Headlines Today

1. **Don't Say No to Drugs** – Economic Times

   Cynics say that G20 meetings are a complete waste of time. The G20 was created for a coordinated fiscal and monetary push out of the Great Recession of 2008-10. Since then, it seems to have lost its rationale. Arvind Panagariya, India's Sherpa for the next G20 summit, seeks new ideas that India can take up at the next G20 summit. I think the recent drug scandal in the US is an excellent opportunity to launch a long-term campaign to gradually change the US emphasis on tough drug patents, and shift towards the softer patents desired by countries like India. The US aims through its new trans-Pacific and trans-Atlantic trade deals to make tough patents a fait accompli in all the countries that dominate the world economy minus the Brics.

2. **World Will Not Achieve Sustainable Development Goals without India: Gates** – Economic Times

   India has made significant progress in achieving some of the MDG targets, particularly in education and health, aided by clear, quantifiable targets and regular monitoring of progress.

   The SDGs present the Government of India with an opportunity to reaffirm its commitment to providing quality primary health care to all. What we have seen is that this requires setting robust national and sub-national level plans while targeting the most vulnerable.Investments must be made to develop strong, resilient primary healthcare systems which have the requisite infrastructure and are fully functional. I believe that India has the political commitment and intellect to draw robust plans and adapt measures that will aid in closing the gap on preventable deaths, which disproportionately affect the poorest

3. **How Patent Law Can Block Even Lifesaving Drugs** – New York Times

   Hillary Rodham Clinton's prescription drug policy proposal, released last week, would hold drug manufacturers accountable to their level of investment in research. But there are some potentially valuable drugs we'll never get drug companies to invest in — those that cannot be patented.

   By granting temporary monopolies to innovators, the patent system is widely credited with protecting and promoting innovation. But when it comes to pharmaceuticals, it may be preventing valuable therapies from coming to market.

4. **Tata Trusts support OSPF — the 'Linux for drugs'** – Hindu Business Line
   "It may be an idea too hot to handle for some groups wedded to IP," says Jaykumar Menon, explaining the creation of the Open Source Pharma Foundation. Taking a "disruptive" approach to public health, the OSPF seeks to be a "Linux (platform) for drugs".

   The Foundation will make data open and public at all stages of the drug development cycle, from early research leads during discovery, through to clinical trials on humans and the final generic manufacturing, Menon told BusinessLine, speaking from the US. The idea is to bring out innovative and affordable medicines. The OSPF has received a commitment of $3 million (about ₹20 crore) from the Tata Trusts, over three years, towards creation of the Foundation, says Menon, who teaches at Canada's McGill University.

5. **MSF urges India to protect affordable medicines for millions** – Express Pharma
   The US government, backed strongly by its pharmaceutical lobby, is not only pressuring India to dilute its patentability standards but has been persistently pushing India to implement a drug regulatory system

   As US President Barack Obama and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi met in New York, Médecins Sans Frontières/Doctors Without Borders (MSF) warned that US pressure for India to change its intellectual property policies could result in millions of people around the world losing their lifeline of affordable medicines. MSF relies on affordable generic medicines produced in India to do its medical work in more than 60 countries, and therefore urged Modi to stand strong and protect India's role as the 'pharmacy of the developing world.

6. **Drug regulator seeks to amend pharma manufacturing laws** - Mint
   After facing heat from the American and European counterparts over quality issues, the Indian drug regulator is set to draft an amendment to existing pharmaceutical manufacturing laws to bring them on par with international standards. The Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) will move a proposal before the government within the next six months to amend the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940, and the Drugs and Cosmetics Rules, 1945, in an attempt to raise drug manufacturing standards in line with those recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO).

   "We have decided to revisit the present laws and bridge the gap between Indian manufacturing practices and the WHO good manufacturing practices (GMPs)," said G.N. Singh, the drug controller general of India. "The new standards in India will be up to the global marks."

7. **Should India Worry About a Dramatic Price Rise of Old Drugs?** – The Wire
   Last week, America found itself a new super-villain in hedge fund manager Martin Shkreli, after the New York Times published a story on how he had hiked the price of Diaprim, a drug, from $13.50 to $750, virtually overnight. Diaprim, which is the brand name for Pyrimethamine, is prescribed for the treatment of malaria and toxoplasmosis. The latter is a disease that is known to frequently affect patients whose immune systems have already been compromised by AIDS.

   Invented by a Nobel Prize winner working for Burroughs Welcome, the rights to the drug were recently acquired by Turing Pharmaceuticals which was founded by Shkreli, a 32-year-old hedge fund manager with a controversial past that has been documented by the NYT in this detailed article. The backlash against the price rise by almost everybody who is somebody, including Presidential hopefuls Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump, has forced Shkreli to backpedal on the price rise.

8. **Drug prices should benefit patients, not industry** – FoxNews.com
   Shkreli gives credence to the likes of Democrat presidential candidate and U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.), who recently introduced legislation to impose federal controls on drug prices. The Prescription Drug Affordability Act of 2015 would allow the Department of Health and

Human Services (HHS) to dictate to pharmaceutical manufacturers the prices HHS will pay for Medicare Part D drugs. Yet, government price controls undermine the likelihood that manufacturers can continue to invest in the research and development that is yielding cures for conditions previously thought to be incurable, such as hepatitis C.

The bill also would allow the importation of drugs from Canada that are not approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Medications supposedly imported from Canada often originate from countries like India, Russia, China, and Brazil, and lack quality controls to ensure that they are safe and effective. Their active ingredients may be replaced with road paint, cement, or rat poison.

9. **Patents and the Misunderstood Case of Compulsory Licensing in India** – Sinapse Blog
India and its IP policies have since long, been the target of constant accusations. The two words that make it to the center stage in every such accusation is none other than "Compulsory License". Time and again India's IP policies have been pulled into the witness box, accusations leveled and charges read. However, India's stand has been pretty clear as it has always pleaded not guilty. The Natco v. Bayer case is perhaps one of the most cited cases in relation to Compulsory Licensing. And why shouldn't it be? It was after all, the first ever Compulsory License granted to a company anywhere in the world post TRIPS agreement.

The case was a global phenomenon and marked the start of a never ending debate.