

TRIPS waiver to scale up manufacturing and timely availability of affordable COVID-19 vaccines: India

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India has welcomed the US support for a relaxation in the norms of the TRIPS (Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights) agreement to ensure quick and affordable access to Covid-19 vaccines and medicines for developing countries.

Key Highlights

- In view of the global health crisis and the need to combat the Covid-19 pandemic, India and South Africa in 2020 had proposed in WTO a relaxation in the norms of the agreement on TRIPS. The proposal has received the support of over 120 countries.
- During his recent phone call on April 26 with US President Joe Biden, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had told him about India's initiative at the WTO, which was aimed at the benefit of humanity.
- The United States on Thursday announced the support for waiving intellectual property (IP) protection for Covid-19 vaccines. The decision is a breakthrough in India and South Africa's attempts to get World Trade Organisation (WTO) member countries to agree to such a waiver to fight the pandemic equitably.

- After the US support, European Union will be the only major trade bloc that continues to oppose the move at WTO. Tai has indicated the US administration will actively participate in text-based negotiations at the WTO needed to make that happen.

SOURCE: *The Indian Express, Economic Times*