

1. [Pharma body says Brexit could leave UK patients facing drug delays](#) – Reuters

Britain's pharmaceuticals trade body has come out firmly against the country leaving the European Union, warning on Monday that an exit could put British patients at the back of the line for new medicines. Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry (ABPI) Chief Executive Mike Thompson, however, said that his members were "overwhelmingly supportive of remaining in the EU", especially given concerns over disruption to the pan-European drug approval system provided by the European Medicines Agency (EMA). An exit could also force the London-based EMA and the life sciences division of Europe's new Unified Patent Court to move from London.

2. [India looking at Iran-like solution for \\$100m million payment crisis with Venezuela](#) – Economic Times

India is looking for an Iran-like solution to defuse a payment crisis of \$100 million with Venezuela. Prodded by pharmaceutical exporters whose payments from Venezuelan companies have been stuck for more than a year, the government is planning to put in place a model similar to the rupee payment mechanism with Iran. India's exports to Venezuela fell sharply to \$125.49 million in the first 11 months of 2015-16 from \$258.07 million in the entire previous fiscal. Pharma exports dropped to \$71.32 million in April 2015-February 2016 from \$143.55 million in 2014-15. The commerce department has proposed a model under which once the export documents presented by the pharma exporter get accepted by the Venezuelan importer, the latter's bank in Venezuela will send its approval through the Venezuelan Central Bank for debiting the vostro account with a domestic bank in India. The mechanism is required since pharma is among the few sectors that have bucked the trend of fall in Indian exports for more than a year. "From the Indian side we are ready to implement the mechanism but since money belongs to them (Venezuela), they have to give consent.

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3. [Pharma officials questioned over cough syrup haul in Kolkata](#) – ETHealthworld.com
The Centre banned codeine-based cough syrups, including this brand, in March following which pharma majors moved court against the restrictions but failed to obtain a stay order. The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) of Kolkata on Monday summoned five senior officials of a reputable pharmaceutical firm and questioned them about the seizure of over 3,00,000 bottles of the banned Phensedyl cough syrup in the past few weeks. Arrests were likely, said an official. The Centre banned codeine-based cough syrups, including this brand, in March following which pharma majors moved court against the restrictions but failed to obtain a stay order. Indian officials, including those from the NCB, are expected to visit Bangladesh this week for discussions, which may include talks on the cough syrup ban.
4. [The state of cancer research and the future of innovation](#) – Mint
In India, a focus on public health initiatives and re-engineering of proven drugs and treatments to cut costs will get better results than looking for new cures. Rishikesha Krishnan, Director and professor of strategic management at the IIM Indore shares his experience and insights from attending the Tata Memorial Centre (TMC) conference on new ideas and challenging the dogmas in cancer as part of its platinum jubilee celebrations. In India, we have about a million new cancer patients every year, but only 150,000 patients get their first treatment. So, as many as 850,000 patients are not getting treated. Momentous recent developments like the unravelling of the human gene, and the resultant new approaches such as personalized medicine and targeted therapies have not resulted in the advances that were hoped for. At this point of time, personalized and targeted medicines seem to be more hype than reality. Combination therapies hold promise but there seem to be huge toxicity issues. New radiation therapies such as conformal radiotherapy and charged particle radiotherapy appear to offer only marginal improvements in efficacy, but at huge cost. Both pharmaceutical and device companies came in for a lot of criticism during the conference. The main grouse against them was their aggressive marketing of therapies which offer only marginally improved benefits over existing therapies, but at unaffordable costs. According to one speaker, about \$300 billion was spent on cancer drugs over the past 15 years but the median gain was an extension of 2.2 months in patient longevity.
5. [Post J&J verdicts, talcum powder norms in spotlight](#) – The Hindu Business Line
The verdicts in two cases Johnson & Johnson in the US in the past two months could have its ripple effects on the talcum powder manufacturers in India too. The cases have raised a massive health concern among consumers given two straight losses for J&J, which has to pay total compensation of \$127 million in the two cases. The losses faced by J&J pertain not to the talcum powder itself, but more with its usage for feminine hygiene, therefore, any change in norm need to take into account baby as well as adult products. Even as the government has asked the J&J for information on the safety of its products and also asked the Bureau of Indian Standards to revise the standards for this sector, consumer activists are talking about the lackadaisical manner the regulators work. Consumer rights activist Bejon Mishra said that the regulatory mechanism for setting standards is slow and the authorities need to be pushed to act quickly. J&J is facing about 1,200 similar cases in the US. Consumer rights activists say they are closely monitoring the situation and waiting for the authorities to take the necessary steps. Other consumer advocacy groups believe there should be clear instructions on the packaging of talcum powder products, especially baby talcum powders to avoid indiscriminate use or wrong use.
6. [Number of patents by biotech dept drops by over 50 pc: Govt](#) – Business Standard
The number of patents filed by the Department of Biotechnology dropped by more than 50 per cent in the last three years, a Parliamentary panel today said. "The Committee observes that the number of patents (national) filed dropped from 70 in 2013-14 to 33 in 2015-16. Similarly, the number of patents filed (foreign) dipped from 18 in 2013-14 to 10 in 2015-16. The report stated that patent filing is one of the major indicators of the scientific achievements of the department in this field. "The Committee recommends that the department should devise a mechanism to keep a record of the patents filed, both in India and abroad, by the institutions supported by the department," the report said.

