CSIR-CDRI’s candidate drug Umifenovir secures DCGI approval for Phase III Clinical Trial against COVID-19

Context

- CSIR constituent lab CSIR-Central Drug Research Institute (CDRI) Lucknow, has received permission for carrying out Phase III randomised, Double blind, Placebo controlled trial of efficacy, safety and tolerability of antiviral drug Umifenovir.

Umifenovir

- This drug has a good safety profile and acts by preventing entry of virus into human cells and also by priming the immune system.
- Umifenovir is mainly used for treatment of influenza and is available in China and Russia, and has recently come into prominence due to its potential use for Covid19 patients.
- To evaluate its efficacy in Indian patients, CSIR-CDRI has taken up the clinical trial.
- Further it has developed the process technology for Umifenovir in record time and licensed the economical process technology for manufacturing and marketing the drug to M/s. Medizest Pharmaceuticals Private Ltd. Goa, who have already received test license from DCGI.
- All the raw materials for the drug are indigenously available and if the clinical trial is successful, Umifenovir can be a safe, efficacious, affordable drug against COVID-19 and can be part of National Program against COVID-19.
- Prof. Kundu also added that this drug has the potential for prophylactic use(intended to prevent disease.)