



News Updates: December 25-26, 2013

Drug Pricing

Publication: The Hindu
Edition: National (*Opinion*)
Date: December 26, 2013
Headline: [Wrong-footing the drug cartels](#)

Synopsis: Uruguay has become the first country to legalise cannabis, taking this most radical step instead of engaging in the so-called war on drugs. Several other countries have adopted measures such as non-prosecution for possession of small amounts. In the United States, 20 states are trying partial legalisation. In Uruguay, smoking cannabis has been legal since 1974, as has been the private consumption of all drugs. In future, Uruguayan citizens over 18 and resident in the country will be able to register with the government and then grow up to six plants at home or buy up to 40 grams of the drug per month from licensed pharmacies. Resale, and the so-called dope tourism, are banned; sale in cafés will be illegal. Production, distribution, and sale will stay in private hands, but the government will control and regulate the whole process. Advertising will be banned, and so will imports or exports. The psychoactive element in cannabis, tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), will be at a low concentration of 5-12 per cent, and regulation will improve purity; in illegal markets, contamination often turns cannabis into a gateway drug to more dangerous substances.

Publication: The Hindu Business Lines
Edition: National
Date: December 26, 2013
Journalist: Bharani Vaitheesvaran
Headline: [Big Pharma in no hurry to restore trade margins for distributors](#)

Synopsis: Big pharma companies, such as Sun Pharmaceuticals, Abbott Healthcare and Glenmark Pharmaceuticals, are yet to restore trade margins to drug distributors, who took a hit after a Government order in May cut essential medicine prices. Distributors say they are operating a sizeable portion of the essential medicines market — estimated at Rs 774 crore in November — on compressed margins. About 35 per cent of drug-makers in the Rs 72,000-crore Indian pharmaceutical market have not restored margins, clouding the business environment for distributors, who are already troubled by rising labour and transport costs, said J.S. Shinde, President, All India Organisation of Druggists and Chemists. The organisation represents 7.5 lakh businesses at varied points in the drug supply chain. The National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority fixed ceiling prices for 348 essential medicines in May this year, forcing manufacturers to pare the margins of wholesalers by 2 percentage points and that of retailers by 4 percentage points.

FDI / Foreign Investment in Pharma / M&As in Pharma

Publication: The Hindu Business Line
Edition: National
Date: December 25, 2013
Headline: ['India is a must-win market for Philips'](#)

Synopsis: Philips India is set to pamper consumers with new-generation personal-care products, and home appliances. It will also unveil diagnostic equipment for the healthcare segment. With products such as Robotics floor cleaner, AirFryer and induction cook-tops, the company sees personal-care and healthcare presenting a huge opportunity for growth. Krishna Kumar, Vice-Chairman and MD, Philips India, told Business Line how various elements of the India strategy have been laced together for the next growth phase.

How is Philips addressing the healthcare segment?

Philips is a major player in the healthcare segment spanning small devices, medical equipment, diagnostic devices and large equipment for diagnostic centres and hospitals. The company increased its market share to become the

number one player in the healthcare segment. This includes imaging systems, patient monitoring, sleep therapeutic devices and non-invasive ventilators for respiratory care and cathlabs.

Publication: The Economic Times

Edition: Online (Reproduced from PTI)

Date: December 25, 2013

Headline: [FDI witnesses major liberalisation in 2013; more to follow](#)

Synopsis: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh-led UPA government relaxed foreign direct investment (FDI) norms in almost dozen sectors including telecom, defence, PSU oil refineries, commodity bourses, power exchanges and stock exchanges. While on one hand, the DIPP relaxed the foreign investment policy, on the other it has also proposed to tighten the norms in the sectors like pharmaceuticals and royalty payments.

FDA / Drug Regulatory / DCGI / Pharma Policy

Publication: The Economic Times

Edition: New Delhi/Ahmedabad

Date: December 26, 2013

Journalist: Soma Das

Headline: [Expert panel under B Suresh to vet drug combos for safety](#)

Synopsis: Flooded with over 5,000 combination drug applications awaiting clearance, the central drug regulator has set up an expert panel under president of the Pharmacy Council of India, B Suresh, to fix standard parameters, which would be used to isolate unsafe combination drugs from the safe ones. This committee would be a subcommittee under the Drug Technical Advisory Board, the apex body for regulation for technical matters on drug safety. Combination drugs constitute 46% of the country's Rs 70,000-crore drug market but many of these have not been tested for safety and efficacy and are termed 'irrational' by drug experts. Also, a large chunk of this is being sold with the state drug controllers' consent, but the central drug regulator is kept out of the loop.

