

'MNC cartels denying medicines to poor nations'

SANJEEV SHARMA/TNS

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Commerce and Industry Minister Anand Sharma today said cartels of multinational corporations were denying availability of life-saving drugs to people in poor regions like Africa.

Speaking at the CII-Exim Bank Conclave on India Africa Project Partnership 2011, Sharma said: "India will not allow this to happen where life-saving medicines are out of the reach of poor people. We will ensure that whatever new molecules develop, the benefit must reach the poor people".

He pointed out that Indian generic drugs have played a pivotal role in bringing down the cost of treatment of diseases like HIV AIDS from above \$11,000 to less than \$400.

He added: "We see some signs of that again, the campaigns that have been carried out and the backdoor manip-



(From left) Aires Bonifacio Ali, Prime Minister of Republic of Mozambique, Union Commerce and Industry Minister Anand Sharma, Gilbert F Houngbo, Prime Minister of Republic of Togo and CII President Hari Bhartia releasing a book 'Mozambique in Focus' during the 7th CII-EXIM Bank Conclave on India-Africa Project Partnership 2011, in New Delhi on Monday. — PTI

ulations.....with the new medicines that are coming out that will happen again."

He said India has one of the finest IPR regimes, at the same time, "The intellect of the world must be for the benefit of humankind."

He said that trade between India and Africa has reached

close to \$45 billion and is well on the path of meeting the target of \$70 billion by 2015. Trade engagement with Africa is an area of high priority for India.

Speaking about the challenges being faced by Africa and India, the Minister highlighted food and

energy security in the backdrop of fragile global recovery from the financial crisis and unrest in Africa and West Asia. He said sustained efforts needed in the direction of food security as food inventories across the world have reached dangerous levels.

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