

1. [Union Budget 2016-17: Dr Shailesh Ayyangar, President – OPPI and Managing Director – India and Vice President –South Asia, Sanofi](#) – The Financial Express

I haven't seen a bold approach to increase financial outlay for healthcare sector

We welcome the fact that the finance minister has named healthcare as one of the nine pillars of the Union Budget 2016. Our country's demographic dividend can accrue only if we give priority to healthcare sector. I haven't seen a bold approach to increase financial outlay for healthcare sector, in view of the stated objective of increasing healthcare spends from current 1.2 per cent of GDP to 2.5 per cent of the GDP. There are relatively few salutary provisions for this sector.

Insurance cover, benefits for the elderly and more government drug stores are welcome steps, as are the proposed national dialysis centres, where the equipment will also have concessional duties. From pharmaceutical sector perspective the expectations were higher, but I haven't come across any specific provision that merits attention. The only relevant provision is the taxation of royalty income at 10 per cent in respect of innovations discovered and registered in India. We had hoped that concessions on R&D for the life sciences sector would continue at 200 per cent, but these are to be phased out to become aligned with other industries. There was also no mention of incentives for pharma clusters, especially for API manufacturing.

2. [DIPP floats discussion paper on standard essential patents](#) – Business Standard
The Budget has introduced a special 'royalty tax' which lowers the effective rate of tax on income. The Commerce and Industry Ministry has floated a discussion paper on standard essential patents and their availability on fair, reasonable and non-discriminatory terms.

The objective of the paper is to invite views and suggestions from the public at large to develop a suitable policy framework to define the obligations of essential patent holders and their licensees. The DIPP has invited views from the concerned stakeholders on issues like whether the existing provisions in the various IPR related legislations, especially the Patents Act, 1970

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3. [Wait for cheaper drugs might get longer](#) – Business Standard
4. [Medical devices should come under Drug Price Control Order: Department of Pharmaceuticals](#) – ET Health
5. [A peoples' budget](#) – ET Health
6. [Budget 2016: Experts sceptical of budget booster to Jan Aushadhi](#) – The Economic Times
7. [US health regulator rejected 11,664 products since January 2011: Nirmala Sitharaman](#) – The Times of India
8. [A new TB vaccine is in the works, and here's why India is excited](#) – Indian Express
9. [5 years on, no charge sheet in J&J faulty implant case](#) – Mumbai Mirror
10. [Delhi government to hire 1 lakh volunteers in healthcare sector](#) – The Economic Times
11. Opinion: [India's trade pacts in a changing world](#) – Mint
12. [Union Budget 2016 - International tax proposals](#) – Business Today

and Anti-Trust legislations, are adequate to address the issues related to SEPs and their availability on FRAND terms.

"If not, then can these issues be addressed through appropriate amendments to such IPR related legislations? If so, what changes should be affected," it said. The other questions which the paper has listed for stakeholders' views include what should be the IPR policy of Indian standard setting organisations in developing standards for telecommunication sector and other sectors in India where SEPs are used.

3. [Wait for cheaper drugs might get longer](#) – Business Standard

While the Budget is supposed to be aiming for mass availability of low-priced indigenous drugs, indications from US pharmaceutical lobbies suggest another scenario.

It appears American industry associations have got feelers that India might not grant compulsory licensing for commercial purposes. The term is used for a government allowing someone else to produce a patented product or process, without consent of the patent owner.

There are various grounds on which such licences can be given - when a drug is not widely available, extremely expensive, etc. Many Indian companies have filed applications for such licences with the government, with the stated aim of making available affordable medicine.

4. [Medical devices should come under Drug Price Control Order: Department of Pharmaceuticals](#) – ET Health

To control the high prices of medical devices such as stents and implants, Department of Pharmaceuticals has proposed to Health Ministry to bring them under the Drug Price Control Order.

"For the first time the Department of Pharmaceuticals has proposed to the Health Ministry for bringing medical devices and stents under the drug price control order," Minister of Chemicals and Fertilizers Ananth Kumar told reporters here today.

As per the procedure they (Health Ministry) will prepare the National List of Essential Devices which will be then enforced by the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA), he added.

5. [A peoples' budget](#) – ET Health

"A peoples' budget that aims to spur the rural economy that is lagging far behind the urban growth momentum. Infra and Agri are the two key sectors that are beneficiaries of Budget 2016. growth. However, I see no boost to investment in manufacturing. The Pharma sector feels neglected as it has been denied the much needed fiscal support for gestational R&D investment through reduced levels of weighted tax deductions from 200% to 150%. The only compensating factor has been the introduction of a Patent Box regime that levies a low 10% tax rate on income accruing from IP. Manufacturing investment is unlikely to see an uptick despite an offer of a 25% tax rate for new projects as the incentive is grossly inadequate."

6. [Budget 2016: Experts sceptical of budget booster to Jan Aushadhi](#) – The Economic Times

The success of the government's effort to push low-cost generic drugs through the 'Jan Aushadhi' scheme hinges on acceptance of these drugs among physicians and sweetening of the terms of business, experts say.

The scheme received a push in this year's Budget with a proposal for a national rollout of 3,000 more stores. However, experts are of the view that this may not be enough to make the nearly decade-old programme successful.

