# Pakistan secures pharmaceutical supplies amid trade suspension with India



Pakistani health authorities have initiated emergency measures to secure pharmaceutical raw materials and finished medicines following the government’s suspension of trade with India. This decision came as a response to actions taken by New Delhi after the recent attack in Pahalgam, Indian-occupied Kashmir.

The Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP) confirmed that although there has been no formal government notification specifying the ban’s details concerning the pharmaceutical sector, contingency plans are underway. A senior DRAP official told The News International, “Following the 2019 crisis, we had started preparing for such contingencies. We are now actively looking at alternative avenues to meet our pharmaceutical needs.”

Currently, Pakistan imports approximately 30 to 40 percent of its active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs) from India, along with finished therapeutic products, including critical agents such as anti-rabies vaccines, anti-snake venom, cancer therapies, and monoclonal antibodies. The disruption of this supply chain has compelled authorities to seek alternative suppliers from countries such as China, Russia, and various European nations to ensure uninterrupted access to essential medicines.

A senior official from the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination, speaking on condition of anonymity, highlighted the urgency of the situation: “Pakistan imports some 30–40 percent of its pharmaceutical raw material from India. We also import finished products, most importantly, anti-cancer therapies, biological products, vaccines, and sera, especially anti-rabies vaccine and anti-snake venom from India.”

Despite the government’s broad announcement suspending all trade with India, the Ministry of Health has not yet issued an official directive clarifying the status of pharmaceutical imports. This has raised concerns within the pharmaceutical sector about potential shortages of critical medicines.

Complicating matters is the existence of a significant black market where unregistered and unapproved medicines, many originating from India, are smuggled into Pakistan through routes involving Afghanistan, Iran, Dubai, and across the eastern border. While such channels partially compensate for the shortfall in legal imports, they lack guarantees regarding the quality or consistent supply of these medicines.

In response to the emerging crisis, a delegation of pharmaceutical industry leaders met with officials from DRAP and the Ministry of Commerce in Islamabad on Thursday. Tauqeer-ul-Haq, Chairman of the Pakistan Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association (PPMA), said, “We had meetings with DRAP and Ministry of Commerce officials to discuss the suspension of trade ties. We urged them to exempt the pharmaceutical sector from the ban, as there are many life-saving products whose raw materials come exclusively from India.”

The PPMA also approached the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), advocating for the exclusion of pharmaceutical and health-related trade from the ban to safeguard patient health.

Some experts view the crisis as a catalyst for greater long-term investment in Pakistan’s domestic pharmaceutical manufacturing capabilities. Dr Zafar Iqbal, a senior public health expert, remarked, “This crisis could be a turning point for Pakistan. The Dow University of Health Sciences (DUHS) Karachi has already started manufacturing anti-rabies vaccines using Chinese raw materials and is working on anti-snake venom. NIH Islamabad should also be upgraded and given the resources and mandate to meet the country’s vaccine and biological product needs.”

These developments highlight ongoing challenges in ensuring pharmaceutical supply security amid geopolitical tensions, prompting both immediate responses and considerations for future self-reliance.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

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* <https://www.noahwire.com> - Although not directly accessible from this source, this article would generally support the narrative of pharmaceutical supply chain disruptions due to trade suspensions and efforts for self-reliance in pharmaceutical manufacturing.
* <https://news.google.com/rss/articles/CBMixwFBVV95cUxQZFV6WHFxQ3FjVF9IQkFYaTdnV0NMWTE0am5hZmJBU0Jsa2tqZzFfa3VsVjNHakxfTF9FXzhoSnpoZkUwTWZXSy1xelJCR29YdUpJb3YzQjN3Q183dFA2eVJmb2pld3hDRHdyZTV3eXdRRWNTaFdtTFJhTVlXX01Oc29jZndTSWVJUU94S2FPYVBQN21oNnBuUkVaNkhLYzFaU3YxQUpMMk5fNHVWSF9xa0YzTVI1emFsVDB5WmRRVld6WXFJYTNj?oc=5&hl=en-US&gl=US&ceid=US:en> - Please view link - unable to able to access data