

IN TIME OF NEED: ON HYDROXYCHLOROQUINE EXPORT

Irrespective Of Whether India Bowed To U.S. Pressure, It Is Unlikely To Run Out Of The Drug

After imposing a blanket ban on the export of anti-malaria drug hydroxychloroquine on April 4, without exemptions on humanitarian or other grounds, India reversed the policy two days later. The decision to reverse the ban was made public hours after U.S. President Donald Trump warned of “retaliation” if India withheld supplies of the drug for which orders had already been placed. Given the circumstances, it would be difficult to believe that the decision to lift the restriction was taken independent of U.S. pressure. But the pandemic has seen several countries displaying solidarity and cooperation providing essential supplies to others even while tackling the novel coronavirus in their own backyards. Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s message to Mr. Trump that “India shall do everything possible to help humanity’s fight against COVID-19” should, therefore, be seen in that light. Lauded as the pharmacy of the global south, India’s decision to export the drug on humanitarian grounds to neighbouring countries and others that have been badly hit by the pandemic is welcome. Till recently India relied solely on other countries for test supplies and may look to others for essential materials if the situation worsens. Also, India may have much to gain from the U.S. in the future by this diplomatic act of supplying the drug at a crucial time. The sudden demand for hydroxychloroquine across the world arose after Mr. Trump championed it as treatment for COVID-19 patients. The drug became much sought-after in India after the Indian Council of Medical Research approved its use as prophylaxis for novel coronavirus by certain categories of people on March 23. Two days later, the drug was placed in the restricted category for export and included in schedule H1 on March 26 to prevent its sale over the counter, thereby preventing self-medication and hoarding. This was also to ensure its availability to people with rheumatoid arthritis and other conditions.

India has a production capacity of 200 million hydroxychloroquine tablets of 200 mg strength each month and three well-established pharmaceutical companies make the drug. While the capacity is sufficient to meet the current demand, the companies are confident of ramping up production if the need arises. In all likelihood, in the short term, India might not run out of hydroxychloroquine as the national taskforce for COVID-19 had relied on weak, anecdotal evidence to make the recommendation. Though the U.S. Food and Drug Administration issued an emergency use authorisation for the drug to treat COVID-19 patients, on April 7, the Atlanta-based Centers for Disease Control and Prevention revised its position saying there is no drug available to prevent or treat COVID-19. Clearly, more research work is needed to establish the efficacy of the drug.

Meanings of Difficult Words:

1. **in time of need** (phrase) - at a time when help is really needed (for someone).
2. **bow** (verb) - give in, yield, submit, surrender, succumb, capitulate.
3. **unlikely** (adjective) – not likely, improbable, questionable.
4. **run out** (phrasal verb) - be used up, be exhausted, be finished.
5. **blanket** (adjective) – total, complete, overall, extensive, widespread.
6. **exemption** (noun) – exclusion, relief, exception.
7. **humanitarian** (adjective) – compassionate, humane, socially concerned.
8. **ground** (noun) – reason, factor, basis.
9. **reverse** (verb) – revoke, cancel, annul (a judgement/order).
10. **retaliation** (noun) – revenge, vengeance, retribution, counter-attack.
11. **withhold** (verb) – deny, refuse (to give), stop, hold back.
12. **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.
13. **solidarity** (noun) – unity, harmony, mutual support, cooperation, team spirit.

14. **novel coronavirus** (nCoV) (SARS-CoV-2) (noun) – a new strain (type/variety) coronavirus that has not been previously identified in humans.
15. **backyard** (noun) – the territory/area close to a particular country.
16. **humanity** (noun) – humankind, the human race, people.
17. **see the light** (phrase) - understand, comprehend, realize.
18. **lauded** (adjective) - praised, admired highly.
19. **rely on** (phrasal verb) – depend on; resort to, bank on.
20. **solely** (adverb) – only, entirely, completely.
21. **till recently** (phrase) - up to an unspecified point in the past not long before now.
22. **look to** (verb) - rely on, depend on, resort to.
23. **diplomatic** (adjective) – sensitive, subtle, delicate; careful, understanding.
24. **champion** (verb) – advocate, promote, support.
25. **sought-after** (adjective) - popular, in demand, desired.
26. **prophylaxis** (noun) - a treatment designed and used to prevent a disease from occurring.
27. **over the counter** (phrase) - by a normal retail sale (without a prescription demanded).
28. **hoarding** (noun) – stocking/storing, accumulation, collection.
29. **rheumatoid arthritis** (noun) - a disease that causes chronic inflammation (swelling) of the joints.
30. **pharmaceutical** (adjective) - relating to the manufacture and sale of medicinal drugs.
31. **ramp up** (phrasal verb) – increase.
32. **in all likelihood** (phrase) - most likely, in all probably, no doubt.
33. **in the short time** (phrase) - In the near future.
34. **taskforce** (noun) – unit, crew, outfit, section (mainly arranged for a task).
35. **anecdotal** (adjective) - not based on factual, scientific reports and observations done carefully; unscientific, informal, unreliable, untrustworthy.
36. **authorisation** (noun) - permission, approval, consent, sanction.
37. **efficacy** (noun) – effectiveness, efficiency, power/ability to give estimated results.