Ever since the department of pharmaceuticals (DoP) launched it in 2008, 'Jan Aushadhi' had a wobbly track record, struggling with major supply constraints, issues with the quality of drugs and lack of state government support. The scheme — now rebranded the 'Pradhan Mantri Jan Aushadhi scheme' — touched a low in 2012-13 when reports suggested the closure of 50 of its stores.

7. [US health regulator rejected 11,664 products since January 2011: Nirmala Sitharaman](#) – The Times of India

The US health regulator has refused entry of 11,664 Indian products, including drugs, into the American market between January 2011 and February 2016, Parliament was informed today.

"According to refusal report data available on the US Food and Drug Administration (USFDA) website, 11,664 refusals of Indian products were recorded from January 2011 to February 2016," Minister of state for commerce and industry Nirmala Sitharaman said in written reply to the Rajya Sabha.

8. [A new TB vaccine is in the works, and here's why India is excited](#) – Indian Express
VPM1002, developed at the Max Planck Institute for Infection Biology, Berlin, contains genetically modified mycobacterium bovis bacteria. A built-in gene makes it easier for immune cells to recognise the bacteria — the organism can thus protect itself against the actual infection with dangerous tuberculosis pathogens.

TB continues to be the No. 1 infectious disease in India, and one of the greatest public health challenges, killing 1 person every 2 minutes and nearly 750 every day. According to WHO's 20th edition of Global TB Report of 2015, there are 22 high burden countries, and India has the highest burden. Globally, 9.6 million people developed active TB in 2014, out of which 1.5 million died. As many as 2.5 million people were living with active TB in India in 2014. Over 70,000 were cases related to multi drug resistant TB (MDR-TB). These cases are resistant to frontline drugs and are costly to treat. The patient profile has been changing; the surging number of cases also reflects the inability to diagnose the problem quickly enough to prevent transmission.

9. [5 years on, no charge sheet in J&J faulty implant case](#) – Mumbai Mirror
It's been five years since the Food and Drugs Administration filed a First Information Report (FIR) at the Mahim police station against Johnson & Johnson for their faulty hip implants, no charge sheet has been filed in the case. The pharma giant has paid a huge sum of compensation to patients in the United States. The company is once again in the news after a jury in St Louis awarded \$72 million to the family of a woman in Alabama who died of ovarian cancer. Her cancer was linked to the usage of J&J Baby powder. But Indian patients have been left in lurch due to the apathy of the investigators.

Deputy Commissioner of police Mahesh Patil told Mumbai Mirror that the investigations were still on. When asked about the developments in investigations, Patil said, "There are several patients are we are reaching out to them." As per law, a charge sheet has to be filed within 90 days of registering the FIR. What is taking the Mahim police so long is not clear.

10. [Delhi government to hire 1 lakh volunteers in healthcare sector](#) – The Economic Times
AAP government in Delhi will hire one lakh volunteers for healthcare services who will be deployed in hospitals, polyclinics and mohalla clinics.

In Delhi, we are going to start volunteer services in the healthcare sector. Government will hire those who want to give their services for two hours in a week in the field as healthcare workers," Health Minister Satyendar Jain said while addressing Confederation of Indian Industry's (CII) Annual conference here.

11. **Opinion:** [India's trade pacts in a changing world](#) – Mint
The Economic Survey 2015-16's analysis of the impact of India's free trade agreements (FTAs) on the economy is a valuable attempt to address a gap in the policymaking ecosystem. Its conclusion—a conditional one, for it acknowledges the need for more analysis—is unsurprising. Controlling for potential non-FTA trade growth, India's FTAs have on the whole had significant impact, boosting trade without introducing inefficiency due to trade diversion. So far, so good.

But this raises interesting questions about New Delhi's long-standing preference for multilateral trade liberalization and the global shift to the contrary.

There are a host of other domestic inefficiencies—from a heavily distorted agricultural sector to poor infrastructure undercutting exporters and the poor regulatory regime in the drug sector that has given the EU and the US a handy weapon against Indian generics—waiting in the wings.

12. [Union Budget 2016 - International tax proposals](#) – Business Today

With the adoption of the BEPS package, OECD and G20 countries laid the foundations of a modern international tax framework under which profits would be taxed where economic activity and value creation occurs. It is now time to focus on implementation of the recommended changes in a consistent and coherent manner. The OECD recognizes that countries are sovereign and measures may therefore be implemented in different manners. It is however expected that countries will seek consistency and convergence when deciding upon implementation of the measures.

It is important to recognize that much ground has shifted in the global tax debate. Many countries (including those with relatively lower corporate tax rates) have enacted the so called "patent or innovation box" regime in order to spur innovation and domestic manufacturing. The regime grants a lower tax rate on profits from intangibles, "boxing" them off from rest of the system. In order to encourage indigenous research & development activities and to make India global R & D hub, the Budget proposes to put in place a concessional taxation regime for income from patents. With a strong technology and knowledge driven economy, India may be in a sweet spot to attract investors in such a regime, who now need to ensure that such regimes are not harmful tax practices under the "nexus approach" as recommended by the OECD BEPS project i.e. taxpayers can use IP regimes only if they show significant R&D occurs in that jurisdiction.