Publication: The Hindu Business Line

Edition: National

Date: December 24, 2013

Headline: [Regulators display zeal, widen the net](#)

Synopsis: Year 2013 will go down in history as one in which many regulatory loopholes were exposed, prompting regulators to take action to plug them. The RBI stole the thunder from the SEBI as it was the central bank's actions that had a decisive impact on the currency and the economy. The year also saw many long-pending Bills finally becoming law, bringing cheer to consumers and companies. Ponzi schemes: Regulators had to sit up and take notice after gullible investors lost their life-savings in scams, such as Saradha scam. Market regulator SEBI brought out the collective investment scheme regulation to cover all schemes that collect more than Rs 100 crore. The idea was to bring all esoteric Ponzi schemes involving investing in emus, goats and potatoes, among other on under regulatory purview. But this can only be called the first step since schemes that collect less than Rs 100 crore and those covered by various state laws will still slip through the net.

Publication: Business Standard

Edition: National

Date: December 26, 2013

Journalist: Sushmi Dey

Headline: [Local drug makers worried as regulators start working together](#)

Synopsis: Domestic pharmaceutical companies are worried over various international drug regulators working in coordination for keeping a check on manufacturing practices and ensuring quality of medicines, whereas there is absence of harmonised norms. "While the US FDA (Food and Drug Administration) has opted for stringent inspections and measures, various other regulators are following them blindly. This can lead to a dangerous situation because each country otherwise have their own criteria and norms for approval. In the absence of

harmonised norms, a coordinated actions by regulators may make things difficult for companies,” said a senior industry official working for a domestic pharma major.

Publication: The Telegraph

Edition: National (*Opinion*)

Date: December 25, 2013

Headline: [Strong Medicine](#)

Synopsis: The Drugs and Cosmetics (Amendment) Bill, 2013, introduced in the Rajya Sabha recently, aims to bring about sweeping changes to the way drugs are regulated in India. It makes an effort to tackle the problem of spurious drugs — an effort that has been praised widely. But in attempting to centralise the process of issuing licences to many key drugs, the bill seems to have stirred a hornet’s nest in the drug industry. One of the main features of the bill is that many new drugs will be re-classified once it is passed into law. Most crucially, though, medical devices will now be classified as drugs and therefore, will come in the ambit of this bill.

Patents / Intellectual Property Rights / Compulsory Drug Licensing

Publication: Mint

Edition: National

Journalist: Ketaki Gokhale

Date: December 25, 2013

Headline: [Glenmark Pharma goes West for \\$250 billion drug market](#)

Synopsis: Glenmark Pharma is seeking to launch its first biotechnology medicine in the US or Europe as early as 2017. Glenmark Pharmaceuticals Ltd, the Indian company that’s reaped more than \$200 million selling rights to its drugs, is seeking to introduce its first biotechnology medicine in the US or Europe as early as 2017. A biologic remedy for ulcerative colitis, a bowel disorder affecting 1.5 million patients globally, is progressing through US trials after being licensed to Paris-based Sanofi and may come to market from 2017 to 2020, according to Glenmark’s managing director Glenn Saldanha. Talks with possible licensees for biologic pain and inflammation drugs have begun, he said.

Clinical Trials

Publication: The Hindu

Edition: National

Date: December 26, 2013

Journalist: Aarti Dhar

Headline: [Ruling on clinical trials is in national interest: Azad](#)

Synopsis: But it is a setback as there is a 50% drop. Union Health Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad on Wednesday admitted that the recent Supreme Court ruling on, and stringent regulations for, clinical trials had set drugs research back in India. But he was hopeful that the sector would gather pace again. “We received a setback because not many pharmaceutical companies are coming forward for clinical trials now. There has been a 50 per cent drop in clinical trials after stringent regulations were put in place, but we are hopeful that they will pick up in the coming days,” he told The Hindu. The changes were meant to protect the national interest and to do justice to those who participated in the trials, he said.

General Industry

Publication: Business Standard

Edition: National

Date: December 25, 2013

Headline: [Paying off doctors](#)

Synopsis: In a decision that should have far-reaching implications, GlaxoSmithKline has said it will stop paying doctors for promoting its drugs. This is the first corrective measure from a leading player in an industry that has for long been accused of unethical sales practices by governments, regulators and activists alike. A few months ago,

GlaxoSmithKline was accused by the Chinese authorities of bribing doctors, hospitals and government officers so that it could sell at higher prices. Last year, the company had pleaded guilty to criminal charges in the United States that it illegally promoted drugs and withheld drug safety data, and agreed to pay \$3 billion as a settlement. This recent decision must lead to some soul-searching amongst the world's other pharmaceutical companies.

