

1. [Pharma lobby cries foul on GIPC's poor ranking to India](#) – **The Economic Times**

Indian domestic drug lobby group Indian Pharmaceutical Alliance (IPA) said the latest Global Intellectual Property Centre (GIPC) index on intellectual property (IP) standards that once again places India at the bottom of 45 countries is suspect at a time when US Trade Representative was conducting a Special 301 Review, an annual exercise that identifies trade barriers to the US firms and their products in foreign shores owing to local IP laws.

Organisation of Pharmaceutical Producers of India (OPPI), IPA's rival and the lobby for multinational pharma giants, was seeking more effective IP protection in India. IPA has said the GIPC's alleged attempts to force India omit safeguards on access to medicines is hasty and not judicious.

Since President Donald Trump's

America First policy was announced, many trading partners of the US fear this might be an attempt to erect barriers to foreign goods entering the US.

2. [Fighting cartelisation in pricing of medicines](#) – **Business Today**

What is the 'right price' for a medicine? This is a matter of constant debate and the response, as you would expect, pretty much depends on the economic background of the person answering the question. Those within the pharmaceutical industry will however tell us that drug prices in India are one of the lowest in the world. However, irrespective of how medicine prices in India compare with the rest of the world, all seem to agree that there cannot be any room for cartelisation when deciding on drug prices.

This follows news reports around alleged artificial pricing arrangement by a group of companies for Vildagliptin, a popular diabetes drug where Novartis is the patent holder. Novartis however has denied any such act by the company or by any of its partner companies selling this drug under different brand names. But then the issue raises two questions: One, around price fixation and the other, around 'right pricing'. If the price that is fixed is a result of any attempt at cartelisation then it is unethical and needs to be investigated. However, 'right pricing' is another matter and hotly debated depending on who one is talking to. D G Shah, Secretary General of the Indian Pharmaceutical Alliance, which has many leading Indian pharma companies as its members, says: "If companies work in tandem and form some sort of understanding for pricing, it is not acceptable .

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3. [Spooked by Donald Trump, Indian pharma cos seeks government help to woo Capitol Hill](#) – The Economic Times
4. [NPPA starts procedure to refix price of condoms](#) – Business Standard
5. [In 10 years, the number of obese nearly doubled in 10 years: Health survey](#) – The Times of India
6. [Prices of coronary stents reduced, government informs HC](#) – Business Standard
7. [Wockhardt US unit gets FDA warning note](#) – Mint
8. [Pharma giant Lupin embarks on generic drug treatment to treat depression in US](#) – Zee News
9. [Twenty U.S. states join generic drug price-fixing lawsuit](#) – ETHealthworld
10. [DoP asks stent makers to submit weekly report on production, distribution of stents to maintain supply](#) – Pharmabiz.com

But that is something for the Competition Commission of India (CCI) to investigate as it is not under the jurisdiction of the NPPA (National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority)."

3. [Spooked by Donald Trump, Indian pharma cos seeks government help to woo Capitol Hill](#) – **The Economic Times**

US President Donald Trump has not just spooked the Indian IT companies, even the billion dollar Indian drug industry is rattled by the protectionist noises coming from White House. In a letter written to Arvind Panagariya, Vice Chairman Niti Ayog, the Indian pharma lobby wants the commerce ministry, India's mission in Washington and New York to proactively engage with the Trump administration and lobby the Capitol Hill to seek policy changes that would favour Indian drug companies. IPA whose members include leading domestic companies like Sun Pharma, Dr Reddy's, Lupin, Cadila Healthcare, Torrent pharma among others are worried that the Trump Administration might get tough on issues like intellectual property rights, or invoke the Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act of 2015 to curtail imports of medicines from India. "The early signals from the Trump Administration do not auger well for the pharmaceuticals. India can look for and may get an opportunity to fill-in the void created by abolition of the Obamacare but it will not come easily. The future is not predictable," said DG Shah, Secretary General Indian Pharmaceutical Association (IPA) in a letter dated February 28 to Panagariya.

4. [NPPA starts procedure to refix price of condoms](#) – **Business Standard**

The National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) has initiated a process to again fix the price of condoms. It has asked manufacturers to provide details of retail prices. The Authority has decided to have one price for basic utility condoms and the other for pleasure condoms. It wants a price list along with "supporting documents like invoices to retailer and samples of August 2015". Condoms have been part of the National List of Essential Medicines from 2003. Subsequently, it was incorporated in Schedule 1 of the Drug Price Control Order of 2012, after which NPPA could cap its price. NPPA's decision to previously cap the price of condoms was challenged by companies at the high court here over the procedure. Reckitt Benckiser and JK Ansell challenged two NPPA orders and contended condoms were not drugs, but devices, and could not be included in the DPCO of 2013. The two pharma firms had claimed theirs' were luxury products "meant for pleasure" and had sought clarification on whether the current ceiling would apply only to utility condoms. NPPA by its November 5, 2013 order had initially capped condom prices at Rs 6.56 each and this was later increased to Rs 8.04 by its July 10, 2014, notification.

