



News Updates: June 26, 2014

Patents/ Compulsory licensing/ Intellectual property rights

Publication: The Hindu Business Line

Edition: National

Date: June 26, 2014

Opinion piece: Ritesh Kumar Singh, Prachi Priya, corporate economists

Headline: [India should seal trade pact with EU](#)

Synopsis: Despite several rounds of the negotiations which started in 2007, the proposed EU-India Bilateral Trade and Investment Agreement (BTIA) covering trade in merchandise, services and investment is far from concluded. Given the subdued sentiment on foreign investment and trade, restoring activity to its normal level will be one of the top priorities of the Narendra Modi government. What is holding back the conclusion of the pact? India's IPR regime is one of the impediments. India fears that any commitment over and above WTO's intellectual property right rules will undermine India's capacity to produce generic formulations. Further, data exclusivity protection measures (that allows pharmaceutical companies to exclusively retain rights to their test results for a certain time period) would delay the supply of generic medicines. That explains India's opposition to the proposal. European pharmaceutical companies are wary of India's patents law which prevents evergreening, which allows companies to renew patents on old drugs by making incremental changes.

Clinical trials

Publication: Pharmabiz

Edition: Online

Date: June 26, 2014

Headline: [Drug firms concerned over lower rate of clinical trial approvals in India: IPA](#)

Synopsis: Pharmaceutical companies in India are expressing concern over the lower rate of clinical trial approvals in the country for some years now. The slow rate of trial approvals is not only hindering the new drug discovery initiatives in the country but also losing out huge business opportunities to other countries like Malaysia, Indonesia and Philippines in the clinical trial segment. According to the Indian pharmaceutical alliance (IPA), during the past one year till June 2014 there have been only about 25 clinical trials approved in the country. Having learned this, majority of drug manufacturing firms in India are concerned over the lower rate of clinical trial approvals, as free and fair testing of drugs is essential to come up with new medicines in the country.

Union Health Ministry

Publication: Mint

Edition: Online

Date: June 25, 2014

Headline: [Harsh Vardhan holds talks with US health secretary](#)

Synopsis: Union health minister Harsh Vardhan has met his American counterpart Sylvia Mathews Burwell and held discussions over a range of bilateral issues. Vardhan, the first cabinet minister of Narendra Modi government to visit the US, also met the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) administrator Raj Shah on Tuesday. The meeting came on the eve of an important international meet "Acting on the Call: Ending Preventable Child and Maternal Deaths" being organized by the US in association with India and Ethiopia. In their meeting, Vardhan and Burwell are understood to have reviewed the India-US health initiatives and discussed new areas of

collaboration that could be forged between the two countries.

Similar reports in-

Outlook- [Harsh Vardhan Outlines Actions to Reduce Maternal, Child Deaths](#)
NDTV- [India, US and Ethiopia Join Hands to Fight Child, Maternal Deaths](#)

Drug pricing

Publication: The Hindu

Edition: National

Date: June 26, 2014

Editorial: Ramnath Subbu, Senior Assistant Editor

Headline: [Move to bring more drugs under control draws flak](#)

Synopsis: The pharmaceutical industry is perturbed by the government's proposal to increase the number of medicines under price control. While no time frame is set, a committee is already in place. The Drug Price Control Order (DPCO) 2013 controls the price of 348 medicines deemed essential under the National List of Essential Medicines (NLEM). "One hopes the new committee applies the same criteria because if they differ, it will be a piquant situation of different criteria at different times," an industry expert said.

Publication: The Times of India

Edition: Online

Date: June 26, 2014

Headline: [Amma pharmacies: A balm for drug pricing](#)

Synopsis: Tamil Nadu government is now launching a chain of Amma drug stores, a welfare scheme that promises to upend the pharma industry's pricing model. Providing branded medicine at a discount of 10% to MRP (maximum retail price) through state-run outlets, the AIADMK regime hopes to soften the impact of rising prices on the public. At a time when the Centre is looking at ways to bring more drugs in the \$15bn Indian market under price control, the TN model of intervention promises a novel solution. The plan is to use the cooperative store network in the state to stock up on branded medicines bought in bulk from drug companies at a marginal discount and ensure sale at a slightly marked-up price that would still be below the rate at which they are sold in the open retail market.

Drug regulation/ Drug quality

Publication: The Financial Express

Edition: National

Date: June 26, 2014

Headline: [Govt may prescribe subsidy pill for pharma firms to upgrade plants](#)

Synopsis: The Modi government is likely to offer a financing scheme to the domestic pharmaceutical industry, which is facing a high-pitched offensive from the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) on quality, to upgrade their manufacturing facilities and meet stringent standards of the world's leading export markets. One of the possibilities being thought about is an interest subsidy scheme for the upgradation of manufacturing facilities. An announcement of the scheme could either come in the Budget for FY15 or shortly thereafter. The department of pharmaceuticals is working on the scope of the scheme, its modalities and possible financial institutions to partner with.