7. [India has trade deficit with 27 countries for last three years: Govt](#) – Hindustan Times
India has a trade deficit with as many as 27 major countries, including China, Australia, Iraq and Iran, in the last three years. With these countries, India has trade deficit during the last three years, commerce and industry minister Nirmala Sitharaman said in a written reply to the Lok Sabha. Replying to a separate question on Pakistan, Sitharaman said India's bilateral trade increased marginally to \$2.53 billion in 2015-16, from \$2.35 billion in the previous fiscal.
8. ['ESI treatment only in govt. hospitals soon'](#) – The Hindu
Union Labour Minister Bandaru Dattatreya said that the Centre was contemplating extending healthcare under the Employees' State Insurance Corporation solely in government hospitals. The employees enjoying ESI facility were so far more dependent for treatment in private hospitals as they did not trust government hospitals. He also said that Centre was in favour of a concerted and joint effort with the State Government in raising the level of healthcare, with particular reference to help the unorganised sector with access to hospitals. He also said that as a beginning, construction workers, numbering an estimated 4.7 crore across the State, were now getting access to quality healthcare at Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) hospitals.
9. [CII session for industry, start-ups](#) – The Hindu
Noted trade and management expert Jagat Shah will be sharing real-life success and failure stories of "Make in India" and five other missions of Government of India during a special interactive session organised by Confederation of India Industries (CII) with industry and start-ups at Golden Jubilee Hall Bhavan in SJCE campus in the City on May 14. Mr. Shah, who has also conducted management lessons for young entrepreneurs in Pakistan and China, and his team will interact with CII Mysuru, offering solutions to micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), start-ups and companies on their various "pain points" in diverse areas such as finance, marketing, exports, technology sourcing, production, human resources, intellectual property rights (IPR), innovations, information technology (IT) etc.
10. [Gilead gets patent for Hepatitis C drug Sovaldi](#) – The Hindu
The decision is a major blow to the access to drug movement, says MSF. In direct contradiction to its earlier order, the Controller General of Patents, Designs and Trademark granted American pharmaceutical company Gilead Sciences the patent for the blockbuster Hepatitis C drug Sofosbuvir (brand name Sovaldi) in India. An application for the same patent was first rejected in January 2015 as lacking inventiveness and novelty. "There has been excessive pressure building up on the Indian government to dilute the independent functioning of the patent office to ensure that patent claims are granted far more easily to U.S. firms. In the process, the patent office has completely ignored recent proceedings in the U.S. against Gilead regarding the same application which have been found to infringe two of Merck's patents, clearly defeating Gilead's claim that its application on the drug was novel," added Ms Menghaney. Stating that the case had been decided outside the merit of the technical and legal issues, Tahir Amin Co-Founder and Director of Intellectual Property Initiative for Medicines, Access & Knowledge (I-MAK) said that the organisation would appeal against the decision.
11. [Now it is Nadda's turn](#) - The Hindu
Another Union Minister has accused the AIADMK government of non-cooperation in implementing Centrally sponsored schemes. Already Union Power Minister Piyush Goyal and Environment and Forest Minister Prakash Javadekar have been touring the State targeting the Tamil Nadu government for not signing Central projects "beneficial to the people." Addressing an election rally here on Monday, Union Health Minister J.P. Nadda charged that the "lackadaisical attitude" of the State government was preventing many of the Centrally sponsored schemes from reaching the targeted population. "The time has come for the people to bid goodbye to the AIADMK government and vote the BJP to power," he said.
12. [Pharma firms come out with apps for asthma patients](#) – The Hindu
With the number of asthma patients rising by the day, pharmaceutical companies are coming out with mobile apps to connect them with doctors for timely medical help. According to

estimates, 50 to 70 per cent of asthma patients in India do not adhere to prescribed treatment regimen, and suffer in the long run. Up to 50 per cent of such non-adherence is on account of the patient's forgetfulness to take medicines on time, and due to inadequate understanding of the prescribed treatment regimen. Sun Pharmaceutical Industries on Monday rolled out a mobile application that connects doctors and asthma patients. As per a World Health Organization (WHO) report, India has an estimated 15 to 20 million asthma patients. Various studies estimate that nearly 40 per cent of asthma patients use inhalers and the rest prefer oral formulations.

