

Important Vocab for the Editorial

1. vaccine (noun) – a biological preparation that improves immunity to a particular disease.
2. skirmish (noun) – fight, conflict, clash, confrontation.
3. intellectual property (noun) – a category of property that includes intangible (non-physical) creations of the human intellect. The most well-known types are copyrights, patents, trademarks and trade secrets.
4. waiver (noun) – deferral, rejection, renunciation (with no stipulations/restrictions).
5. stockpile (noun) – stock, collection, accumulation.
6. catch someone off-guard (phrase) – surprise, baffle, mystify, perplex.
7. relaxation (noun) – the process of making a restriction/rule less strict.
8. Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) (noun) – the WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) is the most comprehensive multilateral agreement on intellectual property (IP). It plays a central role in facilitating trade in knowledge and creativity, in resolving trade disputes over IP, and in assuring WTO members the latitude to achieve their domestic policy objectives. It frames the IP system in terms of innovation, technology transfer and public welfare. The Agreement is a legal recognition of the significance of links between IP and trade and the need for a balanced IP system.
9. context (noun) – circumstances, conditions, situation.
10. ongoing (adjective) – current, existing, continuing, relentless.
11. pandemic (noun) – the worldwide spread of a new disease; The illness spreads around the world and typically affects a large number of people across a wide area.
12. World Trade Organization (WTO) (noun) – an intergovernmental organization that is concerned with the regulation of international trade between nations.
13. table (verb) – submit, put forward, present, propose, introduce.
14. erstwhile (adjective) – old, previous, former, then.
15. vow (verb) – swear, pledge, promise, affirm.
16. perhaps (adverb) – maybe, possibly.
17. anticipate (verb) – expect, foresee, predict.

18. **chasm** (noun) – a clear difference between two people/groups' thoughts, feelings, opinions, etc.; divergence, disunion, gulf, void, gap.
19. **inequality** (noun) – Inequality is simply defined as “the state of not being equal, especially in status, rights and opportunities; imbalance, unevenness, disproportion, disparity.
20. **proclaim** (verb) – announce, declare, pronounce (officially); publicize, make public, make known.
21. **bitter** (adjective) – awful, painful, distressing, disturbing.
22. **sound** (verb) – look like, seem, appear.
23. **well-intentioned** (adjective) – well-meaning; good-natured, caring.
24. **pro-** (prefix) – supporting.
25. **stance** (noun) – position, approach, standpoint.
26. **rebuff** (verb) – reject, refuse, decline.
27. **meet with** (phrasal verb) – experience a particular situation/reaction; deal with, handle.
28. **liberal** (adjective) – broad-minded, open-minded, forbearing; progressive, forward-looking, forward-thinking.
29. **pushback** (noun) – resistance, opposition, disagreement, force back, repulse drive.
30. **salvo** (noun) – attack, aggressive act, assault.
31. **complication** (noun) – difficulty, problem, issue; obstacle, impediment.
32. **echo** (verb) – repeat, say again, restate, reiterate.
33. **relatively** (adverb) – comparatively, proportionately, somewhat, to a certain extent/degree.
34. **hostile** (adjective) – opposed, inimical, antagonistic, ill-disposed; confrontational, belligerent, combative.
35. **lash out** (phrasal verb) – criticize, castigate, condemn/censure.
36. **Anglo-Saxon** (noun) – White, English-speaking person, (referring to the USA and the UK); It also refers to settlers from the German regions (tribes of Angeln and Saxony) settled in England in the 5th & 6th century after the fall of the Roman Empire.
37. **impede** (verb) – hinder, obstruct, slow down.
38. **ingredient** (noun) – element, part, component.
39. **merit** (noun) – good point, strong point.
40. **deficit** (noun) – shortfall, deficiency, shortage, lack.
41. **accompany** (verb) – go with, occur with; supplement, augment, enhance.
42. **generic** (adjective) – unbranded, untrademarked, non-proprietary.

