

1. [World Cancer Day: India begins free screening for oral, breast and cervical cancers](#) – Hindustan Times

India will start a door-to-door campaign to screen for three common cancers—oral, cervical and breast -- on February 4, World Cancer Day. The formal launch has been defeated till the ongoing elections are over. "We will start training the medical officers from Saturday as we wanted the programme to start on world cancer day. The actual screening will start after a formal launch after the elections get over," said a senior official at the Union health ministry, requesting anonymity. The campaign was announced last year as part of government's flagship programme—Prevention, Screening and Control of Common Non-Communicable Diseases to be rolled out under the National Health Mission (NHM). Apart from three cancers, people will also be screened for diabetes and hypertension. For the initial phase of the programme, 100 districts have been identified where it will be launched and later more districts will be included. The programme is conducted by the National Health Resource Centre.

2. [Did government mislead Supreme Court on move to scrap drug body?](#) – The Times of India

The government has told the Supreme court that there was no basis to reports that it proposed to disband the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) or to delink the Drug Price Control Order (DPCO) from the National List of Essential Medicines (NLEM). However, the minutes of a meeting held in the health ministry on November 19, obtained through RTI, reveal that Niti Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant and secretaries of the departments of pharmaceuticals (DoP), industrial policy and promotion and health did decide that "DPCO may be delinked from the NLEM, and the NPPA in its present form and current function may be wound up and deployed in the DoP with a new mandate". According to RTI documents, the meeting held in Nirman Bhawan was to discuss "issues relating to the pharmaceutical sector in pursuance of the meeting held earlier on October 1, 2016 under the chairmanship of PM's principal secretary". The proceedings of the Nov 19 meeting go on to list "the decision taken on each of the items included in the minutes of the meeting held in PMO on October 1".

1. [World Cancer Day: India begins free screening for oral, breast and cervical cancers](#) – Hindustan Times
2. [Did government mislead Supreme Court on move to scrap drug body?](#) – The Times of India
3. ['Tsunami of non-communicable diseases is approaching'](#) – The Hindu
4. [Antibiotic Resistance](#) – Business Standard
5. [State to move towards generic drugs](#) – The Hindu
6. [India's dengue fighter: 'We have developed the world's first dengue drug'](#) – The Times of India
7. [Delegates from 50 countries to participate in BioAsia](#) – Business Standard
8. [Preventable deaths rising in Delhi due to inefficient healthcare: study](#) – Deccan Chronicle
9. [Health Budget: Reality Check](#) – The Indian Express
10. [Strides Shasun plans to de-merge API business into separate listed entity](#) – Mint
11. [Tamil Nadu govt to initiate mass vaccination for measles and rubella](#) – The Times of India
12. [Reactions of disappointments come out from pharma industry leaders and analysts on Union Budget](#) – Pharambiz.com

3. **'Tsunami of non-communicable diseases is approaching' – The Hindu**

"A tsunami of non-communicable diseases (NCD) is about to hit us and it is imperative to prevent it from happening," cautioned Prathap C. Reddy, cardiologist and founder of Apollo Hospitals. He was speaking at the inauguration of the third annual conference of the Heart Failure Association of India that will be held this weekend in the city. Dr. Reddy said the world's population is expected to spend an estimated \$ 30 trillion on NCDs and India's contribution would be \$ five trillion. Given that the allocation for health is only around 1.2% to 1.3% of the total budget, it is necessary to raise awareness among people to prevent a disaster. "If you work eight hours a day, then set aside three minutes per hour that is 24 minutes for exercise," he advised. "India accounts for four to five million cases of heart failure and world-wide, around 2.5 crore (24-25 million) cases are registered," said T. Sunder, cardiothoracic and heart-lung transplant surgeon, adding that "a failing heart affects all organs of the body. As the heart cannot pump efficiently, blood stagnates in the lungs, kidneys and liver, affecting their function. This requires intervention by specialists with expertise.

