

Pharma lobby to USTR: India must remain on 'priority watch list'

Himani Chandna

himani.chandna@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: India must remain on the 'priority watch list' in the annual '2016 Special 301' report on intellectual property rights (IPR), prepared by the office of United States Trade Representative (USTR), the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA) has said.

The PhRMA, one of most influential lobbying organisations in Washington, has requested the US government to act against India over its IPR, which they claim don't conform to global norms.

Citing issues on the weak IPR environment, regulatory data protection failures, high tariff and taxes on medicines, and burdensome environment for clinical research, the PhRMA has requested the USTR that "India remain on the 'Priority Watch List' in the 2016 Special 301 Report." India is on the watch list since 2006.

The lobby slammed Narendra Modi-led government for not taking any concrete measures to improve the situation. "We support the Modi's administration

'PRIORITY WATCH LIST' STATUS IS GIVEN TO COUNTRIES WHOSE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY REGIMES ARE DEEMED OF CONCERN

efforts... While pharmaceutical innovators saw potentially positive signs from Indian government in 2015, translating these positive statements into real results has remained a challenge."

However, the association representing Indian drug makers — Indian Pharmaceutical Alliance (IPA) — has stated that the current patent regime is fully compliant with the international standards.

"We have detailed our understanding of this stance in our previous submission and repeating them is superfluous," said DG Shah, secretary general, IPA. "We now present further data to suggest that the gulf between the US and Indian patent regimes may not be as wide as perceived. More than other approaches, data-driven dialogue may narrow the divide."

Patents