

1. [Pharma companies team up to clean industry's image](#) – Times of India

For the first time ever, some of India's biggest pharmaceutical companies, cutting across their respective associations and representing nearly half the Rs 93,000 crore market, have come together to push for ethical marketing practices to clean up the industry's image.

The forum, comprising of 40 to 50 domestic and MNC firms, had its first closed-door meeting on October 14. It has made a "voluntary and moral commitment" to follow ethical marketing practices in "letter and spirit", and will work with the regulatory mechanism to facilitate the exercise.

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2. [India warns of 'endless' legal challenges at WTO for pharma patent law regime](#) – Mint
3. [India maintains GVK Bio's drug ban issue must be resolved for trade talks with EU](#) – Hindu Business Line
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9. [Folic acid, multivitamin prices may rise on costlier China imports](#) – Hindustan Times

Earlier attempts at bringing about a code acceptable to the entire industry had failed, as the associations — the Indian Pharmaceutical Alliance (representing domestic firms), MNCs-led Organisation of Pharmaceutical Producers of India (OPPI) and the Indian Drug Manufacturers' Association (IDMA) — were at loggerheads.

2. [India warns of 'endless' legal challenges at WTO for pharma patent law regime](#) – Mint

The patent law regime for pharmaceutical products in India and other countries, including what constitutes an invention, will face a "chilling" effect and endless "legal challenges" at the World Trade Organization (WTO) if the US and Switzerland succeed in imposing a controversial norm, India has warned.

The norm which the US and Switzerland intend to bring into force in WTO's trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights (TRIPS) agreement is called non-violation complaints (NVCs). It enables WTO members to raise disputes against another member's actions or policies, even if there is no violation of a WTO agreement.

"The application of NVCs to the TRIPS agreement will have a chilling effect on members and the flexibilities (in the TRIPS agreement) will be severely curtailed," India said on Thursday. "There is a strong potential that IP (intellectual property) regimes and practices in members countries will be opened to (legal) challenges," India argued.

3. [India maintains GVK Bio's drug ban issue must be resolved for trade talks with EU](#) – Hindu Business Line

India is not ready to play ball yet as Brussels has not made any attempt to sort out the issue of the ban placed on generic drugs tested by Hyderabad-based GVK Biosciences. This is despite leaders such as German Chancellor Angela Merkel pushing for resumption of the proposed India-EU free trade agreement (FTA) talks.

"We have been asking the EU to resolve the matter. We have said that we are even ready for re-testing of the banned medicines. But there is no official response from the bloc on the matter. We will not re-start FTA negotiations till there is some concrete movement on resolution of our problem," a Commerce Ministry official told BusinessLine.

4. [Cheap drugs to cost more](#) – The Hans India

The prices of generic drugs are all set to rise on par with the branded ones, thanks to the US-led trade deal. The Indian drug majors' claim that the trade deal to shield the new drug data from the competitors would hurt Indian business in those 12 nations signed the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), including United States.

Speaking on behalf of the Indian pharma industry, Indian Pharmaceutical Alliance (IPA), DG Shah pointed out that, "The generics decline will be discernible from the end of 2017." It means the arrival of new cheap drugs will be delayed due to the new deal. The critics of the deal including advocacy groups like Medecins Sans Frontieres say it will increase the prices of medicines around the world in the long run.

5. [India among top 10 acquirers in US market this year](#) – Economic Times

India has been ranked among top 10 acquirers in the US market this year with 16 deals valued at \$1.7 billion, says Baker & McKenzie.

Majority of these deals were in the pharma sector, with six transactions totalling \$1.5 billion, as Indian companies seek to increase their scale in the US generics market, said a report by Baker & McKenzie.

"Indian companies (particularly in the pharmaceutical sector) have been on a acquisition spree and I think this trend will continue in the near term given the low valuation and the need for Indian companies to increase their scale to compete in the increasingly competitive generic markets, as well to dip their toes into the innovator side of the business," said Ashok Lalwani, Global Head of Baker & McKenzie's India Practice.

6. [CCI extends deadline for bids to conduct pharma study](#) – Business Standard

The Competition Commission has extended the deadline for submitting bids to carry out a detailed study of pharma and healthcare services sector in the national capital region. The anti-trust regulator is planning the study to understand whether there are unfair practices in this sector as part of larger efforts to clamp down on anti-competitive business practices and has also passed many orders in this regard.

In recent years, CCI has come across various instances in the pharmaceutical sector where competition norms seem to have been violated. Under the proposed study, public and private hospitals, insurance companies, pharmaceutical firms and their associations, doctors and their associations, among others, would be covered.

7. [Investments in healthcare are a value creator](#) – Hindu Business Line

"I'm sorry to say there's no such thing as the perfect health system and it certainly doesn't reside in one country," says Mark Britnell, author of the recently launched "In search of the perfect health system."

But the good news, he says, is there are perfect examples of great healthcare around the world, listing out 12 of them.

India's "innovation, flair and speed" finds a mention, reflected in Aravind Eye Care, Narayana Health and Apollo Hospitals, and their use of volumes to raise quality of service and reduce costs. But it's disappointing that a country growing at 7- 8 per cent a year is seeing limited or little progress in universal healthcare, says Britnell. At 4.1 per cent of GDP, India's healthcare spend is lower than the Asian average of 6 per cent.

8. [\*\*India-Africa summit: Govt to push generic medicines\*\*](#) – Financial Express

India is going to use the India-Africa Forum Summit as a major platform to push its generic medicines, especially those that are meant to counter HIV/AIDS. According to MEA officials, currently, India supplies 85% of these anti-retroviral drugs to Africa to help fight AIDS, and during the summit meeting, leaders from both sides will brainstorm on ways to accelerate new preventive technologies for HIV/AIDS.

Pharmaceuticals remain one of the main Indian exports to Africa, making up around 16% of total exported items.

Indian pharma companies are the largest providers of generic medicine in the world, and African markets are a natural fit for these companies, which provide drugs that are often very price-competitive.

9. [\*\*Folic acid, multivitamin prices may rise on costlier China imports\*\*](#) – Hindustan Times

It's not just pulses that's burning a hole in the common man's pocket. Consumers should now brace themselves for the likely price rise of the commonly-used medicines such as folic acid and multivitamins.

Prices of Chinese active pharmaceutical ingredient (API) — the core substance used in producing medicines — have skyrocketed over the last two years, forcing drug makers to demand revision of prices from the National Pharmaceuticals Pricing Authority (NPPA) to cover for rising costs.

The drug makers are not allowed to fix prices beyond a permitted ceiling price, where mostly the increase is not beyond 10%. Drug makers say that they have not been able to raise medicine prices factoring in the sharp jump in imported APIs, most of it sourced from China.