4. **Antibiotic Resistance – Business Standard**

There has been an increase in the antibiotic resistance in the past few years. There are many publications from various institutions in India showing high level of resistance to antibiotics. Government of India has launched the 'National Programme on Containment of Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR)' under the 12th Five Year Plan under which a surveillance lab network of ten labs has been established to monitor trends of AMR in the country. The trends from AMR data gathered in the year 2015 from these tertiary care centres show high resistance to commonly used antibiotics for treatment of bacterial infections. Through various studies conducted in various institutions in India, it is a known fact that over/ mis-use of antimicrobial drugs are responsible for rising antimicrobial resistance in human, animal and food sectors. Other factors are inadequate sanitation and infection control practices in health care settings and also in the community.

5. **State to move towards generic drugs – The Hindu**

Kerala is making a major shift towards promoting the use of generic medicines among doctors and the public by making available generic variants of branded medicines through the Karunya community pharma outlets. The new initiative, which will bear the brand name Kerala Generics, is another venture of Kerala Medical Services Corporation Ltd. and will be rolled out on April 1, Rajeev Sadanandan, Additional Chief Secretary, Health, told The Hindu. Karunya community pharmacies were launched by KMSCL in 2012, to cater to the preference of Keralites for branded drugs, which are sold through Karunya at discounted prices. "We are now giving people an option of buying safe and quality-assured generic drugs at low price. The generics will be sold through Karunya outlets initially, but will have a separate branding, colour code and a separate counter. We will pilot the scheme through four Karunya outlets and if the business model is successful, we will scale it up," Mr. Sadanandan said.

6. **India's dengue fighter: 'We have developed the world's first dengue drug' – The Times of India**

For the past 17 years, Dr Navin Khanna has been hard at work in his lab at the International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB) in Delhi to develop ways to combat dengue. After developing a test kit, he and his team have acquired an international patent on the world's first drug to combat dengue - Cipa. This comes at a time when there 25,000 deaths and 400m cases of dengue worldwide annually. The dengue fighter spoke to Sunday Times.

It was a collective effort of ICGEB and Ranbaxy (later acquired by Sun Pharma) and funded by the department of biotechnology (DBT). A group of scientists in Ranbaxy was already engaged in finding an antidote for dengue using our traditional knowledge of Ayurveda. They had shortlisted 19 plant extracts, including from neem, aloe and basil, which could provide relief from dengue symptoms. Now our job was to find the actual winner. We put these extracts through rigorous tests for over

five years. Cissampelos pareira (patha in Hindi and abuta in English) emerged a clear winner with its ability to destroy the virus as well as being non-toxic to human cells. Traditionally, it's been used among other things to treat women's reproductive health problems. In some countries it's called the midwife's herb as it induces labour. Sun Pharma, ICGEB and DBT filed for a US patent in August 2016 and also published our findings.

7. [Delegates from 50 countries to participate in BioAsia](#) – Business Standard

About 1,500 delegates from over 50 countries will attend BioAsia, the annual technology and bio-business convention beginning here on Monday (February 6). The three-day flagship event of the government of Telangana will be inaugurated by Governor E.S.L. Narasimhan in the presence of industry leaders. According to the organisers, about 100 high profile speakers will address the event, which will see participation by 800 corporates. Over the years, BioAsia has emerged as a pre-eminent technology and bio-business convention in Asia for life sciences, pharmaceuticals and healthcare. At the inaugural ceremony, the Genome Valley Excellence Award will be presented to Nobel Laureate Kurt Wuthrich and Paul Stoffels, Worldwide Chairman Pharmaceuticals and Chief Scientific Officer of Johnson & Johnson for their immense contribution in the field of life sciences and healthcare.

8. [Preventable deaths rising in Delhi due to inefficient healthcare: study](#) – Deccan Chronicle

Deaths due to preventable illness such as tuberculosis has been on the rise in Delhi, warns a new study which shows that government efforts to improve health care has been insufficient to combat the impact of poverty and inequalities in India's capital city. Researchers from Rutgers School of Public Health, New York University and Columbia University in the US found that between 2004 and 2013 amenable mortality increased by about 25 per cent in Delhi. Compared to similar large middle-income nations, India has failed to achieve minimal sanitation and public health standards, resulting in a climbing rate of amenable mortality - premature deaths due to causes which are treatable. Delhi was selected for the study because its statistics are medically certified and more complete than those of India as a whole. Delhi's rates of amenable mortality were compared against those of Moscow, Sao Paulo and Shanghai, mega cities in similar large, middle-income countries with booming economies that likewise have been striving toward a goal of universal health coverage.

