

1. [India Inc seeks a stimulus Budget from FM](#) – Moneycontrol.com

Corporate India's crying out for a stimulus Budget from Finance Minister Arun Jaitley on Wednesday, which can boost growth as demand and investments remain anemic. While private investments have been down thanks to the ongoing corporates deleveraging their balance sheets, consumption, too, has taken a beating after demonetisation.

Lower taxes are not just a way to revive consumer sentiment. Corporate India hopes that the Finance Minister will set a roadmap in the upcoming Budget to bring corporate tax rate down from the current level. Kanchana TK, Director General, Organisation of Pharmaceutical Producers of India (OPPI), told Moneycontrol, "Expectations from the 2017-18 Union Budget are high, in setting the tone and direction. Some of that is about building upon intent already announced as well. In the past, the government has said it would bring the corporate income tax down to 25 per cent. At OPPI, we hope to see a roadmap to this end."

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2. [Govt challenges revocation of FDC drug ban in Supreme Court](#) – The Economic Times

The health ministry on Monday moved the Supreme Court challenging a Delhi High Court order that had revoked its ban of over 300 fixed dose combination drugs. The petition comes almost two months after the Delhi HC on December 2 set aside the government notification that had banned hundreds of fixed dose combination (FDC) drugs, or medicines made by combining two drugs into a single dose.

The government previously had also filed a transfer petition asking for all pending FDC petitions to be transferred to the Supreme Court, which is yet to make a decision on whether it will permit this transfer petition.

The health ministry last year had banned 344 FDCs, estimated to affect around 6,000 medicine brands and shave off more than Rs 3,000 crore from the Indian pharmaceuticals market, which is estimated at over Rs 100,000 crore.

Similar reports –

- [Centre moves SC seeking to enforce ban on 344 fixed-dose-combination drugs](#) – Mint
- [Govt moves SC to enforce ban on 344 Fixed Dose Combination drugs](#) – The Times of India

- [Government moves Supreme Court seeking to ban 344 fixed-dose-combination drugs](#) – The Financial Express

3. [Indian wellness industry likely to hit Rs1.5 trillion by FY2019-20: report](#) – Mint

The Indian wellness industry was estimated at close to Rs85,000 crore in financial year 2014-15 and is expected to grow at a compounded annual growth rate (CAGR) of nearly 12% for the next 5 years. The industry can achieve about Rs1.5 trillion by FY20, according to a recent report by Ficci and EY. The report Value Added Service – Wellness and Preventive Healthcare stated that wellness will be a key growth driver of health insurance in India. India's population today is relatively young (due to the high birth rates) with about 47% of the population expected to enter the elderly phase down the line. Health characteristics, which include the burden of diseases, productive years lost, and cost of health care—among others—are key drivers of economic growth for emerging markets like India. While the wellness and preventive health care sector as a whole is expected to nearly double by 2020, some sub-segments will outperform others. While beauty care and nutritional care would retain their share, fitness and rejuvenation would significantly increase their market share.

4. [Stents' exorbitant prices due to doctor-industry nexus: Health](#) – Business Standard

Health groups today alleged that a doctor-industry nexus was resulting in exorbitant prices of life saving coronary stents and demanded Centre's intervention and implementation of a legally binding code for marketing of health products. The analyses of industry data published by the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) show "massive" margins charged at each step in the distribution and supply of stents and by the time the patient receives them, the increase from the original cost is often in the range of "1,000-2,000 per cent", they said. Asserting that the Centre should uphold fundamental right to health by not succumbing to "pressure" from medical industry, the health bodies also demanded an investigation by Medical Council of India (MCI) on the alleged professional misconduct of office bearers of the Cardiological Society of India indulging in "unethical lobbying". "We have consistently highlighted the unconscionable prices that patients across the country are paying for stents that are pushing them and their families into increasing indebtedness or leaving them without life-saving treatment.

5. [Now, daily drug regimen for TB patients](#) – The Times of India

Moving away from the current three times a week treatment, over 1.30 lakh tuberculosis (TB) patients in the state will switch over to daily drug regimen from next month. Maharashtra was one of the five states, including Bihar, Kerala, Himachal Pradesh and Sikkim, to roll out daily drug treatment for TB in India a month ago. However, it was initially meant only for patients with TB-HIV co-infection. The switch over follows findings by experts who revealed that the old regimen led to increased cases of drug resistance and relapse among TB patients. Relapse occurs when a patient declared 'cured' by a doctor tests positive for the same disease again. "We started daily drug regimen for TB-HIV co-infected patients in Maharashtra from December 1, 2016. Now the Union government has extended the daily treatment to every TB patient under the Revised National Tuberculosis Control Programme (RNTCP) in five states, including Maharashtra. We intend to start this regimen for every TB patients in the state from February 10," state tuberculosis officer Sanjeev Kamble said.

