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Customs duty exemptions directly lower input and landed costs, improve gross margins for specialty portfolios: Sheetal Sapale

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India well positioned as preferred global hub for high-value biopharma production

“Customs duty exemptions on 17 select high-impact medicines announced in Budget 2026 are expected to materially improve the commercial viability of complex and specialty drug portfolios, while strengthening India’s competitiveness across global biopharma value chains,” said Sheetal Sapale, Vice President – Commercial at Pharmarack Technologies.

Speaking about the ‘Budget 2026: The Inflection Point for India Pharma’s Next Growth Cycle’ she said that the exempted products span high-value therapy classes—targeted therapies such as Ribociclib, Abemaciclib, Venetoclax, Ceritinib, Brigatinib, Darolutamide, Ponatinib, Ibrutinib, Dabrafenib and Trametinib; immuno-oncology drugs including Tremelimumab, Toripalimab, Serplulimab, Tislelizumab and Ipilimumab; and advanced and cell-based therapies such as Talycabtagene autoleucel and Inotuzumab ozogamicin.

“These exemptions directly lower input and landed costs, improve gross margins for specialty portfolios and enhance pricing flexibility across both domestic and export markets. When coupled with regulatory modernisation through a strengthened the Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO)—enabling faster approvals, globally aligned reviews and lower compliance friction—the measures significantly improve time-to-market and return on investment for companies focused on biologics, biosimilars and complex therapeutics,” she said.

Sheetal Sapale added that with global biologics patent expiries accelerating, rising oncology and chronic disease demand, and India’s scale advantage in manufacturing, the Budget’s push on biosimilars and advanced therapies creates a strong platform for contract manufacturers, developers and innovators to expand export-led growth and position India as a preferred global hub for high-value biopharma production.