9. [Health Budget: Reality Check](#) – The Indian Express

The health budget this year has made special provisions for elimination of five infectious diseases, strengthening of rural sub-centres, and recruitment of specialist doctors in government hospitals, increased allocation for programmes for women and children, and free treatment for the elderly poor. Missing in this list is a mention of increased budgetary support for the prevention, control and care for non-communicable diseases like cancer, diabetes, hypertension and heart diseases — the major causes of ill health, disability and death in the country today. These diseases do not only afflict urban residents. They are the major cause of death and ill health in rural areas, where incomes are lower, and medical services are more difficult to reach. A small part of this distress could have been addressed through additional budgetary provisions. This would also have reflected an acknowledgement on the part of policymakers, that these conditions, and not infectious diseases, are now the major cause of ill health in the country. Since Independence, a significant portion of the health budget has been channelised into infectious disease control programmes, so that these diseases now account for less than 10 per cent of deaths and only 15 per cent of ill health in the country.

10. [Strides Shasun plans to de-merge API business into separate listed entity](#) – Mint

Strides Shasun Ltd on Friday announced an organizational restructuring plan which will see it demerge and list its active pharmaceutical ingredients (API) business, exit probiotics and cap its investment in the biotech business. The Bengaluru-based company said it will retain its consumer-facing formulations business in regulated and emerging markets and carve out its business-to-

business (B2B) operations. The company has sought shareholder approval to demerge the commodity API business. A related API business currently owned by SeQuent Scientific Ltd (which is owned by the promoters of Strides Shasun) will also be merged into the proposed new API company in a bid to provide critical size to this business, according to the filing. The board of Strides Shasun has formed a committee, comprising of 3 independent directors, to appoint valuers, merchant bankers, solicitors and other intermediaries for the scheme of de-merger.

11. [Tamil Nadu govt to initiate mass vaccination for measles and rubella](#) - The Times of India

After close to a year of planning logistics, setting up facilities, training field workers and allaying fears, the state government will initiate the Centre's mass vaccination drive for measles and rubella on Monday. On Sunday, representatives of the Indian Academy of Paediatrics (IAP), WHO and UNICEF held a meeting in the city and sent out an appeal to all schools and parents to bring their children for the drive and not be swayed away by rumour mongers. In Tamil Nadu, around 1.8 crore children from nine months to 15years -- nearly a quarter of the state's population-- will be vaccinated from February 6 to 28. In Chennai, officials intend to cover 1.02 lakh children in 135 schools on day one. "When we announced the programme, several concerns were raised by parents. But with IAP and other doctors' bodies backing the drive, people are more convinced," said K Kolandaswamy Director of Public Health. Around 16lakh children in the city will be covered at the end of the drive. From February 6 to 16, the vaccination campaign will be held in government, private and aided schools. In the latter phase, the programme will be extended to anganwadi centres, health sub-centres and mobile posts in villages and urban areas. At least 1,500doctors and 10,000nurses, besides anganwadi workers and volunteers, will be involved in the programme.

12. [Reactions of disappointments come out from pharma industry leaders and analysts on Union Budget](#) – Pharambiz.com

Reactions from pharma industry leaders and analysts from various states show that the pharma sector is very much disappointed on the Union Budget presented by the finance minister Arun Jaitely in Parliament on February 1. The industry associations said pharma sector was hoping for some good tidings for it from the government, but received no relief for the industry. Reacting on the budget with severer displeasure, the president of the Bihar Drugs & Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association (BDPMA), Sanjiv Rai said, "Taking note of the prevailing situation in Bihar, we are very much disappointed with the budget presented by the union finance minister Arun Jaitely on last Wednesday in the Parliament. We were hoping so much for the pharma sector, especially for the industry in Bihar, but nothing has been taken care of". He said BDPMA had wanted special status for Bihar pharma industry in the budget, but it did not happen. The pharma sector in the state was expecting specific priorities for the MSME units operating there. All the 150 manufacturing units are small scale units and they need much attention and support from the government. The Union Budget was the only hope, but nothing has been given, he said.