1. **Novartis splits drugs business into two, pharma chief to leave** – Economic Times

Novartis is splitting its pharmaceuticals division into two business units, one focused on cancer medicines and the second on the Swiss company's other drugs, it said on Tuesday, its latest management shake-up within months. David Epstein , division head and chief executive of Novartis Pharmaceuticals , will leave the company to "explore new challenges", Novartis said in a statement. "Novartis expects this change to help drive our growth and innovation strategy, with an increased focus and improved execution", the company said in a statement. "The new structure reflects the importance of oncology to Novartis following the successful integration of the oncology assets acquired from GlaxoSmithKline." Additionally, a small number of jobs will be moved as part of the changes to the Basel headquarters from Novartis facilities in New Jersey in the United States. Novartis shares have fallen 16 percent this year.

2. **Anti-rejection drug prices cut by 65%** –ETHealthWorld.com

For a patient in need of an organ transplant, finding the right donor and undergoing the procedure is just half the battle won. In a huge respite for such patients, the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) has reduced the rates of these drugs, with the cost of most-widely used Tacrolimus being slashed by 60-65%. "The packages for heart and liver transplant is somewhere between Rs 25 lakh and Rs 30 lakh. Despite spending so much, the patients have to spend Rs 15,000 to Rs 20,000 every month on anti-rejection drugs. NPPA move will certainly bring down post-transplant financial burden on patients," said heart transplant surgeon Sanjeev Jadhav.

3. **Lying and collateral damage** – Mint

In an opinion piece by Sudeep Khanna, a consulting editor at Mint, he says, the scrap heap of business history is filled with the debris of companies whose foundations were corroded by fraud and lying. Lying to customers, regulators and shareholders is so rampant among companies across the world that one wonders what the fuss is all about. In the oil and gas sector, large companies such as Shell, ExxonMobil and Chevron have had to cough up large fines to resolve allegations of under-reporting the value of natural gas and knowingly underpaying royalties. In May 1999, pharma major Roche paid the then highest ever fine of $500 million for leading a worldwide conspiracy to raise and fix prices for certain vitamins sold in the US and

elsewhere. If ever we worry about how lying and cheating is a problem in India, those names should reassure us that we are in good company.

4. **Indian generic exports to decline 10-12% in next 5 years: CRISIL** – Mint
To sustain beyond 2020, domestic companies need to step up focus and investment on new drug development and biosimilars, the report said. The projected decline is in contrast to compounded annual growth rate (CAGR) of 19% seen in the last decade. Large drug makers exporting to US are squeezed by more rivals filing ANDAs, and consolidation of distribution channels which has squeezed pricing power. The value of drugs going off-patent which peaked in 2012 at around $48 billion is predicted to drop around $20 billion in 2016. Some of the leading companies have launched R&D programmes aimed at new drug discovery. CRISIL Research analysis indicates that 14 companies together have 39 products in various stages of clinical development. These companies have adopted various approaches—such as in-house development, joint development and out-licensing—to manage the risk-return trade-off.

5. **6 major companies found manufacturing 'substandard' drugs** – Business Standard
Abbott's affected batches had expired by the time the drug regulator had issued the alert. At least six major pharmaceutical companies, including Cipla, Ipca Labs, Alkem Labs, Morepen Labs, Abbott and Sanofi were found manufacturing substandard drugs by the Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO) in 2015-16, of the 181 drug alerts through the year. Business Standard has accessed this information from the regulator--Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO). Around 99 per cent of the drug alerts issued by CDSCO were for small companies. The six companies mentioned above were sent seven alerts last financial year.

6. **New molecules may help fight multi-drug resistant cancers** – Business Standard
Australian researchers have discovered a new class of molecules originally derived from sea snails that are showing promising results against multi-drug resistant cancers. The discovery was made by scientists at University of Wollongong (UOW) and Illawarra Health and Medical Research Institute (IHMRI). The molecules called N-alkyli satins killed 100 per cent of drug resistant cancer cells in just 48 hours, compared with a chemotherapy drug commonly used to treat breast cancer which killed only 10 per cent of cells in the same time period. Multidrug resistance, whereby cancers develop resistance to chemotherapy drugs and are no longer responsive to treatment is a major limitation to the current management of the disease.

7. **Govt brings in fast-track option for patents** – Business Standard
After coming out with the Intellectual Property Rights policy last week, the government has now amended the Patent Rules, which offers applicants the option of fast-tracking examination of patents, apart from providing benefits to start-ups to increase and streamline patent filings. Apart from attracting more filings, especially from start-ups, the government hopes this will streamline the patent examination system. However, the fast-track option will only be open to new applicants, provided they agree to select India as the International Search Authority (ISA) and file applications in India first. India is one of the 18 countries who are designated as ISAs, part of the global system for searching existing patents. The government has targeted to bring down the time taken to examine all patents down to 18 months by March 2018. The government has hired 458 new examiners to help the existing 130. The cost of filing too has been revised.

