

1. **[Concern over drug quality](#) – Business Standard**

Two recent developments outline the serious challenges facing the Indian pharmaceuticals industry. One is the order by a single-judge bench of the Delhi High Court quashing the ban imposed by the Union health ministry on as many as 344 fixed-dose combination drugs. The other is the US pharmaceuticals regulator, the Food and Drug Administration, finding the Halol plant of Sun Pharmaceutical lacking in good manufacturing practices, despite having had the time to set things right since the first “observations” were issued.

2. **[India needs to invest more in public healthcare: WHO](#) – The New Indian Express**

India needs to invest more in public healthcare and build a robust health delivery system in all aspects, including infrastructure and human resources, with special focus on rural areas, the WHO today said. "We know that nations need a healthy population to prosper. Stepping up investment in public healthcare is pivotal to sustaining India's economic growth. Investing in health is investing in India's growth story," Dr Henk Bekedam, WHO Representative to India, told PTI.

According to Bekedam, though India has made enormous progress in the healthcare sector in recent past, still "60 million people are in poverty through paying healthcare bills mainly because of the country's low investment in health, inadequate financial protection and high out-of-pocket expenditure". He said many more abstain from health services or delay seeking healthcare due to financial difficulties.

In this context, the WHO proposed a few steps of working with the government to position health higher on the agenda, both at the national and state levels.

3. **[Government plans equal abortion rights for single women](#) – The Economic Times**

In a move that will make it easier for single women to safely and legally terminate unwanted pregnancies, the health ministry has recommended recognising "failure of contraceptive" and "unplanned pregnancy" as lawful reasons for abortion among all women, married or otherwise. At present, the law recognises these two reasons for abortion only in case of "married" women. The relief is part of a series of recommendations made by the health ministry for amendment of the Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Act.

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2. **[India needs to invest more in public healthcare: WHO](#) – The New Indian Express**
3. **[Government plans equal abortion rights for single women](#) – The Economic Times**
4. **[Mozambique raises quality concerns on Indian drug exports](#) – The Indian Express**
5. **[It's wait and watch for pharma industry](#) – Deccan Herald**
6. **[All's not well with pharma funds](#) – The Hindu Business Line**
7. **[Healthcare policy decisions must be made keeping in mind, 'Do to your patient, what you will do to yourself'](#) – Firstpost.com**
8. **[Wary Drug Makers Move to Fend Off Further Attacks Under Donald Trump](#) – The New York Times**
9. **[WHO urges Trump to expand Obamacare, ensure healthcare for all](#) – Reuters.com**
10. **[DoP directs NPPA to adopt correct methodology in fixing ceiling price of ciprofloxacin 500 & 250 mg tabs](#) – Pharmabiz.com**

The proposal is likely to be taken up by the Cabinet soon after the ongoing Parliament session ends, sources said. The existing MTP Act requires a doctor to indicate a reason for abortion. This could be to save the life of the woman, in case of rape or incest, or due to the physical or mental health of the woman. Recognising the growing reality of sexually active single or unmarried women, the government's recommendations aim to widen the purview of legal abortion. Experts say the move is progressive and will give women safe and legal abortion options.

4. [Mozambique raises quality concerns on Indian drug exports](#) – The Indian Express

Mozambique has raised concerns with the Union health ministry about the quality of medicines that are being exported from India. This communication from Mozambique has come to light after the drug regulator of Vietnam took a major step of blacklisting 39 Indian pharmaceutical companies as they were found to be exporting low-quality drugs there. Vietnam's drug regulator took this decision a few weeks ago. The Mozambique's drug authority discussed the quality issues related to Indian drugs directly with C K Mishra, secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare who was on a visit there. During the last meeting of Drugs Consultative Committee (DCC), which took place on November 4 and November 5, the Mozambique issue was mentioned by K L Sharma, joint secretary (Regulation), Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

5. [It's wait and watch for pharma industry](#) – Deccan Herald

The Union government invoked its power under Section 26A of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940 (Drugs Act), to ban 344 fixed drug combinations (FDCs) for larger public good. The impact was such that as many as 454 petitions were filed in the Delhi High Court seeking immediate revocation of the ban. The pharmaceutical firms – small, medium and big – were looking at the high court to stop the government and the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) from prohibiting the manufacture, distribution and sale of these drugs in the country. Several popular medicines such as Corex – sold since 1989 – too were banned, with the government questioning the quality and therapeutic value of some of the FDCs.

