

1. [How Windlas Healthcare studied FDA rulings and tweaked systems to come up trumps at inspection](#) –

The Economic Times

Dozens of warning letters by the US Food & Drug Administration over the past few years have put Indian pharma companies in an unenviable situation, forcing them to plug possible loopholes. But while the focus has been on Big Pharma, a few smaller units, away from the media glare, used the warning signs to insulate their processes from any lapses. The result: they win the gruelling scrutiny of the regulatory agency where larger peers falter. Healthcare, a small drug manufacturer which set up a tablet manufacturing unit in Dehradun, is one such firm that has come up trumps from pre-approval inspection by US FDA last month.

2. [126 drugs cheaper by over 40% as govt fixes ceiling](#) – The Times of India

Government has fixed the ceiling price of 530 essential medicines that has resulted in price reduction of over 40 per cent in case of 126 drugs, Parliament was informed on Friday.

1. [How Windlas Healthcare studied FDA rulings and tweaked systems to come up trumps at inspection](#) – The Economic Times
2. [126 drugs cheaper by over 40% as govt fixes ceiling](#) – The Times of India
3. [PGI granted only 5 patents in 50 years](#) – The Times of India
4. [Foreign patients turn to India in search of cut-price cures](#) – ET Health
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10. [India, US hold dialogue on collaboration in traditional medicines](#) – ET Health
11. [Centre removes Niper director](#) – The Times of India
12. [Merck and EMBL to collaborate for drug discovery in biopharma](#) – Business Standard
13. [Express Healthcare: Medical EMIs, frugal innovation in medical technology](#) – Indian Express
14. [Creating tomorrow's pharma leaders](#) – The Financial Express

“National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority has fixed the ceiling price of 530 medicines”, out of 680 NLEM medicines (628 net medicines) that are under the scheduled category of DPCO 2013, Minister of State for Chemicals and Fertilisers Hansraj Gangaram Ahir said in Rajya Sabha.

Out of 530 drugs, above 40 per cent price reduction has happened in case of 126 medicines, while prices of 34 drugs has come down in the range of 35-40 per cent.

Also appeared in [The Hindu](#)

3. [PGI granted only 5 patents in 50 years](#) – The Times of India

While Chandigarh and its periphery is emerging as a science hub, as visualized by eminent scientist C N R Rao, the markers of innovation - patents granted and licences for commercialization obtained at major science institutes - are abysmally low.

There are 15 medical/science research centres of national importance in Chandigarh and its neighbouring areas within a radius of 8km. They have started collaborating as Chandigarh Region Innovation and Knowledge Cluster since November 2012.

PGI has only five such patents granted in the past 50 years since its inception and not a single is licensed, while National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research (Niper), Mohali, has 40 granted patents, out of which only seven are licensed.

4. [Foreign patients turn to India in search of cut-price cures](#) – ET Health

When doctors told Australian Greg Jefferys he had Hepatitis C and the disease was destroying his liver, the devastating diagnosis was compounded by the cost of a cure.

Unable to afford Sovaldi, hailed as a miracle drug, the 61-year-old flew to India, one of a growing army of patients seeking out low-cost, life-saving medicines on the subcontinent.

But the advent of generic Indian anti-retrovirals saved his life -- and made the country a global centre for cheap, lifesaving HIV drugs. Pharmaceutical firms say India's disregard for patents will stifle innovation or make drugs commercially unfeasible -- Gilead paid \$11 billion to buy the developer of Sovaldi in 2012.

But after losing several high-profile patent battles, it appears drugmakers can do little to combat the Indian government's will or that of overseas patients determined to import drugs.

5. [Quality hallmark, it has all to do with patients](#) – The Hindu Business Line

International drug regulators explain to industry top management why quality is in the interest of patients and business.

When the owners and top management of leading domestic drug companies spend an entire day together, interacting with foreign and local regulators, the message is clear. Quality matters.

Or as one slide at the conclave put it quite simply: "Quality is doing the right thing when no one is looking: Henry Ford."

The seriousness of this message was not lost on the room full of pharma industry representatives, since local drugmakers have been under intense regulatory scrutiny, particularly in the United States. Besides receiving warning letters, some even face import bans.

6. **Opinion:** [Policy shame: sick, rare and ignored](#) – The Hindu

If the Indian government is serious about its commitment to realise the rights of its citizens to universal and equitable health care, it cannot ignore rare diseases. The draft National Health Policy, 2015, makes no mention of them.

Rare diseases are a diverse set of over 7,000 different conditions that afflict an estimated 1 in 20 Indians and 350 million people worldwide. Put simply, it means that every bus on the road with a full complement of passengers possibly has two people with a rare disease.

If the Indian government is serious about its commitment to realise the rights of its citizens to universal and equitable health care, it cannot ignore rare diseases. Some State governments, such as Delhi, have established a panel to tackle rare diseases. However, any State-level intervention must be guided by a comprehensive national policy to ensure that the entire rare disease-afflicted community benefits.

