

### 1. Patel pitches for increase in health budget - PTI

Union minister Anupriya Patel today stressed on the need for an increase in health budget in order to reduce out-of-pocket spending. The Minister of State for Health said such spending currently is at 84 per cent of the total health expenditure and most of it goes for buying medicines. Speaking at the inauguration of international workshop on Health Technology Assessment (HTA) she said, "This is a serious concern for the government and it is committed towards HTA that will address this." She said India compares poorly with other developing countries like Sri Lanka, which spends more public fund on health. "In terms of budget allocation we are way behind. We have a long way to go," Patel said. According to a research collaboration between Institute

for Studies in Industrial Development and Public Health Foundation titled "Changing pattern of public expenditure on Health in India", all neighboring countries, except Pakistan, fare much better in terms of public expenditure on health as percentage of GDP. While India spends 0.9 per cent of its GDP on health, Sri Lanka spends 2, China 1.9, Nepal 1.6, and Bangladesh 1 per cent. Secretary, Health, BP Singh also made a similar point while talking about technological intervention in health services. "Integration of IT and health will transform the entire landscape. But this transformation is not without cost. There is a question of affordability," he said. Director General for Health Services, Jagdish Prasad said naturopathy and yoga will help eradicate non-communicable diseases. "In collaboration with AYUSH ministry, we have introduced a pilot project in six districts to offer treatment for non-communicable diseases through naturopathy and yoga," he said. The three-day workshop is jointly organised by Department of Health Research (DHR), ICMR, National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE)-UK and Health Intervention and Technology Assessment Program (HiTAP)-Thailand.

### 2. Govt looking to amend Drugs and Cosmetics Act - PTI

Government is working towards amending the Drugs and Cosmetics Act 1940 to develop a framework to benefit consumers as the existing Act does not differentiate between offline and

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online pharmacies, a top official said today. "With the advent of e-pharmacy, there is a need to amend the Drugs and Cosmetics Act 1940 as it does not differentiate between offline and online pharmacies. The government is seized of the issue and is working towards amending the existing law to develop a framework where the consumers are benefited," Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare K B Aggarwal said.

Aggarwal said e-pharmacy will allow easy availability of drugs at all hours. But he flagged concerns with respect to legitimacy of e-pharmacies, patients' safety and privacy, misuse of e-pharmacy and adverse effect on retailers business. He touched upon the need to create e-pharmacy guidelines that will allow proper tracking and monitoring of sales of drugs, authenticity of online pharmacists and prescriptions, details of patients, helping in reducing drug abuse and counterfeiting. The official was speaking at a Ficci event.

He suggested that linking a person's Aadhar with e-pharmacy will ensure correct identification of the person seeking medicines. Deliberations on ensuring privacy and confidentiality of information, Aggarwal said, are going on and soon, suggestions will be put up for discussion among stakeholders. According to him, DCGI is working towards developing its online platform and the system should be in place by the end of December 2016.

The government is working towards drafting a new Drugs & Cosmetics Act 2016 to meet the current regulatory requirements related to safety, efficacy and quality of drugs, Dr S Eswara Reddy, Joint Drugs Controller, Central Drugs Standard Control Organization, said. He favoured a standard format of prescriptions.

### **[3. Celgene drug fails to extend survival in lymphoma study](#) – Reuters**

Celgene Corp said on Monday that its flagship drug Revlimid failed to extend survival as a maintenance therapy for a type of blood cancer after patients had responded to prior treatment. As a result, the U.S. biotechnology company said it would not seek an additional approval for Revlimid for that use, and its shares fell more than 2 percent. Revlimid, a multiple myeloma treatment with annual sales of about \$6 billion, was being tested versus a placebo in patients whose diffuse large B-cell lymphoma had responded to initial treatment with Roche's Rituxan and chemotherapy.

