

Make essential drugs affordable for all: Cipla

Indispensable medicine should not be sold under monopoly

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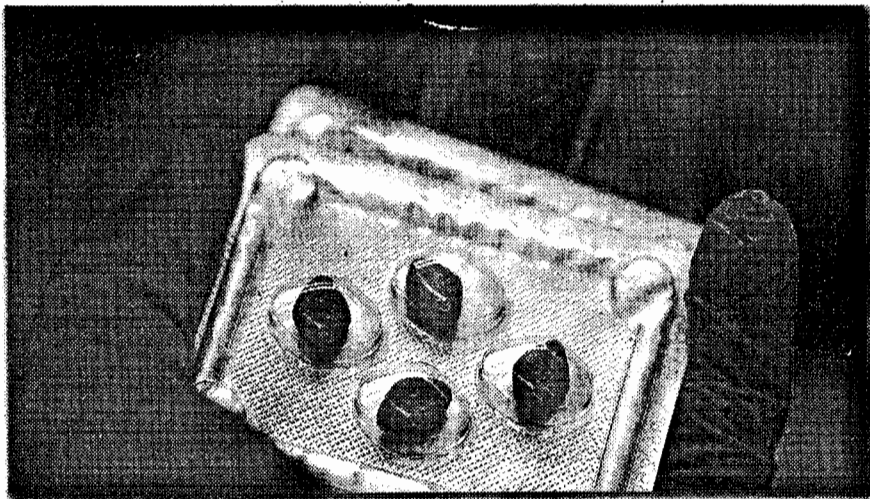
AMID US firms' allegations of patent norm violations against Indian pharma companies, leading domestic drug maker Cipla has said that essential medicines be made available to people at affordable rates and should not be sold under monopoly.

"As a scientist I believe that an inventor or innovator of a new drug should be suitably rewarded, no doubt about that. But then, if the drug is essential it should not be sold under monopoly," Cipla chairman Yusuf Hamied said.

Hamied, who was speaking here at the special screening of documentary *Fire in the Blood*, said the right to live should not be dependent on the ability to pay.

"It is important to ensure that essential life saving and vital drugs are available at affordable prices not only in developing countries but worldwide," he added.

"The right to live should



HEALTH ISSUES: US pharma lobbies are pressuring their government to take action over issuance of compulsory license by Indian government to a domestic firm

not be dependent on the ability to pay, lives cannot be sacrificed at the altar of corporate profit and greed," Hamied said.

The US pharma lobbies are pressuring their government to take action against India. They are alleging that Indian IPR laws discriminate against Ameri-

can companies. They have raised concerns regarding Swiss pharma major Novartis losing the legal battle for getting its blood cancer drug Glivec patented in India. They have also raised concerns over issuance of compulsory license by Indian government to a domestic firm. Calling the phar-

maceutical industry a 'healthcare custodian' of the world, Hamied offered technology transfer to produce affordable drugs to the developing countries.

"I do believe that countries should take up this offer from India to provide technology to the developing world," he added.

Pricing.