

INDIA-U.K. FTA WILL TIGHTEN SCREWS ON GENERIC DRUGS: MSF

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: India - UK

The proposals on intellectual property (IP) rights in the draft India-U.K. Free Trade Agreement (FTA) will hurt the global supply of generic medicines, Doctors Without Borders (Médecins Sans Frontières or MSF) warned on Wednesday. In a press note, the international organisation said the intellectual property chapter of the India-U.K. FTA contains “harmful IP provisions”. The IP-related chapter, leaked on October 31, showed the controversial provisions tabled by the U.K. to “tighten the screws on producing, supplying and exporting affordable generic medicines from India”.

“Given the disastrous consequences this leaked IP chapter could have on the global supply of generic medicines, the U.K. government should withdraw it completely,” Leena Menghaney, South Asia head of MSF’s Access Campaign, said.

In a “Fact Sheet”, MSF has argued that the demand for “harmonisation” of Indian patent law with the U.K.’s laws will lead to dilution of important provisions in the Indian patent system necessary for manufacturing generics.

“Article E.10 of the leaked IP chapter stipulates that both parties “shall not” make patent opposition proceedings available BEFORE the grant of a patent. In effect, this provision applies only to India as the U.K. does not have a pre-grant opposition system — this goes directly against the current Indian patent law, which allows patent opposition proceedings both before and after the grant of a patent,” the MSF.

A U.K. government spokesperson said they would not comment on the “alleged leaks” and will sign “a deal that is fair, reciprocal, and ultimately in the best interests of the British people and the economy.”

It is feared that the FTA provision goes directly against the current Indian patent law

[Our code of editorial values](#)

END

Downloaded from **crackIAS.com**

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com