13. [No mechanism to keep track of medicines in Telangana, AP](#) – Deccan Chronicle

AP Drug Control Authority trying to develop software to track drugs based on batch numbers, brand names. Both Telangana and Andhra Pradesh do not have any real time mechanism to track and trace drugs that are manufactured, distributed and sold in their markets. Lack of proper IT supported infrastructure is making the job of the Drug Control Administration tedious and it has to depend on manufacturers, distributors and retail pharmacists for information. Many pharma companies have obtained stay orders regarding 230 of the 344 banned recombination drugs. The Delhi High Court has granted stay to companies that approached it. Drug control authorities of AP and TS are withdrawing the remaining drugs from the market and also of those companies who didn't get stay orders.

14. [To better health](#) – Indian Express

Supreme Court directives on making NEET compulsory for medical college admissions and revamping the Medical Council of India are moves in the right direction. Sujatha Rao is former union secretary, health, and Sita Naik is former member of the board of governors of the MCI and also member of the Ranjit Roy Chaudhury Committee, in this article highlight the NEET working and the MCI state of affairs in India. Medical profession deals with human lives and is dependent on the knowledge and basic competencies of the doctor. It is important that standards are not diluted for any reasons. Instead, the focus of governments should be towards improving the standards of science education in high schools. The NEET will compel governments to focus on high school education. The MCI is an anachronism and its reform has been long-drawn and tortuous. The health ministry overlooked the recommendations made by several expert committees to arrest declining standards and the massive corruption that had crept into the system. The MCI has done nothing regarding reforms of curriculum, quality assurance, ethical practice, rational treatment, and humane patient care. By overhauling this institution with appropriate expertise as required to govern this sector, India can expect a great leap forward on health outcomes.

15. [Melbourne strikes new med tech deals in India](#) – Express Healthcare

The State Government of Victoria, Australia announced the signing of two new agreements which will further strengthen Victoria's renowned medical technology sector and share our expertise partnering with leading Indian organisations to address major health challenges, including the diagnosis of epilepsy. Swinburne University has signed two memoranda of understanding (MoU) with major Indian partners while on a Neuroscience Victoria trade mission, run jointly by the Victorian Government and Austrade to open up new markets for Victorians in the medical technology sector. This project will develop products and technologies that can be used to help diagnose epilepsy in villages and remote communities across the vast nation. The technology can be used to help local health workers diagnose epilepsy early and refer patients for treatment in urban centres.

16. [IIT-H centre to train healthcare innovators](#) – New Indian Express

Have an innovative idea in healthcare? To encourage students to come up with solutions to India's many healthcare ailments, two IIT-Bombay alumni are offering a one-year fellowship of `50,000 per month. Preparatory to selection to the fellowship, the Centre for Healthcare Entrepreneurship at IIT-Hyderabad will throw open its doors to a maximum of 12 potential entrepreneurs who will take up a residency programme on campus. The training will be hands-on in a simulated environment, followed by an opportunity to incubate their idea. They will get access to technological expertise at IIT-H and exposure to local and global venture capital partners.

17. [DoP working on war footing to establish mega parks for APIs – Pharmabiz.com](#)

Alarmed over the ever growing dependence of the Indian pharmaceutical companies on China for the active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs), the department of pharmaceuticals (DoP) is working on the recommendations of the Katoch Committee on war footing and has taken an in-principle decision to go ahead with the mega parks for bulk drugs as was recommended by the Committee. The Katoch Committee, which had submitted its report to the government in September last year, had recommended establishment of large manufacturing zones (LMZs)/mega parks for APIs with common facilities maintained by a separate special purpose vehicles (SPV). The Katoch committee on APIs was constituted by the DoP last year to formulate a long term policy and strategy for promoting domestic manufacture of APIs/bulk drugs in the country as the government was concerned over the over-dependence of Indian pharma companies on China for the bulk drugs which has taken alarming proportions during the last some years.

18. [Around 3,700 blood transfusion related ATRs reported under HvPI – Pharmabiz.com](#)

Against the backdrop of Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) circular asking the state drug controllers (DCs) to direct all licensed blood banks in the country to register under the Haemovigilance Programme of India (HvPI), around 3,700 blood transfusion related adverse transfusion reactions (ATRs) has been reported till date with the addition of 37 more centres over the past one month from the earlier 333 centres. Meanwhile, a more comprehensive transfusion reaction reporting form (TRRF) is also now in place to facilitate blood banks to register more data through its new version of Haemo-Vigil software indigenously developed by IT division of National Institute of Biologicals (NIB).

19. [Govt sets up blueprint action group to wipe off Bengaluru blues – Deccan Herald](#)

The state government has constituted a Bengaluru Blue Print Action Group (BBPAG) to address myriad problems through a collaborative, planned and holistic approach. Chaired by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, the group has Infosys chief mentor N R Narayana Murthy, Wipro chairman Azim Premji, and a mix of urban experts and development professionals among its non-official members. Formalised through a government order last week, BBPAG moves beyond a Vision Group model and stresses on implementation. The mandate of the group is clear: To finalise a Bengaluru Blue Print, a road map for the future, articulating short, medium and long-term.