

1. [Something's got to give in India's pharma policy contradictions](#) – Fierce Pharma Asia

India wants to cap drug prices at home while ramping up sales of generics to Western markets targeting the U.S.--all while dozens of manufacturing plants are under regulatory scanners on quality and testing. To be sure, the domestic and multinational companies have wide disagreements on intellectual property laws. But they do increasingly share concerns in India on pricing that may form the basis for a less confrontational approach to access issues.

India follows a market-based price system, the Drug Price Control Order, launched under the previous Congress Party-led government in 2013 that put around 650 drugs under a price ceiling aimed at ensuring access for poorer patients.

The Organisation of Pharmaceutical Producers of India (OPPI) and other stakeholders said measures focused on price control have a limited impact and do not improve access.

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2. [US, Pacific Rim Nations Reach Free Trade Deal](#) – Economic Times

The US and 11 other Pacific Rim countries have reached a deal on the most sweeping trade liberalisation pact in a generation but the accord on Monday faced initial skepticism in the US Congress. In a deal that could reshape industries and influence everything from the price of cheese to the cost of cancer treatments, the 12 countries will cut trade barriers and set common standards. Details of the pact were emerging in statements by officials after days of marathon negotiations in Atlanta. The Trans-Pacific Partnership would affect 40% of the world economy and stand as a legacy-defining achievement for US President Barack Obama, if it is ratified by Congress.

Lawmakers in other TPP countries must also approve the deal. Initial reaction from key US lawmakers was skeptical. Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders, a US Democratic presidential candidate, said he was disappointed and warned the pact would cost US jobs and hurt

consumers. "Wall Street and other big corporations have won again," he said, vowing to "do all that I can to defeat this agreement" in Congress. Senate Finance Committee Chairman Orrin Hatch, a Republican, said he feared the TPP could fail to break down trade barriers for American-made products. "While the details are still emerging, unfortunately I am afraid this deal appears to fall woefully short," Hatch said. The TPP has been controversial because of the secret negotiations that have shaped it over the past five years and the perceived threat to interest groups from Mexican auto workers to Canadian dairy farmers.

3. [Doctors Without Borders Reject TPP Pact](#) – Economic Times

Aid organisation Doctors Without Borders came down heavily on the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) on the grounds that the deal will restrict access to low-cost generic medicines to millions of people. TPP is a trade agreement between the US, Japan and 10 other countries from the Asia-Pacific region. The trade pact has been under negotiation for the past five years over key issues such as agriculture and intellectual property.

"TPP will still go down in history as the worst trade agreement for access to medicines in developing countries, which will be forced to change their laws to incorporate abusive intellectual property protections for pharmaceutical companies," said Judit Rius Sanjuan, US manager and legal policy adviser at MSF Access Campaign or Doctors without Borders.

4. [US, 11 others strike FTA linking 40% of global economy](#) – DNA

The US had sought 12 years of protection to encourage pharmaceutical companies to invest in expensive biological treatments like Genentech's cancer treatment Avastin. Australia, New Zealand and public health groups had sought a period of five years to bring down drug costs and the burden on state-subsidised medical programs. Negotiators agreed on a compromise on minimum terms that was short of what U.S. negotiators had sought and that would effectively grant biologic drugs a period of about years free from the threat of competition from generic versions, people involved in the closed-door talks said.

5. [Government to unveil IPR policy in 2 months: Amitabh Kant](#) – Economic Times

Government will come out with a national Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) policy in the next couple of months, which will be one of the "finest" in the world, DIPP Secretary Amitabh Kant said today. "India in the next two months will be coming out with a completely new and one of the finest IPR policies in the world," Kant said at an Indo-German Business Roundtable here.

6. [India-EU FTA: PM Narendra Modi conveys concerns on ban of 700 drugs](#) – Economic Times

Prime Minister Narendra Modi today conveyed India's concerns to German Chancellor Angela Merkel over banning of over 700 drugs two months back and asked her to use her influence in EU to remove the impediments for resumption of FTA talks with the 28-member bloc. After talks between Modi and Merkel, Foreign Secretary S Jaishankar said there was an understanding that "we would go forward with negotiations" though there was an issue of India's pharmaceutical exports getting affected.

He was replying to a question on whether the issue of resumption of FTA negotiations was discussed in talks between the two leaders.

7. [India, UK health regulators sign MoU to boost public safety](#) – Economic Times

To increase collaboration in the area of medicines and medical devices, UK's Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) today signed a MoU with its counterpart body in India. With an aim of improving public safety in the two countries, a MoU was signed between the Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO), part of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare of India and MHRA.

"We operate in a global environment and agreements such as these serve to further strengthen our ability to promote good practises and we look forward to working even closer with our Indian counterparts," MHRA Chairman, Professor Michael Rawlins said.

8. [Govt to restart selling its own medicines](#) – Hindustan Times

Indian Drugs and Pharmaceuticals Ltd (IDPL), the central government-owned drug firm, may start selling drugs soon. While the government is exploring opportunities to start exporting 'IDPL-made' generics within this financial year, the ministry of chemicals and fertilisers is set to infuse a working capital of Rs45 crore to kick start the operations.

“ Sick units including Hindustan Antibiotics Limited, Bengal Chemicals and Pharmaceuticals Limited, Indian Drugs and Pharmaceuticals Ltd will soon get new life as we are rebuilding and renovating them,” Gangaram Hansraj Ahir, minister of state, chemicals and fertilisers told HT. “The idea is to reduce Chinese imports of active pharmaceutical ingredients (API),” Ahir said. The government recently invested Rs3 crore in IDPL's Gurgaon unit. At present, all the drugs manufactured by IDPL are consumed in various government-run programmes.

9. [The right prescription](#) – Hindu Business Line

There has been a fundamental shift in the system of healthcare delivery in the country. Once under the purview of doctors and nurses alone, it now involves healthcare practitioners and allied health services providers such as diagnostic and medical laboratory services, physiotherapy and occupational therapy and radiological services. This shift has undoubtedly improved the quality of healthcare; but the unintended consequence has been a sharp increase in the costs of healthcare.

With growing privatisation — 80 per cent of outpatient and 60 per cent of inpatient care is now provided by the private sector — there has been a surge, not only in costs, but in malpractices related to unnecessary testing and overcharging. On the supply side, while the surge in demand for health technicians has led to a mushrooming of institutions providing such training, quality and standards of education vary widely. In the absence of overarching central laws (health falls in the concurrent list), there has been uneven development of skills and ethical standards are virtually not enforced. Getting a common set of rules under a single law is only the first step in cleaning up this situation.

10. [FICCI recommends 16-point agenda to position India as most preferred healthcare destination](#) – Pharmabiz

In a bid to leverage the inherent comparative and competitive advantages as a nation and position India as the most preferred healthcare destination, the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) has made wide-ranging recommendations to capitalise on the available opportunities in the Medical Value Travel (MVT) market.