

'80-90% crucial drugs imported from China'

Jan 29 2015 : The Times of India (Kolkata)

If Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'Make in India' mantra has to be implemented in some sector first, it has to be in the pharma industry .

The reason-in the past four financial years, India has imported from China bulk drugs and active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs) worth about Rs 38,186 crore. Most of these have gone into making essential drugs. In November TOI had reported that national security adviser Ajit Doval had warned the government about overdependence on China. If submissions to the government by the pharmaceuticals department are any indication, there is significant dependence on imports in the case of 12 essential drugs.

"Approximately 80-90% of these (essential drugs) imports are from China," the department has said. "The decision is based on economic considerations." The 12 drugs are-parace tamol, metformin, ranitidine, amoxicillin, ciprofloxacin, cefixime, acetyl salicylic acid, ascorbic acid, ofloxacin, ibuprofen, metronidazole and ampicillin. Eight of these are on WHO's Model List of Essential Medicines.

Documents of the department of pharmaceuticals show there has been a consistent growth in the import of drugs and APIs from China.

RELYING ON DRAGON <small>In Figs in(₹)Crore</small>	
Year	Imports from China
2011-12	8,798
2012-13	11,000
2013-14	11,865
Apr-Sep 2014	6,521

(Source: Department of pharmaceuticals)

In 2011-12, Rs 8,798 crore worth of bulk drugs and APIs were imported from China. The corresponding figure was Rs 11,000 crore in 2012-13, Rs 11,865 crore in 2013-14 and Rs 6,521 crore during April September in 2014-15.