7. **Opinion:** [The antibiotic red line of control](#) – The Hindu

India faces a twin challenge of overconsumption of antibiotics breeding drug-resistant bacteria while ensuring that the poor and vulnerable have easy access

A much-needed public awareness campaign to highlight the dangers of misuse and irrational use of antibiotics was recently launched by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. Called 'Medicines with the Red Line', it comes at a time when the consumption of antibiotics in India has increased sharply while the effectiveness of these drugs to treat bacterial infections has been steadily declining.

High disease burden, rising income, cheap, unregulated sales of antibiotics and poor public health infrastructure are some of the reasons for the sharp increase in antibiotic use. A report (August 2014) in the journal *The Lancet Infectious Diseases*, said that in 2010, India consumed 13 billion units of antibiotics, the highest in the world. Between 2005 and 2009, consumption shot up by 40 per cent.

8. [Fund crunch ails TB programme](#) – The Hindu

Poor funding is hampering the TB programme in India, say health experts.

According to them, the slashing of the health budget by 20 per cent by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in December 2014, citing fiscal deficit and under-utilisation of funds, has led to a setback to the programme.

In 2015, a joint monitoring mission report, put together by government officials and national and international experts, pointed out that the Revised National Tuberculosis Control Programme (RNTCP) is underfunded.

9. [Eli Lilly India to look beyond diabetes, focus on cancer](#) – Hindustan Times

American drug maker Eli Lilly, which is known for its huge portfolio of anti-diabetes drugs, is stepping out of its comfort zone.

The company, which has been in India for 23 years now, makes about 85% of its turnover from diabetes drugs. Now, it plans to launch four products in the next three years, with new focus areas including oncology and auto-immune diseases. "We are looking to launch three or four products in the next three years across oncology, auto-immuno and diabetes. We are also focussing on drugs for osteoporosis, Alzheimer's and pain-relief," Edgard Olaizola, managing director, Eli Lilly India told HT.

10. [India, US hold dialogue on collaboration in traditional medicines](#) – ET Health

Taking forward the Indo-US dialogue on collaboration in traditional medicines, researchers from India and US today started discussions to review and cooperate on methods to reduce morbidity due to cancer using AYUSH interventions.

The two-day India-US workshop on traditional medicine was inaugurated by AYUSH Minister Shripad Yesso Naik in the presence of US Ambassador to India Richard Verma and Assistant Secretary of Global Affairs Health and Human Services (HHS) Ambassador Jimmy Kolker.

11. [Centre removes Niper director](#) – The Times of India

The Union ministry of chemicals and fertilisers has ordered the removal of National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research (Niper) officiating director K K Bhutani and three other professors for holding the posts despite being overage.

The orders issued on March 3 stated that professors who have obtained the age of 60 years and above be removed. Bhutani would turn 65 by December this year.

he recent appointments made at Nipers in Hyderabad, Hajipur, Rae Bareli and Guwahati has the age limit of 60 years for the director's post.

12. [Merck and EMBL to collaborate for drug discovery in biopharma](#) – Business Standard

Merck has entered into a research collaboration focused on cancer metabolism with the European Molecular Biology Laboratory (EMBL), located in Heidelberg, Germany. The collaboration with EMBL is well-aligned with Merck's research and development (R&D) strategy in biopharma to complement its capabilities in early-stage oncology research with external innovation - particularly in specific modalities, including cancer metabolism.

The aim of the collaboration is to investigate mechanisms by which cancer cells generate energy and growth-enabling building blocks, which could ultimately deliver novel therapeutic targets,

as well as biomarkers. The collaboration partners will make use of EMBL's extended capacities and capabilities in the area of metabolomics.

13. [Express Healthcare: Medical EMIs, frugal innovation in medical technology](#) – Indian Express
The two-day Healthcare Sabha organised by the Indian Express Group concluded on Saturday with delegates calling for frugal innovation in medical technology; to introduce skill enhancement programmes to bridge the workforce deficit; and work out a system of paying cancer and heart diseases and chronic illness treatment bills through medical financing or EMIs.

“It is at a nascent stage but financing of medical treatment through EMIs has started. Patients can stagger their bill payments. EMIs are available for stents, pacemakers, cancer therapy and other chronic illness. In cancer, only 20 or 30 per cent patients can afford treatment. When cost of therapy limits choice of therapy EMIs are an option,” Srivastava said.

14. [Creating tomorrow's pharma leaders](#) – The Financial Express
The pharma industry has a lot of things going in its favour such as low cost of production coupled with strong policy support from the Government of India.

India's competitiveness lies in its significant lower cost of production vis-à-vis the US and almost half of Europe.

The Government of India unveiled 'Pharma Vision 2020' with an aim to make India one of the top five pharma innovation hubs by 2020. The government intends to support the pharma industry through world class infrastructure, internationally competitive scientific manpower for pharma R&D, venture fund for research and various tax breaks. To enhance ease of doing business in India, the approval time for creation of new production facilities has been significantly reduced. The government has also allowed 100 per cent FDI under the automatic route in the drugs and pharma sector.