5. [In 10 years, the number of obese nearly doubled in 10 years: Health survey](#) – **The Times of India**

The proportion of obese or over-weight people in India has almost doubled in the last 10 years, whereas incidence of diabetes and hypertension are fast increasing in the country, data from the fourth National Family Health Survey (NFHS) shows. The data shows 39.3% Indians were overweight and obese in 2014-15, whereas around 21% were obese in 2004-05. The survey conducted across 26 states and Union Territories found that obesity was more common among women than in men. While 20.7% of women were obese in 2014-15, 18.6% men were suffering from the disorder. The overall incidence of diabetes was 20.3% and that of hypertension 22.2%. However, there was some overlapping in the data with some people suffering from both or falling under two different sub-categories. This is the first time the government has conducted a survey to find out the incidence of diabetes and hypertension.

6. [Prices of coronary stents reduced, government informs HC](#) – **Business Standard**

The government on Thursday informed the Delhi High Court that the prices of coronary stents, used to treat narrowed or weakened arteries in patients, have been reduced by 85 per cent. A division bench of Chief Justice G. Rohini and Justice Sangita Dhingra Sehgal, taking into record a notification issued by the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA), disposed of a public interest petition filed by Advocate Birender Sangwan, who sought price control on stents. Earlier, the bench had directed the central government to fix the maximum retail price (MRP) and a ceiling price by March 1, 2017, for coronary stents. Responding to the court's direction, the Ministry of Chemicals

and Fertilisers said that on February 13, an order of capping the price of stents was issued. All manufacturers and importers were also directed not to price their products above the notified ceiling price, the court was told.

7. [Wockhardt US unit gets FDA warning note](#) – Mint

Wockhardt Ltd's step-down unit in the US, Morton Grove Pharmaceuticals Inc., has received a warning letter from the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for violation of norms. While the current product portfolio of the firm will be available in the US, new approvals will be withheld until compliance issues are resolved, Wockhardt said in a stock exchange filing on Wednesday. The company, with the help of consultants, has initiated steps to address issues raised by FDA, it said. The company has been grappling with regulatory issues since 2013, which has hurt its earnings. The drug maker reported a loss of Rs53.91 crore in the quarter ended December, as against a net profit of Rs72.04 crore in the same period a year ago. This was its first quarterly loss in more than four years. Three plants of Wockhardt in India are already under an import ban in the US. The company's formulations units at Chikalthana and Waluj in Maharashtra have been under the US FDA's import alert since 2013, while its bulk drug plant at Ankleshwar in Gujarat was issued an import alert in August.

8. [Pharma giant Lupin embarks on generic drug treatment to treat depression in US](#) – Zee News

In a major advancement, Pharma giant Lupin Ltd announced the launch of generic drug Pristiq (Desvenlafaxine Succinate) to treat depression in the US market. "We have launched generic Pristiq (Desvenlafaxine Succinate) extended-release tablets, 50 mg and 100 mg having received an approval from the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) earlier. It is indicated for the treatment of major depressive disorder (MDD). Pristiq tablets had annual US sales of approximately USD 859.9 million. Lupin is an innovation led transnational pharmaceutical company developing and delivering a wide range of branded and generic formulations, biotechnology products and APIs globally.

9. [Twenty U.S. states join generic drug price-fixing lawsuit](#) – ETHealthworld

California, Illinois and 18 more states have joined a lawsuit filed last year alleging that six companies, including Mylan NV and Teva Pharmaceutical Industries Ltd, conspired to push up prices of two generic drugs, the Connecticut attorney general's office said on Wednesday. Connecticut, which leads the group, and 19 other states filed the original lawsuit on Dec. 15. It added the additional states in filing an amended complaint which also added violations of state antitrust laws, the Connecticut attorney general's office said in a statement. The state lawsuit is part of a broader effort by the federal government, states and the U.S. Congress to address the rising cost of many generic drugs. The drugs involved in the state lawsuit are the delayed release version of a common antibiotic, doxycycline hyclate, and glyburide, an older drug used to treat diabetes. The lawsuit, filed in the U.S. District Court for the District of Connecticut, also names Australian drugmaker Mayne Pharma Group Ltd, Heritage Pharmaceuticals Inc, Aurobindo Pharma Ltd and Citron Pharma LLC.

10. [DoP asks stent makers to submit weekly report on production, distribution of stents to maintain supply](#) – Pharmabiz.com

The Department of Pharmaceuticals (DoP) has directed the companies manufacturing coronary stents in India to submit a weekly report on coronary stents produced and distributed to maintain a record of production, import and supply of the coronary stents in the country. In separate letters to 62 manufacturers, the DoP has stressed the need for ensuring compliance of the price capping of the coronary stents along with maintaining its uninterrupted supply. "Some reports regarding shortage of coronary stents in the market/hospitals have now come to the notice of the Department. After due deliberations on the current situation and alternatives available with the government to resume normal supply of the coronary stents, it has been decided to invoke the powers of Section 3 (i) of DPCO, 2013", the DoP said in its letter to Abbott Healthcare Private Limited.