8. **When a small change is big** – Hindu Business Line
Writer Pritam Banerjee is a senior director for Corporate Public Policy, responsible for South Asia region, Deutsche Post DHL Group. The article says, India needs to go much beyond the Bali obligations in the matter of easing procedures at the border. Siting an example of the pharmaceutical industry, Pritam says, many products require clearances from agencies other than customs: for example, pharmaceuticals require clearance (or 'no objection') from the Additional Drug Controller (ADC). Such clearances often take up a lot of time, especially if the process requires collection and testing of the products. The newly launched 'single-window' initiative of customs aims to address this problem by having a single common declaration for both customs and these other agencies, and having these agencies give their 'no objection' or clearance online through this electronic single window. The problem is that these agencies still

require a separate submission of physical documents and do not have processes in place that would use the information already available in the customs declaration to clear the goods in advance, prior to their arrival at the port or airport. For example, ADC could use the information in the common declaration to determine in advance whether samples would need to be collected and inform the trader and make arrangements for the same, thereby saving precious time in the clearance process. But this is not possible in the current system.

9. **Intellectually promising** – Hindu Business Line
   An editorial in Hindu Business Line gives a balanced view on pros and cons of the IPR policy announced. It mentions, that the backdrop on which the IPR policy is announced is not to be overlooked: the developed world, particularly the US, has put India's IPR laws under 'watch' for not protecting innovation and discouraging research and investment. Mega trade blocs are pushing a WTO-plus agenda which does not allow for domestic elbow room in the case of IPR. By saying so, it has, in effect, ruled out changes in Section 3 (d) of the Patents Act, which disallows the extension of a patent on the basis of 'frivolous' changes — staving off global pressure on this score. This also implies that compulsory licensing, or the right to waive patents in the event of a health emergency, will stay. Yet, global observers have been tactfully assured that our IPR laws will evolve over time, thereby seeking to address India's obdurate image on the world stage. It sees IPRs as an end in itself, assuming a simplistic, linear link between intellectual property and creativity. It is all very well to encourage 'commercialisation' of IPRs as they add to the intangible wealth of a business concern, but intellectual property is meant to be used, not hoarded. The role of patent trolls worldwide is instructive here.

10. **Health scheme for BPL patients finds few takers** – Times of India
    Uttarakhand has fared poorly in utilizing funds under the Rajya Vyadhi Nidhi (RVN) scheme, under which the state government pays up to Rs 2 lakh for treatment of BPL patients. According to sources, barely 57 patients were treated under the scheme in 2015-16. Since its implementation in 2005, only 892 BPL patients benefitted from the scheme and just Rs 1,081.89 lakh has been utilized. The health department's data show that the number of BPL category patients stands at 6.23 lakh, from which we can infer that the scheme has failed to provide succour to a large section of the people. Under the scheme, if the cost of treatment is more than Rs 2 lakh, the case is referred to the ministry of health and family welfare for financial support, which is disbursed under the Rashtriya Aarogya Nidhi (RAN). Experts are of the view that if RAN was implemented with due diligence in Uttarakhand, it would have provided much help to BPL families, and overall health of the people of the state would have improved.

11. **India must resist pressure to amend its patent laws** – DNA
    The editorial in DNA talks about the fear of pressure from global pharma. With India constantly pressured by developed countries to amend its patent laws, it is feared that these changes can proceed only in the direction that favours global pharma companies. Only last week, the Patents Office reversed its own decision to reject a patent application by a US company for a hepatitis C medicine. The patent office had earlier said that the drug was not significantly different from an earlier formulation by another company. The new IPR policy was expected to give a boost to India's quest for more foreign direct investment. But there is criticism that the document has few specifics like protection for global pharma majors to get them interested in investing in India. Nevertheless, the offer of tax benefits and fee waivers to encourage research and development and patent creation aligns with the Make In India, Start-up India and the Digital India initiatives and could produce results in the long run. Even while the government claims to be upholding access to healthcare, it is at best a balancing act.

12. **Need for responsible waste management by Pharma industry to tackle antibiotic resistance** – Pharmabiz.com
    In an interview with Anurag Roy, Business Unit Director, Asia Pacific, Middle East and Africa, DSM Sinochem Pharmaceuticals Pvt Ltd shares his perspective on how pharma companies use insufficient waste management and treatment systems and dump untreated waste water and antibiotics into the environment while producing thousands of tons of antibiotics. He says, modern medicine is incomplete without Antibiotics which are being used across the globe in the treatment of deep-rooted infections, complex surgeries and even common ailments. As per

Centre for Disease Control (CDC), Antibiotics and related drugs, together called antimicrobial agents, have been used for the last 70 years to treat patients. However in recent decades, widespread and rampant use of antibiotics, especially in low and middle income countries have led to the phenomenon of antibiotic resistance or anti-microbial resistance (AMR). He also adds, there is another important aspect here that is missing from the debate about AMR but must be addressed. The manufacturing of antibiotics and as well as the management of waste and waste water which is an inevitable part throughout the entire supply chain is an issue which is not given due importance.