

India to help African nations procure life-saving drugs

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India and African nations will work closely on building a regulatory framework to make pharmaceuticals "accessible and affordable" without compromising with its quality. The move follows African nations demand to ensure cheap life-saving drugs in their countries for the poor patients.

India also said that for combating AIDS, it has taken a "comprehensive" survey of samples to check and detect sub-standard and spurious drugs and is strengthening the regulatory structures to ensure improvement in the quality of drugs.

Noting that commodity security for medicines is a "major" area of focus, Union



Health Minister J P Nadda said India is committed to ensuring that the agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) flexibilities will be fully harnessed to provide sustained and unin-

terrupted access to the life-saving medicines.

He was speaking at a high-level event 'Ensuring access to life-saving medicines to end the AIDS epidemic by 2030' on the sidelines of the 3rd India Africa Forum Summit here.

TRIPS is an international agreement administered by the World Trade Organisation (WTO) that sets down minimum standards for many forms of intellectual property regulation as applied to nationals of other WTO members.

India is also committed to supplying quality and affordable drugs to treat HIV and extend all possible support and cooperation to Africa in fighting AIDS.

"India would work with the

African Union on doing a regulatory harmonisation so that pharmaceuticals remain accessible and affordable and without compromising with quality.

"India would also support establishment of joint ventures in Africa to promote local manufacturing. We commit ourselves in encouraging this and ask companies to work closely with Africa in this direction and help in building technical and human capacities," Nadda said.

Observing that health commodity security is "critical", Nadda also said that India will take forward the recommendation of Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta to create a joint India-Africa cooperation framework on HIV.

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