

India to push pharma, shrimp exports to US

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Government is going to make a strong case for faster US Food and Drug Administration (USFDA) inspection and audit of Indian pharma companies and seek removal of a ban on export of wild caught shrimp to America at the India-US Trade Policy Forum meet on Friday.

Ahead of US Trade Representative Katherine Tai's visit for the Trade Policy Forum (TPF), sources said, during a working group meeting, India also flagged export control regulations for high tech products and technologies.

Further, the Indian side will also raise the issue of reinstating Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) status for India, which will help improve access for Indian products into the co-

untry. Indian exports had enjoyed the benefit until 2019, when the Trump administration withdrew the facility. The government has been demanding restoration but despite the Biden administration seeking to repair trade relations, GSP benefit has not flowed so far

TRADE POLICY FORUM MEET

and is expected to feature prominently during Tai's meeting with commerce and industry minister Piyush Goyal.

The US is India's largest trading partner with bilateral goods trade pegged at over \$69 billion during April-October. In recent years, India's trade relations with the US have improved with both sides agreeing to remove several irritants.

For government, which

has sought to position India as a pharmacy to the world, faster clearances by the USFDA to enable Indian companies to sell medicines in the US market, is a key priority. During the working group meeting, officials have raised the issue of fast-tracking inspections and audits of facilities, which are meant to check quality standards.

In the absence of USFDA visits, there is a huge backlog as inspections were on hold post-Covid. This has resulted in approvals and renewals and the Indian side suggested that digital or physical inspections should be undertaken, given that the US is the largest market for Indian pharma exports.

The issue of export ban by the US on Indian wild caught shrimp will also figure prominently in the TPF meeting.