

## Novartis Calls for Predictable IPR Policy

Our Bureau

**New Delhi:** Swiss drug maker Novartis has called for a highly predictable intellectual property rights regime and regulations which reward innovation.

"India wants to develop to the same framework that we have in Europe, Switzerland or US. It is very important that the environment becomes highly predictable and that IPRs are clearly defined," Lutz Hegemann, global head of development-established medicines franchise at Novartis Pharma AG said on Tuesday while addressing the Swiss Embassy's public symposium on innovation.

The cost of research and development

has increased exponentially over the past 20 years to over \$4.6 billion in 2011 and laws need to encourage activities of drug development, said Hegemann. "Beyond intellectual property innovation can be incentivised by strong regulatory mechanism, access to quality medicines and rewarding valuable innovation," he said.

The Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion is expected to soon take the draft IPR policy to the Cabinet for approval.

"The rules being framed should provide a fillip because we truly want to go from 'Make-in India' to 'invent in India' because in any economy which needs to be successful the core has to be

innovation," said Ranjit Shahani, managing director and vice chairman, Novartis India.

Shahani said there are too many triggers for compulsory licence that exist in India and threshold limits are pretty low. "Definitions of national emergency must be pretty clear. This is an evolving matter and it requires more clarification," he said.

According to Novartis, it has an "industry-leading pipeline which addresses major unmet medical needs". Some of the drugs it is planning to introduce in India are meant to cure heart failure, psoriasis, ankylosing spondylitis and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. The company has invested \$9.9 billion in research of new drugs and medical devices.

*Patent.*