

1. [Pharma Authority won't be dismantled, it will retain powers to fix drug prices: Anant Kumar](#) – The Economic Times

The Niti Aayog and the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilisers seem to be in disagreement over the role of the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority, India's drug pricing watchdog. Even as there were reports of discussions between senior officials of the Niti Aayog, health ministry and the Department of Pharmaceuticals (DoP) to shrink the regulator's pricing powers, minister for chemicals and fertilisers Ananth Kumar indicated on Wednesday that the authority will stay in its current form.

The regulator will not be dismantled or given a new mandate and will retain its independent powers to review and fix prices of drugs, the minister said.

"NPPA has only one mandate, and that is a cherished mandate. The mandate is of providing affordable medicines to the people at large. That will continue," Kumar told ET. He was speaking on the sidelines of the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the Bureau of Pharma PSUs of India and the National Yuva Cooperative Society to set up 1,000 Jan Aushadhi drug stores.

2. [NPPA seeks info about pricing, products from stent makers](#) – The Economic Times

Taking a step closer towards fixing ceiling prices of coronary stents, national drug pricing regulator NPPA has asked manufacturers and marketers of the

medical device to disclose detailed pricing data and information by the end of this month. The National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) has also called for a meeting with the stakeholders to discuss the issue on January 24. "As coronary stents have been notified by the Department of Pharmaceuticals as scheduled formulations, it is mandatory for all manufacturers/importers/marketers of coronary stents to file Form V as prescribed in DPCO, 2013 through the Integrated Pharmaceutical Database Management System (IPDMS)," NPPA said in a notification.

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2. [NPPA seeks info about pricing, products from stent makers](#) – The Economic Times
3. [Stent prices to be fixed in 10-15 days: Ananth Kumar](#) – Business Standard
4. [Superbug death spurs drug regulator warning](#) – The Times of India
5. [Budget 2017 should focus on preventive, promotive healthcare: Mehta of PwC](#) – Business Standard
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12. [18-year-old girl to get drug resistant TB drug: Health ministry to Delhi High Court](#) – Hindustan Times
13. [Zyudus Cadila open for buyouts in the US](#) – Business Standard
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All the concerned manufacturers and marketers have been asked to send the information latest by January 31, 2017, failing which, action will be initiated as per provisions of DPCO 2013, against the company, it added.

3. [Stent prices to be fixed in 10-15 days: Ananth Kumar](#) – Business Standard

With an aim of providing relief to heart patients, the government on Wednesday said it will fix prices of stents in the next 10-15 days. Chemicals and Fertilizers Minister Ananth Kumar said that drug price regulator National Pharmaceuticals Pricing Authority (NPPA) has already been asked to take up the matter. "We have asked NPPA to fix prices of stents. This issue is pending for long. The price will be fixed in the next 10 to 15 days. This will give huge relief to patients," Kumar said here. He was speaking on the sidelines of signing of a MoU between Bureau of Pharma PSUs of India (BPPI) and National Yuva Co-operative Society for opening of 1,000 Jan Aushadhi drug stores across India. The NPPA has already asked manufacturers and marketers of the medical device to disclose detailed pricing data and information by the end of this month.

4. [Superbug death spurs drug regulator warning](#) – The Times of India

In the wake of the recent death of an American woman after contracting an infection resistant to antibiotics, the drug regulator has directed the pharma supply chain, including retailers, chemists and drug makers, to strictly follow norms while selling antibiotics. The Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) has also asked companies to carry specified warnings to avoid antimicrobial resistance. "To contain anti-microbial resistance, the office has been advising the supply chain system in India to follow strict requirements of Schedule H and H1 for sale of medicines," DCGI G N Singh said in a notice issued to all state regulators and other stakeholders. The Centre has also asked state drug regulators to take "strong policy measures including stringent regulatory action on the over-the-counter (without prescription) sale of high-end antibiotics".

