

TPP Legacy

Why in news?

\n\n

America exited from Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP).

\n\n

What is TPP?

\n\n

\n

- 12 countries that border the Pacific Ocean signed the TPP in February 2016.

\n

- The pact aimed to deepen economic ties between these nations, slashing tariffs and fostering trade to boost growth.

\n

- But, once the new U.S. administration came to power, one of the first thing it did was to veto U.S. participation in the TPP.

\n

\n\n

Why TPP was opposed?

\n\n

\n

- It was opposed because of its far-reaching provisions that increased corporate power over trade at the expense of workers and consumers.

\n

- It provided explicit protection for 'biologics' - drugs manufactured in a living organism, rather than through chemical synthesis.

\n

- It also provided for a provision called called 'data exclusivity' or 'marketing exclusivity'.

\n

- It prevented a generic company (that provides cheaper medicine) from relying on the clinical test results in order to prove the efficacy of its drug.

\n

\n\n

What is the legacy of TPP?

\n\n

- \n
- The developed world's ambitions for intellectual property will not die with TPP. It might simply migrate to other agreements like Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) agreement which involves 16 countries.
- \n
- The RCEP negotiations also feature some of the intellectual property provisions of the TPP. This is a great concern for access to medicines globally, especially for key generic drug-producing countries like India.
- \n
- U.S. withdrawal from the TPP may change the U.S.' approach to trade and intellectual property by switching from trade agreements that includes several countries to bilateral free trade agreements (FTAs).
- \n
- So, the U.S. is likely to continue (if not worsen it) its vigorous campaign against the violators of U.S. intellectual property.
- \n
- Despite the public health impact of the TPP's provisions, it is unlikely that these concerns will guide U.S. trade or foreign policy.

\n

\n\n

What is the way ahead?

\n\n

- \n
- In reality, the TPP had been dead long. But the global subversion of access to medicines through trade agreements and diplomatic pressure by the U.S. will continue.
- \n
- So, there is now a greater need for vigilance against the ever-expanding corporate control over generic medicines.
- \n
- In India, we need greater government commitment to the use of the public health safeguards in our patent law to survive this era.

\n

\n\n

\n\n

Source: The Hindu

\n

