

Medical Technology Association of India recommends Japan as “China+1 alternative in MedTech Imports”

03 March 2023 | News

Japan can become the China+1 alternative for MedTech imports from Asia amid rocky diplomatic ties



Medical Technology Association of India (MTAI), which represents leading research-based medical technology companies with large footprint in manufacturing and training in India, has recommended Japan as the China+1 alternative for MedTech imports.

MTAI stated that India, like most countries, including leading manufacturing hubs like the US, Japan, and Europe, meets a significant portion of its MedTech needs through imports. However, the increasing value of MedTech imports from China is becoming a growing concern, and alternatives must be explored on priority.

At present, India has developed adequate manufacturing capacity for some categories of medical equipment; but for more complex technologies it is reliant mostly on imports from the west like the US, Europe, UK, and from China, Japan & Singapore in the East.

Pavan Choudary, Chairman, MTAI said, “The China + 1 alternative for imports from Asia could be Japan, as both India and Japan have a rich history of amicable bilateral relations, similar market & political systems and a shared history of peace. Japan has traditionally been a financial investor and partner in India for many developmental projects (including those in healthcare e.g., JICA, Mitsubishi, etc.). If an attractive FTA is signed with them, it could help India in getting technical expertise and financial aid in healthcare social impact programmes.”

MTAI analysed that among the medical device imports from China, product categories of ultrasonic scanning apparatus, magnetic resonance imaging apparatus, diagnostics instruments like pulse oximeter, flame photometer, surgical instruments & appliances and accessories for catheters, ophthalmic instrument, etc. constitute the top 5 import categories during 2017-2022. In comparison, India's imports from Japan for these medical devices stand at around \$131 million, while China's imports for these categories alone are around \$887 million over the last 5 years.

Moreover, Japan is a global leader in manufacturing advanced medical devices and equipment. It has a highly developed healthcare system and invests heavily in research and development. Japan's expertise in advanced medical technology and reputation for high quality, make it an attractive alternative to China.