5. [Budget 2017 should focus on preventive, promotive healthcare: Mehta of PwC](#) – Business Standard

Emphasising that expenditure on public health in the country was quite low, Rana Mehta, partner and leader (healthcare), PwC said the government needed to focus on preventive and promotive care. Mehta also stressed on the need for a robust medical fraud detection engine as part of the insurance claims process.

India has among the lowest spends on public health. The focus of the government should be on preventive and promotive care. Secondary and tertiary care services could largely be procured from the private sector under the National Insurance Scheme.

Accessibility to healthcare in India is predominantly driven by affordability. The National Health Protection Scheme envisaged by the Government will provide insurance to the majority of the people below the poverty line. This will help them access quality healthcare facility.

6. [Pharma industry grows 29% to Rs 2.04 lakh crore in 2015-16](#) – The Economic Times

Indian pharmaceutical industry grew by 29 per cent to Rs 2,04,627 crore in 2015-16 from Rs 1,77,734 crore in 2014-15, while it attracted FDI of \$ 2.25 billion during April 2014 to March 2016. The country "is one of the largest producers of pharmaceutical products and a leading player in the global generics market, exporting nearly 50 per cent of its production", was according to the achievement report of the sector under the government's 'Make in India' initiative. "The Indian pharmaceutical industry has witnessed a robust growth in recent years growing from Rs 1,77,734 crore in FY 2014-15 to Rs 2,04,627 crore in FY 2015-16, registering a growth of 29 per cent as compared to the growth of 12 per cent from Rs 1,58,671 crore during FY 2013-14," the report said.

7. [India's immunisation programme on a fast track](#) – Daily News and Analysis

Health Ministry's Mission Indradhanush (MI), a programme on vaccination for children launched last year has helped India attain a seven per cent increase in immunisation coverage as compared to the one percent raise that had become a norm each year from 2009 to 2013. According to the Health Management Information System of the union health ministry, a total of 117 lakh immunisation sessions have been conducted from April 15, 2016 to January 13, 2017, which include both MI and Routine Immunisation (RI) programmes, which go on all year round. In a total of 28.7 lakh MI sessions conducted since the commencement of this programme till December 2016, 55 lakh children got 'fully' vaccinated. Now, in February 2017, the programme will reach out to 66 more districts in eight north-eastern states, including Sikkim.

8. [Government to set up 1,000 Janaushadhi Kendras](#) – The Economic Times

The central government on Wednesday said it aims to set up 1,000 Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Kendras (PMBJK) in both urban and rural areas as part of its "Mission 3000" Kendras. The central government aims to open 3,000 PMBJKs by March 2017. According to Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilisers, a memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed between the 'Bureau of Pharma PSUs of India' (BPPI) and 'National Yuva Cooperative Society' (NYCS) towards the initiative. Minister for Chemicals, Fertilisers and Parliamentary Affairs H.N. Ananth Kumar said the number of Janaushadhi Kendras has increased to 750 stores, thereby clocking a seven-fold jump in the last two-and-half years. "Around 20,000 applications have already been received and over 5,000 have been accorded in-principle approval for setting up of Janaushadhi Kendras in the country," the minister was quoted as saying in a statement.

9. [Lack of education a contributing factor for incomplete vaccine doses: Study](#) – Hindustan Times

The basket of vaccines under government's universal immunisation programme may be growing, but only 75% children complete the recommended three doses of diphtheria-pertussis-tetanus (DPT) vaccine in India, a new study shows. The study conducted by experts from US' Center for Disease Dynamics, Economics & Policy, which was published last week in journal Vaccine analysed factors affecting DPT vaccine uptake among children in India. In 2014, Indian children accounted for 22% of the 18.7 million children worldwide who had not received three doses of DPT by age one. Coverage with the third dose of DPT is a widely used indicator of the performance of countries' routine immunization services.