### **[4. India rejects 955 pharma patent applications in last three years](#) – The Economic Times**

India has rejected as many as 955 patent applications in the pharmaceutical sector in the last three years. "... 618 applications have been rejected citing Section 3 (d) of the Patents Act, 1970, as one of the grounds for rejection in the last three years," Commerce and Industry Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said in a written reply to the Lok Sabha today.

### **[5. Government may regulate e-Pharmacies soon](#) – The Economic Times**

The government may back e-pharmacies amidst the long-drawn battle between chemists and online medicine retailers in the country. A health ministry sub-committee tasked with deciding the online model's viability has spoken in its favour, according to the country's apex drug regulator. The sub-committee, which deliberated over the issue for almost a year, is also set to release a report of recommendations to regulate e-pharmacies here, said Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) joint drugs controller S Eswara Reddy, who was speaking at an event organised by FICCI on Monday.

### **[6. Sanofi cross-border deal: SC refuses to give early hearing](#) – The Financial Express**

The Supreme Court on Monday refused to grant early hearing in the Rs1,058-crore Sanofi SA cross-border deal involving Indian assets of Hyderabad-based Shantha Biotechnics (SBL). The case is similar to that of the Vodafone group's \$2-billion tax dispute. Senior counsel Harish Salve, appearing for Sanofi, wanted the apex court to hear early the department appeal against the Andhra Pradesh High Court's February 15, 2013 order that ruled in favour of French drugmaker Sanofi Pasteur Holding SA.

**7. [Health services to all key proposal of the draft National Health Policy](#) – The New Indian Express**

Assuring health services to all as an entitlement would be one of the key proposals of the draft National Health Policy. The Health Ministry has prepared a note of the draft policy which is expected to be taken up by the Union Cabinet for approval next week. As soon as Union Health Minister J P Nadda clears the note, it will be sent to the Union Cabinet, a senior Health Ministry official said. The National Health Policy has been pending for the last two years. Though the note does not talk about making health a fundamental right as it will have legal consequences, it talks about “providing assured health services to all”.

**8. [Govt. intervention sought for Hepatitis C treatment](#) – The Hindu**

In absence of a policy intervention for Hepatitis C, civil society and legal aid organisations have put together a policy brief, calling upon the government to take concerted action to address the right to health of people living with HCV (PLHCV). HCV is a transmissible disease — it spreads the same way as HIV — and if not treated can lead to chronic conditions of the liver such as liver cirrhosis, cancer or failure. With an estimated disease burden of 8.7 million patients, HCV kills nearly six times as many people as HIV, said Paul Lhungdim, a patient activist and Project Coordinator of Delhi Network of Positive Persons (DNP+).

**9. [Indian generic majors in strong position to tap opportunities in US generic injectable market: ICRA](#) – Pharmabiz.com**

ICRA has reported that Indian generic players have better opportunity in US generic injectable market with upcoming patent expiries, drug shortages, quality manufacturing and development resources. Indian companies are increasingly focusing on complex generics and some of the leading Indian companies have carved a niche for themselves through the launch of differentiated and complex filings. The financial profile of ICRA sample of generic injectable players in the US is characterised by healthy operating margins, RoCE, working capital intensity and moderate debt-protection metrics. The growth rate in CY2015 and CY2014 improved to 15.7 per cent and 13.3 per cent respectively, compared to approximately over 7 per cent in CY2012 and CY2013 each.

**10. [DoP to hold meeting with industry & trade bodies on July 27 to discuss barcoding for domestic market](#) – Pharmabiz.com**

With its plan to introduce barcoding on pharma products in domestic market as part of efforts to counter spurious drugs, the Department of Pharmaceuticals (DoP) has convened a meeting of industry bodies such as **OPPI**, IPA, IDMA along with pharma trade organisation, AIOCD on July 27. DoP has already made it mandatory for pharma exporters to implement barcoding on secondary and tertiary of pharmaceuticals packaging from April 1, 2016. On the other hand, the country has struggled with unabated supply of spurious medicines at the retail level with no effective tracking system. Last year the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) in a draft circular announced its intention to extend track and trace system to drugs circulating in the domestic market.