Publication: The Economic Times

Edition: National

Date: December 25, 2013

Headline: [Vitamin D is the real superhero](#)

Synopsis: It is unlikely that Dracula ever considered the nutritional aspects of his favourite (liquid) diet, and that must have been his undoing. Indeed, even his aversion to garlic — regarded today as beneficial, though aromatically overpowering — could have been a contributory factor, as a pair of researchers now aver that the average super villains' poor diet and lack of sunlight made them deficient in Vitamin D and, thus, prone to be vanquished by well-fed heroes who basked in sunshine.

Publication: The Hindu

Journalist: N. Gopal Raj

Edition: Noida/ Delhi

Date: December 26, 2013

Headline: [Malarial drug resistance marker identified](#)

Synopsis: Scientists have uncovered mutations of a gene that make the most dangerous malarial parasite resistant to front line drug therapy. More than half a million children die each year from malaria caused by Plasmodium falciparum. Drugs with artemisinin have led the fight against this single-celled parasite's depredations and contributed to a decline in the world's burden of malaria. However, strains of P. falciparum that are resistant to artemisinin have been detected in Cambodia, Thailand, Myanmar and Vietnam, raising fears that these drug-resistant forms could spread to other parts of the world and put at risk the advances that have been made in combating malaria. An international team of scientists have identified a parasite gene whose mutations are associated with artemisinin resistance. Such mutations could be “a useful molecular marker for tracking the emergence and spread” of resistance, noted Frédéric Arieu of the Institut Pasteur in France and his colleagues in a paper published last week in Nature.

Publication: The Hindu

Journalist: Arti Dhar

Edition: Noida/ Delhi

Date: December 26, 2013

Headline: [Maternal mortality ratio comes down to 178](#)

Synopsis: India inches closer to achieving millennium development goal — MMR 109 by year 2015. With the maternal mortality ratio (MMR) — number of women who die of pregnancy-related causes per 1,00,000 live births — coming down to 178, India is inching forward to meet its global commitment to reduce the ratio to 109 by year 2015. The latest MMR figures for 2010-2012, released by the Registrar-General of India suggest that the MMR had come down to 178 from 212, an annual decline of 5.7 per cent. While Kerala has the lowest MMR at 66 as against 81 in 2007-2009 Sample Registration Survey figures, Assam tops the list in absolute numbers with 328 deaths per 1,00,000 live births, though the number has declined by 5.6 per cent from the previous figure of 390.

Publication: The Hindu Business Line

Edition: National (Editorial)

Date: December 25, 2013

Headline: [Good governance calls for gumption](#)

Synopsis: The recent elections have emphasised that government intervention without focusing on good governance does not work. It was the ability to usher in a host of programmes focussing on overall development

that helped the UPA continue at the Centre since 2004. During the pre-UPA phase, the focus was on growth without too much of a policy focus on the social sector. And this led to a political backlash against the NDA's 'India Shining' campaign. The state of the health sector is even more interesting. Data from the National Sample Survey Organisation and the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare show that , on an average, 70 per cent of the people prefer to visit private hospitals. They think they can get better facilities there. One can blame increase in income, but two-third of the poor does not feel confident about government healthcare facilities. The trend is the worst in Bihar where 93.3 per cent of the people do not go to government healthcare units. But there are a few exceptions. For instance, government healthcare system seems to function well for Sikkim, Mizoram, Himachal Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Orissa and Tripura (91.8 per cent, 90.6 per cent, 82.7 per cent, 82.5 per cent, 76 per cent, and 80 per cent respectively).

Publication: The Asian Age

Edition: Mumbai

Date: December 26, 2013

Headline: [But there are still challenges](#)

Synopsis: Foot soldiers working for the Community Based Monitoring (CBM) have also observed positive changes in the healthcare system after their constant pursuance at the government and community levels. However, a more "integrated approach" towards the healthcare system is expected by them by increasing coordination among the government departments related to rural health care services. "There are good changes we have observed and at the same time the government machinery is also getting more accountable towards patients. But departments like rural development and public works should also coordinate with the health department to have overall results," said Dr Shashikant Ahankari from the Halo Medical Foundation. The foundation has been doing the CBM in Solapur and Osmanabad districts for the past two years.

Publication: The Indian Express(Express News Line)

Edition: National

Journalist: Anchal Dhar

Date: December 26, 2013

Headline: [In Jan, free medicines, surgeries in Gurgaon govt hospitals](#)

Synopsis: From January, government hospitals in and around Gurgaon will provide free medicines, surgeries, medical tests and referral transportation to the residents of Haryana under the Mukhyamantri Muft Ilaaj Yojana (MMMIY). Under this scheme, basic medical check-up of patients categorised under general category in hospitals will also be free of cost. The operational costs of the patients, Rs 100, will also be waived. "This service will be available in government hospitals of primary and secondary level.

