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 Covid-19 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)**.)