Publication: The Indian Express

Edition: Online

Date: June 26, 2014

Headline: [Several drugs in govt hospitals fail quality tests in random checks](#)

Synopsis: Seven drug samples, selected randomly in government hospitals and dispensaries in the capital, have been found to be “not of standard quality”, in tests conducted by the state drug control department till March this year. Manufacturing licences in two cases were suspended for a period of 20 and 30 days respectively, for three days in one case and, in the remaining four cases, action is yet to be taken by drug control authorities of states where the companies are based. According to data submitted by the drug control department to the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), anti-hypertensive drugs Atenolol and Ramipril were found below standard in the AIIMS medical store, Delhi government’s Guru Teg Bahadur (GTB) hospital and in the allopathic dispensary run by the municipal corporation in Chandni Chowk.

Universal Health Coverage/ Public Health

Publication: Mint

Edition: National

Date: June 26, 2014

Headline: [Focus on higher spending, universal coverage](#)

Synopsis: The last three years have seen little increase in health spending, according to Sakthivel Selvaraj, senior health economist at the Public Health Foundation of India, a not-for-profit organization. In real terms (considering high inflation), there was a decline, he said. Both Union and state governments should increase spending on public health, Selvaraj added. India has made little progress in achieving universal health coverage—despite several ambitious programmes designed to do so. The new government has expressed its commitment to universally accessible, affordable and effective, holistic healthcare.

Publication: Mint

Edition: National

Date: June 26, 2014

Opinion piece: K. Srinath Reddy, President, Public Health Foundation of India

Headline: [Grow health for development](#)

Synopsis: Health must become a high priority in a nationally agreed development agenda, with both the Centre and states subscribing to a shared vision and pledging a common commitment to concerted action. This is required not only because the Constitution places the mantle of health services delivery mainly on the states, but also because universal health coverage, unveiled as an aspirational goal in the 12th Plan, cannot be implemented if there is a lack of consensus across this large federal polity. Health and nutrition are now well recognized as important levers for economic development. The World Health Organization’s Commission on Macroeconomics and Health helped to position this firmly in the global development discourse. The recently published report of the Lancet Commission on Investing in Health estimated the benefits of increased investments for accelerating progress on the global health goals set in 2000—the economic returns would be ninefold for low income countries and 20-fold for low-middle income countries such as India. On the other hand, failure to prevent child malnutrition and adult heart disease can cause a huge loss of brain power and productivity, impairing growth and escalating healthcare costs.

Indo- US ties

Publication: The Hindu

Edition: Online

Date: June 26, 2014

Headline: [US urged to back India’s APEC entry](#)

Synopsis: As new government has taken charge in India, the Obama administration has an opportunity to revitalise its economic ties with India by the latter’s inclusion in the Asia-Pacific

Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum, a top American think-tank has said. A new policy innovation memorandum, authored by Alyssa Ayres of the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) explains that economic ties between the two countries have soured, and remain well below potential. India has been waiting nearly 20 years to join APEC, and further delay “is both a strategic and tactical mistake”, she noted. An India within APEC would likely ameliorate some concerns about U.S.-India economic ties today, asserted Ms. Ayers, who served in the South and Central Asia Bureau of the State Department for several year, before joining CFR. Entry would also affect India’s commitments to free and open trade, and build confidence for considering Indian membership in the Trans-Pacific Partnership, she said.

General industry

Publication: Deccan Herald

Edition: National

Date: June 26, 2014

Headline: [Everyone has a role to play in creating awareness](#)

Synopsis: Even as we rejoice the eradication of polio from India, another dreaded and stigmatised disease called leprosy continues to stalk the country. Though the impression among the public today is that India has been cleansed of the illness, nothing is farther from the truth. In the year 2010-11, a whopping 1,27,000 persons were diagnosed with leprosy. The successive year, 1,35,00 new cases emerged. One million Indians are now estimated to be suffering from the disease, which is 58 per cent of the total international burden, and NHRC (National Human Rights Commission) has recently written to the Union Health Ministry asking for an explanation on the disturbing upward spiral.

Publication: The Economic Times

Edition: Online

Date: June 26, 2014

Headline: [US healthcare profit outlook brightens on Obamacare, drug prices](#)

Synopsis: U.S. healthcare companies are winning higher profit forecasts, bucking a wider trend on Wall Street, as pricey new biotech drugs hit the market and insurance enrollment rises under the Affordable Care Act. Analysts' profit expectations for the group have risen sharply since the start of the year, while estimates for most of the other nine Standard & Poor's 500 macro sectors have fallen, according to Thomson Reuters data. The jump in forecasts has come in the past two months, thanks largely to rising estimates for biotechnology companies such as Gilead, and for insurers, including Aetna .

Publication: Business Standard

Edition: National

Date: June 26, 2014

Headline: [Pharma body seeks exemptions for R&D, drug samples](#)

Synopsis: The Indian Drug Manufacturers' Association (IDMA) here today asked the government 'control samples' and samples given to physicians be exempted from duties and taxes in the Budget. The drug makers' body in a memorandum sent to the Finance Ministry also requested that all excisable goods used for Research & Development purposes should be exempted from central excise duty, besides allowing exemption for capital goods, raw materials, consumables, and reference standards for R&D purposes.

