



PHARMACEUTICALS EXPORT PROMOTION COUNCIL

(Set up by Ministry of Commerce, Govt. of India)

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Pharmexcil seeks AP govt to review ban on expansion of bulk drug units in 4 notified districts

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Our Bureau, Mumbai

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In an effort to support the growth of bulk drugs and intermediates manufacturing in Andhra Pradesh, a known hub for pharmaceutical ingredients production, the Pharmaceutical Exports Promotion Council (Pharmexcil) has requested the Andhra Pradesh government to review its permanent ban order on bulk drugs manufacturing in four districts surrounding Hyderabad.

In a letter to the chief secretary of the state of Andhra Pradesh recently, the council argued that the government should consider allowing at least expansion of production facilities and change in product lines in the existing units in four districts - Medak, Rangareddy, Mahaboobnagar and Nalgonda.

The state government has been keeping the ban on setting up of all types of bulk drug manufacturing units except formulations, dyes and dye intermediate units and other highly water polluting industries in four districts from October 1996 and has made the ban permanent from 1999.

According to the Pharmexcil officials, the state Pollution Control Board is interpreting the ban notification to include the change of product mix, expansion without increase in the pollution load, modification to the existing product profile and change of the line of activity, though these units abide by the existing pollution control norms.

The pharma industry has been demanding that even if the new industries were prohibited to come up in the region, the government should allow the manufacturers to expand the capacity of the existing units if the industries have adequate pollution control mechanisms and the expansion also abides satisfactorily with the norms.

The Pharmexcil, in its letter, echoes the argument of industry that such expansion does not add to the environmental load from the air pollution, water pollution and noise pollution angles and the change of product mix may be permitted without any restrictions if the industry can satisfy that there is no increase in the pollution load due to the change of product mix.

The ban notification published as Government Order (GO) Ms No 95 has to be reviewed and necessary orders passed as many industries have adopted adequate pollution control methods, cleaner technologies for production and green production processes, appeals the council.

A temporary notification restricting the establishments and expansion of the bulk drug, dye manufacturing and several other industries in all the existing Industrial Estates (IEs), Industrial Development Areas (IDAs) and other existing Industrial areas was issued on October 14, 1996 and was made permanent in April 20, 1999. Thereafter, a final notification was issued vide GO Ms No 95 dated September 9, 2007, making the ban absolute, which according to industry, has become a hurdle for the growth of bulk drug industry in the state of Andhra Pradesh.