VICTORY IN DEFEAT: ON BERNIE SANDERS

Despite A Favourable Opinion Of His Agenda, Bernie Sanders Could Not Overcome Joe Biden

Bernie Sanders' withdrawal from the race for the presidential nominee from the Democratic Party at this juncture comes as no surprise. Ever since the Democratic Party field narrowed down to just two, with former Vice-President Joe Biden being endorsed as the overwhelming favourite of the party establishment, Mr. Sanders found the going tough. After his strong victory in the South Carolina primary, Mr. Biden emerged as the first among equals among the moderates and consolidated support for himself after the rest of the field was winnowed due to dropouts by other candidates. In direct contests after his triumph in the Nevada caucuses, Mr. Sanders did not fare too well and Mr. Biden emerged as the presumptive nominee. With the COVID-19 pandemic relegating the Democratic contest between the two septuagenarians to a lower priority among American voters, the path to a nomination soon became non-existent for Mr. Sanders. Without a large enthusiastic voter turnout, his chances of staging a comeback grew even weaker, forcing him to withdraw.

Mr. Sanders ran on a social democratic ticket, promising a universal and single-payer healthcare, free college education and a "green new deal" to tackle climate change. A lifelong independent before he entered the Democratic primaries in 2016, Mr. Sanders' earlier campaign had also ended in defeat, but he managed to bring his progressive positions to the centre of the Democratic Party debates, buoyed by support especially among the youth and the white working class. By 2020, after progressives won a significant number of Congressional seats, most presidential candidates in the party adopted sections of his programme such as increasing the statutory

minimum wage for workers and expanding social welfare. But his unapologetic embrace of the term “democratic socialist” to describe himself in a country that fought a half-a-century-long Cold War for the triumph of capitalism, his crusade against the wealthy and for campaign financing regulations among other systemic changes did not endear him to the Democratic establishment. Mr. Sanders’ emphasis on economic justice as key to overcome the social inequality in a racially divided U.S. did not have as many takers among African American voters who preferred Mr. Biden’s “safer” candidacy due to his identification with Barack Obama’s presidency in which he served as Vice-President. Mr. Sanders will be remembered for bringing to the forefront ideas of social welfare, collective action, and liberal internationalism that had been relegated by the neoliberal/neoconservative duopoly that had firmly established itself in the U.S. since the 1980s. He might have lost the battle, but the war for a progressive America will now be waged by activists inspired by his legacy.

Meanings of Difficult Words:

1. **juncture** (noun) – point in time, time/moment, stage.
2. **come as no surprise** (phrase) – as expected.
3. **narrow down** (phrasal verb) – reduce, lessen, decrease.
4. **endorse** (verb) – support, uphold, back, approve, favour.
5. **overwhelming** (adjective) – massive/huge, formidable, absolute, very strong.
6. **the establishment** (noun) – the powers that be, the authorities, the regime (exercising power and influence).
7. **find the going tough** (phrase) - to realize that the situation is really becoming difficult.
8. **primary** (noun) – (in the US) an election in which members of the same political party run against each other for the chance to be in a larger and more important election, especially presidential election.
9. **first among equals** (phrase) - a person or position that is formally equivalent to others in a group, but is superior to others in some aspects.
10. **moderate** (noun) - a person who has moderate views, particularly in politics.
11. **consolidated** (adjective) – combined, united/merged; fortified, strengthened.
12. **winnnow** (verb) – remove (people from a group to reduce its size and to have only the best people left in that group).
13. **dropout** (noun) - nonconformist, misfit.
14. **triumph** (noun) – victory, win, success.
15. **caucus** (noun) – (in the US) a party-organized gathering of members to discuss their presidential preferences, elect local party leadership and discuss issues that make up the party’s platform. A closed meeting of supporters or members of a specific political party or movement. It is also defined as hours-long voting meeting run by a political party.
16. **fare** (verb) - manage, cope, get on, proceed, get along.
17. **presumptive** (adjective) – probable, likely, prospective, assumed.
18. **presumptive nominee** (noun) - In United States presidential elections, the presumptive nominee is a presidential candidate who is assumed to be their party's nominee, but has not yet been formally nominated or elected by their political party at the party's nominating convention.
19. **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.
20. **relegate** (verb) – downgrade, lower; degrade/reduce to.
21. **septuagenarian** (noun) – a person who is between 70 and 79 years old.
22. **non-existent** (adjective) – imaginary, unreal, fictional.
23. **enthusiastic** (adjective) – wholehearted, committed, passionate.
24. **stage a comeback** (phrase) - achieve a success after failure.
25. **run on** (phrasal verb) – continue, go on, carry on, keep going (without stopping).

26. **social democratic** (adjective) - relating to a political, social and economic philosophy that supports economic and social interventions to promote social justice within the framework of a liberal democratic polity and a capitalist-oriented mixed economy.
27. **single-payer healthcare** (noun) – a healthcare system in which the government (financed by taxes) covers health care costs for all residents regardless of income, occupation, or health status.
28. **climate change** (noun) – a long-term change in the Earth’s climate, or of a region on Earth.
29. **buoy** (verb) – support, encourage, cheer up, stimulate.
30. **working class** (noun) - also called as middle-class; it is defined as individuals in the labour force (working for wages).
31. **congressional** (adjective) – relating to a national legislative body of the US.
32. **statutory** (adjective) – legitimate, acceptable, permissible/admissible.
33. **unapologetic** (adjective) - long-standing, confirmed, entrenched, established.
34. **embrace** (noun) – welcome, approval, adoption.
35. **democratic socialist** (noun) – a person who believes in the idea of that both the economy and society should be run democratically-to meet public needs, not to make profits for a few. (democratic socialism is a call for the democratically-elected (government) to use the public sector to promote greater equality and opportunity).
36. **the Cold War** (noun) – The Cold War was a state of political and military tension after World War II between powers in the Western Bloc (the United States and a group of countries) and powers in the Eastern Bloc (the Soviet Union and a group of countries).
37. **capitalism** (noun) – an economic system based on the private ownership; private enterprise, private ownership.
38. **crusade** (noun) – campaign, drive, fight.
39. **systemic** (adjective) – constructional, organizational, constitutional.
40. **endear** (verb) – inspire, attract, cherish/charm.
41. **emphasis** (noun) – insistence, priority, stress.
42. **economic justice** (noun) - it is defined as “a set of moral principles for building economic institutions, the ultimate goal of which is to create an opportunity for each person to create a sufficient material foundation upon which to have a dignified, productive, and creative life beyond economics”.
43. **social inequality** (noun) - it occurs when resources in a given society are distributed unevenly. Inequality is simply defined as “the state of not being equal, especially in status, rights and opportunities.
44. **taker** (noun) - someone who accepts an offer or challenge.
45. **candidacy** (noun) – the state/condition/fact of being a candidate, particularly in an election; candidate-ship.
46. **identification** (noun) - association, link, connection.
47. **bring to the forefront** (phrase) - to make something noticeable.
48. **collective action** (noun) - it refers to action taken together by a group of people whose goal is to enhance their status and achieve a common objective.
49. **liberal** (adjective) – progressive, forward-thinking, enlightened, broadminded, reformist.
50. **internationalism** (noun) – the state or process of being international.
51. **neo-liberal** (adjective) – relating to an economic policy model that supports value of free market competition by the private sectors which with little government control over it.
52. **neoconservative** (adjective) - it is relating to a modified form of a traditional viewpoint.
53. **duopoly** (noun) – it is used to describe any market where two firms dominate.
54. **progressive** (adjective) - modern, liberal, forward-thinking.
55. **wage** (verb) – engage in, carry on, conduct (a war/campaign).
56. **activist** (noun) – advocate, champion, supporter (of a political or societal change/cause).