43. generic-drugs (noun) – unbranded drugs; copies of brand-name drugs that contain the same chemical substance as a drug that was originally protected by chemical patents.
44. pharmaceutical (adjective) – relating to aspects like preparation, dispensing, and effective utilization of medicinal drugs.
45. requisite (adjective) – necessary, required, essential, vital, needed.
46. personnel (noun) – force, staff, employees, workforce.
47. know-how (noun) – knowledge, expertise, skill.
48. in all likelihood (phrase) – in all probability, most likely, possibly, perhaps.
49. immunogenicity (noun) – the ability of cells/tissues to provoke an immune response in the body of a human.
50. efficacy (noun) – effectiveness, efficiency, power/ability to give estimated results.
51. supply chain (noun) – a network between a company and its suppliers to produce and distribute a specific product to the final buyer.
52. address (verb) – tackle, deal with, attend to, try to sort out.
53. indeed (adverb) – in fact, actually, undeniably.
54. speculation (noun) – prediction, guesswork, opinion/thought.
55. proclamation (noun) – order, ruling, announcement, declaration, pronouncement, statement.
56. in favour of (phrase) – in support of, to the advantage of, approve of.
57. persuade (verb) – convince, influence, motivate.
58. measure (noun) – action, step, procedure.
59. willingly (adverb) – voluntarily, readily, without hesitation.
60. venture (noun) – a business enterprise, undertaking, operation, activity.
61. expeditiously (adverb) – quickly and efficiently.
62. dose (noun) – an amount/quantity of something.
63. affordable (adjective) – economical, inexpensive, reasonably priced.

Vaccine skirmishes: On production of COVID-19 vaccine

MAY 11, 2021 00:02 IST

IPR waiver will not bring immediate benefits; the effort must be to share the stockpile

The Biden administration's announcement that it would support a waiver on intellectual property rights (IPR) for the production of COVID-19 vaccines appeared to catch the world off-guard, on both sides of the argument. The original proposal for the relaxation of TRIPS for such vaccines in the context of the ongoing pandemic was drafted at the WTO by India and South Africa last year. Months before it was tabled, during the 2020 U.S. presidential election, erstwhile candidate Joe Biden vowed that should he win, he would “absolutely positively” commit to sharing vaccine technology with countries that needed it, perhaps anticipating the deep chasm of inequality in vaccine access. Now that his administration has proclaimed its intent to fulfil that promise, it must come as a bitter realisation that what sounds like a well-intentioned, pro-developing-countries policy stance has been rebuffed by major EU nations and met with counter-suggestions that might make even the most liberal U.S. Democrats uncomfortable. The first pushback salvo came from Germany which said that it would create “severe complications” for the production of vaccines, echoing the view of major pharma corporations. While French President Emmanuel Macron had appeared relatively less hostile to considering the proposal earlier, he lashed out at the “Anglo-Saxons” for impeding vaccine availability globally by blocking the export of ingredients.

There are merits to the argument that an IPR waiver, even if it were to become a reality, may not entirely resolve the vaccine deficit issue in countries suffering the worst of the pandemic now. First, the grant of a waiver would have to be accompanied by a “tech transfer” that provides

generic pharmaceutical manufacturers with the requisite trained personnel, raw materials and hi-tech equipment and production know-how. Second, there must be a scientifically convincing answer to the question of how any vaccine then produced by these generic manufacturers — in all likelihood, years from now — would pass the tests of safety, immunogenicity and protective efficacy. Third, the impact on global supply chains for vaccine production should be examined so major disruptions might be avoided. Finally, alternative options to urgently address vaccine shortfalls should be considered, including developed nations sharing a significantly greater part of their vaccine stockpiles, particularly in cases where the latter exceed projected domestic need. Indeed, there is speculation that the intention behind Mr. Biden's waiver proclamation might be in favour of the last outcome, essentially a tactic to persuade pharmaceutical companies to accept less painful measures including sharing some of their technology willingly, agreeing to joint ventures to increase global production expeditiously, and simply produce more doses at affordable prices to donate directly to where the need is most severe, especially India.

GUPTA CLASSES