6. [Medical audits will check stent prices, say activists](#) – The Hindu

Demanding that the government introduce medical audits, where doctors will have to account for drugs and devices used, health activists on Monday said they were 'alarmed' that doctors and hospitals were taking 'cuts' for recommending use of coronary stents, which may not be necessary, in heart patients. After seeing that massive margins charged at each step in the distribution and supply of stents, activists have demanded that the government develop standard treatment guidelines for cardiovascular interventions with the help of expert doctors, free from conflict of interest, and implement medical audits of procedures. The recommendations come after data published by the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority

(NPPA) showed that the price of a stent increases nearly 2000% by the time the patient gets the implant. The NPPA data also shows that the largest cut goes to the hospitals, which can be as high as 650% more than the price at which the hospital purchases the stents from the distributor.

7. [Online pharmacies see muted investor interest over regulatory uncertainties](#) – Mint

After a disappointing year in which investments in online pharmacies fell by half in an atmosphere of regulatory uncertainties, companies and investors are hoping for a better year in 2017, betting on the country's large market size. According to Tracxn, an online data aggregator for start-ups, online pharmacies in India received a total funding of \$28.45 million in 2016, compared with \$62.20 million a year ago. Overall funding in health tech was also down at \$92.35 million in 2016 from \$321.85 million in 2015. In a December 2015 notification, the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) directed state authorities to put a "strict vigil" on online sales of medicines and take action against e-pharmacies that violate the provisions of the Drug and Cosmetics Act, 1940. The central drug regulator added the rules of the Act do not distinguish between conventional and online sale of drugs and, hence, the provisions of the Act have to be complied with in both cases. Consequently, in May 2016, there was a crackdown on five online portals by state regulators, creating confusion on whether online sales of medicines were permitted under the Act, making investors wary.

8. [Suven Life gets patent for anti-neuro degenerative drug](#) – The Economic Times

Drug firm Suven Life Sciences has been granted a patent by the US for a drug to cure neuro-degenerative diseases. In a BSE filing today, Suven Life said it has been granted "one product patent from the US corresponding to the new chemical entities (NCEs) for the treatment of disorders associated with neuro-degenerative diseases". The patents are valid till 2034, the company added. Suven Life CEO Venkat Jasti said: "We are very pleased by the grant of these patents to Suven for our pipeline of molecules in the CNS arena, which are being developed for cognitive disorders with high unmet medical need with a huge market potential globally." With these new patents, Suven has a total of 25 granted patents from the US. "These granted patents are exclusive intellectual property of Suven and are achieved through internal discovery research efforts. Products out of these inventions may be out-licensed at various phases of clinical development like phase-I or phase-II," Suven said.

9. [Piramal Enterprises buys drug portfolio from UK firm for Rs1,160 crore](#) – Mint

Piramal Enterprises Ltd (PEL) on Monday announced that it had bought a portfolio of drugs for spasticity, a muscle control disorder, and pain management from UK-based Mallinckrodt Llc for \$171 million (around Rs1,160 crore) in an all-cash deal. The acquisition, by the company's UK subsidiary Piramal Critical Care, is a prelude to Piramal Enterprises's plans to spin off and list its financial services unit and pharmaceuticals business, said chairman Ajay Piramal. "In the medium term we will do that. All our acquisitions, and in some ways moving up in value chains and getting more critical mass, are steps towards that," Piramal said. Earlier this month, in a second and more conclusive restructuring of its financial services business, Piramal Enterprises moved all assets and liabilities related to lending to real estate and non-real estate projects to its unit Piramal Finance Pvt. Ltd.

10. [ISCR to host 10th annual conference on "patients first and research for patients" in Mumbai](#) – Pharmabiz.com

Reiterating the commitment of the clinical research fraternity to addressing the growing healthcare needs of the country against the backdrop of a more favourable regulatory environment, patients first and research for patients is the theme of the 10th Annual Conference of Indian Society for Clinical Research's (ISCR). To be held in Mumbai from February 10 to 11, 2017 the event is expected to draw clinical research professionals from academia, healthcare institutions, not for profit organisations and the industry. "Given the more patient-centric regulatory environment we have in India now and the focus on Make in India, this is an opportune time for all stakeholders of clinical

research to engage in a constructive debate on how we can encourage more research and innovation in India,” said Suneela Thatte, President of ISCR. “India has 16% of the world’s population and 20% of the world’s disease burden and yet less than 1.4% of global clinical trials are done in India.”