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# WHO backs India & South Africa's IPR waiver proposal to WTO for Covid treatment

*The move gains significance as global drug makers involved in the development of Covid therapeutics have refused to give up patents over their products.*

Teena Thacker ET Bureau October 19, 2020, 11:32 IST



The World Health Organization ([WHO](#)) has supported India and South Africa's proposal to the World Trade Organization to relax [intellectual property agreements](#) that might pose a challenge to gain access to Covid-19 vaccines.

"WHO welcomes South Africa's and India's recent proposal to [WTO](#) to ease international and intellectual property agreements

on Covid-19 vaccines, treatments & tests in order to make the tools available to all who need them at an affordable cost," WHO chief Tedros Adhanom said in a tweet.

The move gains significance as [global drug makers](#) involved in the development of Covid therapeutics have refused to give up patents over their products.

Organizations such as Geneva based Drugs for Neglected Diseases Initiative (DNDi) that funds research for neglected diseases, UnitAid that invests in innovative technologies for the prevention and treatment of HIV, Malaria and Hepatitis C, Doctors without Borders or MSF among others have also urged other countries to back this waiver proposal to ensure that Covid-19 vaccines, diagnostics and drugs are made available to everyone who needs them.

Article IX 3 and 4 of the Marrakesh Agreement Establishing the WTO agreement has an option where countries under exceptional circumstances can seek a waiver from certain obligations under WTO treaties, such as TRIPS, proposal by India and South Africa says that waiver should remain valid until the majority of the world's population has access to effective vaccines and has developed immunity to Covid-19.

The waiver is expected to last for two years. Under the current provision of TRIPS countries do have an option to invoke Compulsory License for a particular drug or vaccine to expand its access.

The Indian domestic pharma [industry](#) too has backed its government's move where some of the largest domestic pharma lobby groups have endorsed the waiver. "This is the time for solidarity and global cooperation," Sudarshan Jain, secretary general of the Indian Pharmaceutical Alliance, has earlier told ET.

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This will provide patients a far more cost-effective treatment option, and enable doctors to treat a wider patient population in the country.

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**WFS creates taskforce to prepare for Covid vaccine delivery**



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# MoS for agriculture Parshottam Rupala launches 'Ayushman Sahakar'

*Ayushman Sahakar specifically covers establishment, modernization, expansion, repairs, renovation of hospital and healthcare and education infrastructure encompassing hospitals, medical and nursing colleges, yoga centres, diagnostic centres, health insurance services and other medical and health related services authorised by the government.*

ET Bureau    October 19, 2020, 17:48 IST

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# UN stockpiling billion syringes for Covid-19 vaccine

***UNICEF, the UN Children's Fund, said it aims to get 520 million syringes in its warehouses by the end of this year, to guarantee an initial supply in countries ahead of the vaccine.***

AFP    October 19, 2020, 16:51 IST

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## Need to continue extreme caution against Covid-19: WHO

***“There should be no complacency in view of the declining numbers in recent weeks. The Region still reports large numbers of Covid-19 cases. We need to continue to do our very best to curtail the pandemic,” said Dr Poonam Khetrapal Singh, Regional Director WHO South-East Asia Region.***

ETHealthWorld    October 19, 2020, 16:08 IST

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## Bridging critical gaps in sexual and reproductive health services during Covid-19

***Brand Content Initiative***

ETHealthWorld    October 19, 2020, 15:50 IST

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## Rockefeller Foundation provides funding to scale up Covid-19 testing in India

***The grant will support the domestic manufacturing of critical testing materials and deployment of scalable testing programmes, essential to mitigating the virus' spread, Rockefeller Foundation said in a statement.***

PTI October 19, 2020, 15:29 IST

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## Vaccine storage demands could leave 3B people in virus cold

*From factory to syringe, the world's most promising coronavirus vaccine candidates need nonstop sterile refrigeration to work.*

AP October 19, 2020, 15:14 IST

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## KK Shailaja orders probe into alleged medical negligence at Kerala hospital

*While giving a voice message to the nursing staff, reminding them of the precautions to be taken by them during the visit by the Central team at the medical college, the nursing officer can be heard saying that some patients had died due to the negligence of the staff.*

M K Sunil Kumar TNN October 19, 2020, 13:56 IST

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## Covid-19 infection being 'effectively contained', positivity rate below 8% for 4th day: Govt

*The country's cumulative positivity rate stands at 7.94 per cent and is on a continuous decline, the ministry said in a statement.*

PTI October 19, 2020, 13:51 IST

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# Bengaluru coronavirus control efforts paying off as fatality rate drops to 1.2%

*This is even as the number of positive cases rose with 4,000 cases reported daily in the beginning of this month, barring the past one week when the new infections started reducing.*

Akshatha M ET Bureau October 19, 2020, 11:09 IST

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