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India, Brazil to set up industry-level working group to sort out hurdles faced by pharma exporters

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India and Brazil will set up an industry-level working group to identify the hurdles being faced by the pharma companies on both the sides and strengthen the pharmaceutical collaboration between the two countries.

This was decided at a Pharmaceutical Round Table, recently in Sao Paulo in Brazil where both the sides raised several obstacles affecting the business from both the countries on the export front and discussed entire gamut of issues confronting the pharma industry.

Indian pharma companies raised the issues of requirement of multiple testing despite having approvals from regulatory agencies in developed countries, delays in registration of products in Brazil / issue of import licenses as also port clearances; insistence by Brazil in respect of new molecules on reference price in India (where costs are less) than a higher one (as would be necessary given high costs of factors of production in Brazil) etc.

Brazilian side while pointing out that many of the problems being faced by Indian companies are also faced by Brazilian companies, referred to problems faced by their companies in India and agreed with the Indian side to constitute an industry level working group to identify hurdles in further strengthening of the pharmaceutical cooperation and relay concrete suggestions towards this end to the government channels.

While taking part in the round-table, Commerce Minister Anand Sharma suggested that India and Brazil could further strengthen their ongoing cooperation in making drugs and medicines available at affordable prices.

Commerce Minister stressed that the provision in TRIPs of invoking the route of compulsory licensing for making available cheaper drugs, though introduced at the behest of developing countries, was in fact used more often by developed countries. As to India, in March this year, Hyderabad-based Natco Pharma was allowed, following the process of adjudication, and thus not an executive invocation, to manufacture and sell in public interest cancer-treatment drug Nexavar at a price over 30 times lower than charged by patent-holder Bayer Corporation, under compulsory licensing (CL).