The government had constituted a committee under the chairmanship of Dr C K Kokate, vice-chancellor, KLE University, Belagavi, Karnataka, in September 2014, to examine the safety and efficacy of these FDCs. Later, the Centre made the recommendations of Kokate panel report as the basis for its decision to ban the 344 drugs.

6. [All's not well with pharma funds](#) – The Hindu Business Line

After a stellar rally which lasted for over seven years, pharma stocks took a breather last year. Concerns over regulatory action by the US Food and Drug Administration on Indian drug makers, citing quality lapses, caused nervousness among investors. Also, the uncertainty regarding US elections and concerns regarding change in government policies had a rub-off on the stock prices of Indian drugmakers. Over the past year, the BSE Healthcare Index has shed over 7 per cent while the BSE Sensex gained about a per cent. Pharma funds that invest their corpus in drugmakers have seen their NAV decline by 5-7 per cent in the last 12 months.

7. [Healthcare policy decisions must be made keeping in mind, 'Do to your patient, what you will do to yourself'](#) – Firstpost.com

A patient's quality of life and longevity should be given paramount importance in any decision undertaken in the healthcare sector. Since it is an important and sensitive matter, healthcare needs to be driven by patient's right to select quality products and therapies that are backed by scientific evidence and due diligence.

Regulators need to understand that putting a price cap on stents will only discourage innovators from bringing out better products in India, thereby limiting choice for both the doctor and the

patients. If the manufacturers start to find the market unsustainable, India will only become home to outdated, sub-standard and less tested devices. After all, if pricing is the only criteria we work on, then we would still be working with the first stent that came out 25 years back. Thankfully technology innovation and research kept creating new path-breaking products and now we have safer and much better devices 'because' we didn't just stay put after the first device. If I have to put it plainly: just pricing can never be the main criteria when it comes to saving lives. I will not use a medical device just because it is cheap - simply because lives are dependent on it.

8. [Wary Drug Makers Move to Fend Off Further Attacks Under Donald Trump – The New York Times](#)
If the nation's pharmaceutical executives thought Donald J. Trump would grant them a reprieve from scrutiny over high drug prices, he made them reconsider that idea in the last few days. "I'm going to bring down drug prices," he told Time magazine in an interview published on Wednesday. "I don't like what's happened with drug prices." Biotech stocks promptly fell nearly 3 percent on Wednesday. They recovered slightly on Thursday and Friday, but the comments remained a warning blow for an industry that had rallied in the weeks after the election, on the assumption that Mr. Trump and a Republican Congress would be friendly to the nation's drug makers. Suddenly, it looked as if pharmaceutical companies might join Carrier, Ford and Boeing as targets of Mr. Trump's ire.

9. [WHO urges Trump to expand Obamacare, ensure healthcare for all – Reuters.com](#)
The World Health Organization (WHO) on Friday urged U.S. President-elect Donald Trump to expand Obamacare and ensure all Americans have access to healthcare. The real estate magnate takes office next month after promising to repeal outgoing President Barack Obama's signature healthcare policy which helped millions more Americans get medical insurance but has been a target of Republican attacks.

Agnes Soucat, the WHO's director of health system governance and financing, said there were various ways of providing health cover to more people, and it amounted to "political choices." "We as the WHO really encourage the new administration to make sure that the social contract is expanded and that all U.S. citizens have access to health care," Soucat told a news briefing in Geneva. The United States is the only country among the 35 member states of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) not to provide universal health care, a key U.N. Sustainable Development Goal for 2030, she said.

10. [DoP directs NPPA to adopt correct methodology in fixing ceiling price of ciprofloxacin 500 & 250 mg tabs – Pharmabiz.com](#)
The Department of Pharmaceuticals (DoP) has directed the NPPA to adopt the correct methodology in all such cases of calculating the ceiling price of scheduled formulations like ciprofloxacin 500 mg and ciprofloxacin 250 mg tablets as per para 4(i) of DPCO, 2013 and provisions of existing Schedule-I by including market shares of only generic/brands and not company-wise MAT percentage.