10. [Poor fungal infection diagnosis may up antibiotic resistance](#) – The Hindu

Poor diagnosis worldwide of fungal disease causes doctors to over-prescribe antibiotics, increasing harmful resistance to antimicrobial drugs, a new study has warned. According to World Health Organisation (WHO), antibiotic resistance is one of the biggest threats to global health. It is linked to 23,000 deaths per year, researchers said. Paying closer attention to underlying fungal infections is necessary to reduce drug resistance, they said. "If we are trying to deliver globally on a comprehensive plan to prevent antimicrobial resistance, and we are treating blindly for fungal infections that we do not know are present with antibiotics, then we may inadvertently be creating greater antibiotic resistance," said lead author David Perlin, from Rutgers New Jersey Medical School in the U.S.

11. [Hospital margins highest in trade of stents: Report](#) – The Indian Express

National drug pricing regulator NPPA Tuesday put out data on the margins made by players in the trade of stents which showed that hospitals charged the most, a report in The Times of India said. Stents are mesh tubes that are placed in arteries as part of coronary angioplasty in order to treat weak or narrow arteries. The report said hospital margins sometimes touched almost 650 per cent although not all hospitals charged so much. The NPPA data was based on the figures produced by stent companies and pointed to almost ten-time jump in the price of stents by the time it reaches

the patient. The margins also seemed to differ between drug-eluting stents and bare-metal stents. Stents used for surgeries in India are mostly of the drug-eluting variety.

12. [18-year-old girl to get drug resistant TB drug: Health ministry to Delhi High Court](#) – Hindustan Times

The month-long legal battle of an 18-year-old girl, suffering from a drug resistant form of TB and in critical stage, finally paid off on Wednesday with the health ministry agreeing to administer her with Bedaquiline, used to treat drug resistant forms of TB. Bedaquiline, made by pharma major Johnson and Johnson, was added after 50 years to India's TB-control programme to treat extensively drug resistant tuberculosis, which cannot be treated with existing drugs. Since March 2016, the drugs has been made available in six sites in India - two centres in Delhi and one each in Mumbai, Ahmedabad, Chennai and Guwahati. The administration of Bedaquiline is restricted and available only through the Revised National Tuberculosis Control Program (RNTCP). Capital's Lala Ram Swarup (LRS) TB Hospital, which is part of the National Institute of Tuberculosis and Respiratory Diseases, told the Delhi High Court that it was ready to administer the medicine to the patient under its supervision.

13. [Zydus Cadila open for buyouts in the US](#) – Business Standard

Amidst rumours of Ahmedabad-based drug major Zydus Cadila Group looking to acquire California-based Sentyln Therapeutics, the company said it was open to buyouts in the US and has been looking for suitable targets in the generics as well as speciality space for some time now. Cadila Healthcare, however, denied speculations over buying Sentyln. Media reports on Wednesday suggested the company was all set to buy speciality pharma company Sentyln Therapeutics for \$171 million. The firm holds the rights for a popular pain-management drug for cancer patients, Abstral. The market size for this opioid-based drug is estimated to be around \$24 billion. At present, sale of Abstral is estimated to be around \$10 million. On Wednesday, Zydus Cadila also received final approval from the US-FDA to market Methotrexate tablets, a chemotherapy drug used for leukemia, lymphoma, breast cancer, lung cancer, head, neck and other cancers.

14. [Antibiotic resistance can be tackled through collaborative effort by stakeholders including medical fraternity: AIOCD](#) – Pharmabiz.com

The misuse and overuse of antibiotics leading to antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in India can be tackled through collaborative effort by government, drug supply chain and medical professionals, said AIOCD general secretary Suresh Gupta. Gupta's remark came in the wake of a notification issued by Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) advising the drug supply chain system in India to follow strict requirements of Schedule H and H1 for sale of medicines. The drugs under Schedule H can be sold only based on the prescription of a registered medical practitioner and only the amount specified in the prescription should be sold. Schedule H1 was included in 2013 to curb the indiscriminate use of antibiotics, anti-TB and some other drugs in the country. These drugs cannot be sold without a valid prescription. Meanwhile DCGI issued the advisory to drug supply chain, state drug controllers to ensure compliance of norms pertaining to sale of Schedule H and H1 drugs after a woman from Nevada, USA visiting India died of a super bug resistant to available antibiotics.