1. **South Africa negotiating with Roche to cut cancer drug prices** – Reuters

South Africa is in talks with pharmaceutical firm Roche to reduce the price of its breast cancer drug Herceptin, which cost 500,000 rand ($32,745) a year to treat one person and was unaffordable to most women, the health minister said on Tuesday. Africa's most industrialized country has a history of pushing back against high medicine prices. A civil society inspired movement started in 1998 was key to eventually winning concessions from big pharmaceutical firms to reduce the cost of life-saving anti-retroviral drugs (ARVs).

2. **IMS Health to conduct study on India joining global Pharma** – Economic Times

Government has asked IMS Health to conduct a study to explore whether India should become a member of global forum where certain standards for drugs and pharmaceuticals have been adopted. The international forum -- Pharmaceuticals Inspection Convention/ Pharmaceuticals Inspection Cooperation Scheme jointly referred to as PIC/S is an instruments between countries and pharmaceutical inspection authorities to promote GMP (good manufacturing practices).

3. **Government recovers just 7.8% of Rs 4928 crore drug overcharging fine** – Economic Times

As on March 31, 2016, the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) has recovered Rs 386.07 crore against total demanded amount of Rs 4,928.09 crore, which is about 7.83 per cent," Minister of State for Chemicals and Fertilisers Hansraj Gangaram Ahir said. He also mentioned that action for recovery of the overcharged amount is taken as per the provisions of Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 1995 and DPCO, 2013. If the company concerned does not deposit the amount of demand, the matter is referred to the respective collector for recovery, he said.

4. **Licences of 10 drug manufacturers suspended, says government** – Economic Times

The manufacturing licences of 10 drug manufacturers in six states have been suspended. "The Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) asked the State Licencing authorities concerned to suspend the manufacturing licences of 10 manufacturers of Liposomal Amphotericin B Injection on March 11, 2016," the Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare Shripad Yesso Naik said during Question Hour. The Committee had also recommended that Liposomal Amphotericin injection marketed in India may be regulated under Section 26A of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940 and the manufacturers of the injection were asked to prove the quality, safety and efficacy of their products on the basis of scientific criteria suggested by Expert Committee. "Show cause notices were issued to all 10 manufacturers to reply within 3 weeks as to why the manufacturing licences issued to them for their products Liposomal Amphotericin injection should not be suspended.

5. **Biotech department patents drop by 50 per cent in last 3 years: Parliament** – Economic Times
As reported by a parliamentary panel, There has been a drop by more than 50 per cent in the number of patents filed by the Department of Biotechnology in the last three years. "The performance of the department has gone down considerably in the last three years both in terms of patents filed and granted." 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. It said that patent filing is one of the major indicators of the scientific achievements of the department. The panel recommended 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.

6. **Children with tuberculosis suffer on lack of proper FDCs: doctors** – Mint
Since 2010, evidence is emerging that doses to treat TB earlier thought to be optimal are less than what a child's body needs, doctors say. Fixed-dose combination (FDC) drugs sold in India to treat tuberculosis (TB) in children do not contain the right amount of medicines, and the only one with the right combination made by an Indian company is not sold in the country. "None of the combination drugs available in India are correct for children. They contain lower amount of medicines than needed by young children suffering from tuberculosis," said Varinder Singh, professor, paediatrics department, Lady Hardinge Medical College. Four medicines are administered to children to treat TB. The amount of Isoniazid, commonly called the INH, thought to be optimal was 5 mg/kg weight of the child. Mumbai-based company Macleods Pharmaceuticals Ltd has produced an FDC according to new recommendations. It has been selling it to countries like Indonesia. "Macleods has finally registered in India and should be selling the medicine soon in the country," said Sunil D. Khaparde, deputy director general, Central TB Division of India of the health and family welfare ministry. He said another Indian company Lupin Ltd has also applied for registration following the new recommendations.

7. **Passive euthanasia gets a lifeline from govt** – Business Standard
Draft Bill allows euthanasia for patients who can take informed decisions; doctors to be protected from liability. The government on Monday proposed a Bill that permits passive euthanasia - withholding medical treatment or life support system required to keep a patient alive. The Medical Treatment of Terminally Ill Patients (Protection of Patients and Medical Practitioners) Bill, put up by the health ministry for public comments, makes a differentiation with active euthanasia, which involves administering poison to such a patient, which will remain banned. The law is being framed after the Supreme Court in 2011 ruled in favour of passive euthanasia with certain safeguards and guidelines, making it legal without any legislation

8. **German doctors help Indian fight pharma influence** – Times of India
Hundreds of doctors across Germany under the banner 'I pay for my own lunch' are not only fighting the influence of pharmaceutical companies within the profession in Germany, but have also extended support to start a similar group in India. It helped establish No Free Lunch(NFL) India recently along with Dr Gopal Dabade of the All India Drug Action Network, a Karnataka-based organisation. Asked how NFL was different from the recent initiative in India called Doctors for De-commercialised Ethical and Rational Healthcare started by a group of doctors, Dr Dabade agreed that the objectives of the two initiatives were the same and that there would be efforts to reach out to similar groups.

9. **Vaccination, prevention key to reducing disease burden** – The Hindu
Vaccination and preventive steps were the only means of reducing the disease burden on the country whether it was infectious or non-communicable diseases, because it carries one-fourth or more per cent of diseases prevalent in the world, said V.K. Subbaraj, Secretary, Department of Pharmaceuticals, Union Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilisers. Talking on the topic of 'Drugs and Diseases, an Indian overview', Dr. Subbaraj pointed out that the country was not even producing majority of medical devices, diagnostic equipment, hospital beds and even diapers for both the adults and children. "It is only recently some entrepreneurs have started to make them here. There is a lot of scope for research in science and technology here to bring down the costs of treatments," he said.

10. **Gilead patent to hit millions of patients outside India** – DNA
    The patent awarded to Gilead for hepatitis C drug Sofosbuvir, marketed by Gilead as Sovaldi in India, could leave 50 million patients outside of India without access to the medicine, Médecins Sans Frontières' India old dna. The patent awarded to US pharmaceutical company Gilead by the Controller General of Patents, Designs and Trademark on May 9, contradicted the patent authority's own prior order from January 2015, where Gilead's application was rejected. Though India's 12 million patients won't face the brunt of this decision, it will damage India's role as the provider of affordable generics to global South, and of raw materials or Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (API). Leena Menghaney, South Asia head of Médecins Sans Frontières, told dna that because of voluntary licences signed by Indian generic companies with the originator company Gilead, the prices within the country will stay low.