding the proposed Trans Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPPA) which is likely to have adverse impact on the Indian pharma products, and other such Free Trade Agreements (FTA) in the pipeline.

The TPPA, involving countries like United States, Australia, Peru, Vietnam, Malaysia and Japan, and the strengthening of existing FTA between New Zealand, Chile, Singapore and Brunei are going to define stringent conditions even for products being transited through these countries. This is going to be harmful to the Indian exports. Hence, the DoP would take up the matter with the Commerce Department, sources said.

“Though the private industry has raised concerns about these pacts with some South American countries like Brazil, problems still remain in countries like Argentina. These need to be addressed urgently. The industry is also concerned about India signing the FTAs with various countries wherein facility of zero duty is being extended and industry will face more problems. All these issues would be taken up in detail with the Commerce Ministry,” a senior official said.

The DoP also made it clear that it would oppose any form of data exclusivity under the FTAs or otherwise because the developed countries are pressing for the same in the backdrop of 200 preparation patents going to expire in USA very soon.

Sources also claimed that the issue of data exclusivity and patent linkage had been taken up with the Commerce Ministry. In the draft circulated by the Department of Industrial Policy and Planning (DIPP), there is a chapter on investment related to Intellectual property rights which may impact the industry adversely.

“But the DIPP and the Commerce Ministry had given assurance that no additional conditions of IPR would be included and the Prime Minister himself went on record to allay the fears of the industry saying that India would not accept any TRIPs Plus arrangements including data exclusivity. Still, these need to be followed up regularly,” the official added.

The DoP said it would gather inputs from the industry regularly and actively push the matter with a holistic view point with the Commerce Ministry.

