

VOLUNTARY LICENSES ON COVID-19 THERAPEUTICS: A COMPETITION LAW PERSPECTIVE

**Organised by
Third World Network**

DATE

28 FEBRUARY 2022

TIMING

6:00 PM - 7:15 PM IST

PLATFORM: ZOOM (VIRTUAL)

SPEAKER

- Dr MV SHIJU
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DISCUSSANT & MODERATOR

- KM GOPAKUMAR
(TWN)

A voluntary license (VL) is a contract in which the patent holder allows the contracting party to use the patent, either against a payment of royalties or for free for a defined period of time. Often patent holders use the voluntary licenses to avoid the issuance of compulsory license and control the competition. VL were issued on various COVID19 therapeutics. However, these licenses failed to ensure availability and affordability.

For instance, despite receiving significant public funding of at least USD 70.5 million, Gilead has signed secretive bilateral licenses for Remdesivir (a therapeutic for COVID-19 treatment) with a few generic companies of its choosing that excludes nearly half of the world's population from its licensed territories. Much of Gilead's supply has also been reserved for very rich nations. As a result, to date, most developing countries have barely received any supply of Remdesivir. The prices of Remdesivir are also prohibitively high.

Critics have pointed out that VLs puts various conditions to limit the competition such as the limited territory, the relation of royalties and actual patent coverage, involving drugs with weak patents in the license, restrictions on API production and supply, restrictions on challenges to patent validity, transparency of the process, the involvement of patient groups etc. Against this background, we are organising a webinar to provide a competition law perspective on recent VLs.

In light of the above, TWN would like to invite you to the Webinar.

REGISTER NOW

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_WBLchnobThCYmEvCdoklyw