

IPR & Innovation

National IPR Policy to be delayed further, [Business Standard - THE SMART INVESTOR - Kolkata](#)

The much-awaited National Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) Policy might be delayed further, with the draft getting stuck at the inter-ministerial consultation level and inputs from key ministries yet to come. The department of industrial policy and promotion (DIPP), under the ministry of commerce and industry, had prepared and circulated the draft policy and invited public comments last year. The draft is now with ministries, which were expected to respond with feedback by the middle of this month. **Ranjana Smetacek**, **Director-General of the Organisation of Pharmaceutical Producers of India**, said the government should come out with a robust policy, after investing so much time on it. In its latest Special 301 IPR report, the US trade representative had again kept India under the category of 'Priority Watch List' and threatened to take "further actions" if the intellectual property climate does not improve.

Access to Healthcare

Does Modi govt have a strategy to back universal health coverage?, [Hindustan Times](#)

The National Democratic Alliance government began its term in 2014 with a flurry of progressive announcements to improve healthcare, coining the phrase "health assurance for all." It signaled a move away from reliance on traditional medical insurance and suggested that assuring good health outcomes depends on the provision of universal healthcare, and also on two critical and complementary factors: addressing the social determinants of health and putting in place mechanisms to guarantee quality and redress grievances to ensure accountability. Over the past year, the ministry of health and family welfare has announced several new initiatives, including measures to reduce neonatal mortality and achieve universal immunization coverage. It also released India's first national mental health policy and issued a draft national health policy for comments in December 2014.

Ethics & Compliance

Use of skin creams not risk-free, [The Times of India](#)

Dermatologists believe that some ointments have no business being in the open market, but topical steroid combinations are sold unrestricted to anyone complaining of itching, soreness, acne or any common skin complaint. Also, known for their skin lightening effect, these harmful steroids are widely used by many. In 2014 Indian Association of Dermatologists, Venereologist and Leperologists (IADVL) formed a Task Force Against Topical Steroid Abuse (TFATSA) to convince the Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) to ban the sale of these creams without prescription. "The government is ignorant to the overuse of topical steroids as they do not cause mortality. The fairness obsession is being exploited by companies manufacturing and promoting these irrational combinations," said Dr Shyam Verma (IADVL member and national coordinator of TFATSA).

Other News on Pharma

Stents, pacemakers, orthopedic implants to be included in DPCO, [Business Standard](#)

Life saving medical devices like stents, pacemakers and orthopedic implants would be included in the Drug Price Control Order (DPCO), the Centre has announced today. The DPCO is an order issued by the Government of India to control and regulate the price of essential and life-saving drugs. The central government is committed to end the "drug mafia" which is responsible for unaffordable prices of medical devices like stents, Minister of Chemicals and Fertilisers Ananth Kumar said.

Similar reports have appeared in:

[Zee News](#)

Maharashtra FDA detects 5 distributors involved in overpricing of cardiac stents, [Pharmabiz.com](#)

Maharashtra Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has detected five such distributors involved in overpricing stents based on a probe conducted over a period of six months. An inquiry into the rampant malpractice, according to the FDA Commissioner Dr Harshadeep Kamble has further revealed that cardiac stents were exorbitantly priced across seven hospitals from Mumbai, Pune and Nashik. The

MRP of the imported stents is being usually jacked up by 300 per cent to 700 per cent of the actual cost of import.

Industry seeks clarity on concessional duty on import of medical devices, wants tax anomalies remove, Pharmabiz.com

Medical devices industry urged the government to take immediate steps on the issue of applicability of concessional duty on import of medical devices. Experts stress that lack of clear stand on this matter by the ministry of health and the department of pharmaceutical is leading to a bureaucratic logjam, preventing the revenue department from taking any concrete measure. The medical device industry has been for a very long time demanding the government to withdraw the concessional duty notification that requires importers to pay only 0 to 5 per cent import duty on medical devices.

Ayush ministry to strengthen ties with China's SATCM, other countries to boost ISM medicine growth, Pharmabiz.com

Ministry of Ayush is seriously working to give a fillip to its collaborations with countries that have strong focus on herbal medicine. The recent renewal of its memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the China State Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine (SATCM) on cooperation in traditional medicine after it concluded its five year validity period on January 13, 2013 signals a new trend in alternative medicine. Another MoU is proposed to be signed with Mongolia and Serbia. Efforts to establish a Chair in the colleges of China for traditional medicine has been sought.