Publication: Mail Today

Journalist: Ritu Bhatia

Edition: New Delhi

Date: December 26, 2013

Headline: [A year full of health perks](#)

Synopsis: It's that time once again. Come end-December and most of us need to confront whether or not we stuck to our health resolutions, and what the outcome has been. Have you managed that daily walk? Cut your portions? Are you going to bed one hour earlier, as planned? If things haven't been going the way you wanted, you'll just have to wait a few days to set a new list of resolutions. Till then, here's a brief review of some health trends of 2013. While there's been a spike in lifestyle diseases like diabetes and heart disease and others such as cancer and bipolar disorder, the good news is that urban Indians are more aware of health risks associated with behaviour and lifestyle. "Increasing awareness of Vitamin D deficiency due to inadequate sunlight exposure has been the talk of town with large numbers queuing up to check for levels and discussing supplementation," says Dr Amitabh Parti, Unit Head, Department of Internal Medicine, Fortis Memorial Research Institute.

Publication: DNA (also appeared in The Hindu Business Line)

Edition: Online *(Reproduced from Press Trust of India)*

Date: December 26, 2013

Headline: [Maternal mortality rate drops by 20% in Bengal](#)

Synopsis: The maternal mortality rate in West Bengal has dropped sharply by 20% due to health reforms in the state, latest statistics say. Quoting a latest survey report prepared by the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, who also holds the health portfolio, told PTI that the maternal mortality rate (MMR) rate has fallen to 117 per 1 lakh childbirths during 2010-12. The figure during the period 2007-09 was 145 per 1 lakh childbirths. The state ranks fifth in the new list which is topped by Kerala which registered only 66 women fatalities in one lakh cases. Maternal deaths are defined as the number of women who die during pregnancy or within 42 days of the termination of pregnancy.

Publication: Reuters India

Edition: Online

Date: December 24, 2013

Headline: [Exclusive: Carlyle near deal to buy J&J diagnostics unit - sources](#)

Synopsis: Private equity firm Carlyle Group LP (CG.O) is nearing an agreement to acquire Johnson & Johnson's (JNJ.N) ortho clinical diagnostics unit, four people familiar with the matter said on Monday, in a deal expected to be worth around \$4 billion. J&J's ortho clinical diagnostics unit makes blood-screening equipment and laboratory blood tests. It also makes tests that can identify a patient's blood type and screen for viruses such as HIV and hepatitis C. The unit is a small player in a market led by larger rivals such as Roche Holding AG (ROG.VX), Siemens AG (SIEGn.DE), **Abbott Laboratories** (ABT.N) and Danaher. Pfizer Inc (PFE.N), for instance, recently spun off its animal health products business, and **Abbott** split off its branded drugs unit early this year.

Publication: Reuters India

Edition: Online

Date: December 25, 2013

Headline: [China tightens infant formula rules in food safety drive](#)

Synopsis: China will further toughen milk powder regulation next year as it moves to boost confidence in domestic producers and allay long-standing fears around food safety in its \$12.4 billion infant formula market. Milk powder firms will need to apply for a new permit under the toughened rules by the end of May next year, the China Food and Drug Administration said in a statement on its website, which was carried by state media on Wednesday. The food regulator will then release a list of approved producers. That damaged the reputation of Chinese firms and boosted the market share of foreign brands such as Danone SA, Nestle SA, Mead Johnson Nutrition Co and **Abbott Laboratories**. Imported brands account for close to 80 percent of the infant formula market in major cities.

Publication: The Economic Times *(Reproduced from PTI)*

Edition: Online

Date: December 24, 2013

Headline: [Global FMCG majors Unilever, Pepsi, GSK and others bet big on India despite slowdown](#)

Synopsis: India was the flavour of the year, at least in the FMCG sector, as multinationals hiked stakes in their subsidiaries lured by long term potential of the country, while homegrown executives made their way to top hierarchy of global firms in 2013. Unilever, GlaxoSmithKline and PepsiCo made big bang announcements during the year as they decided to enhance their play in the "strategic and emerging" Indian market.

Publication: Jagran Josh

Edition: Online

Date: December 25, 2013

Headline: [What kept SC busy this year in Pharma/ Healthcare](#)

Synopsis: The case closely monitored by the international media was the patent battle fiercely fought between Indian pharmaceutical companies and foreign firm Novartis over a cancer drug. In a major blow to the Swiss pharma

giant, the apex court rejected its plea for a patent on cancer drug Glivec clearing hurdles in the way of generic drugs manufacturer to provide affordable drugs to lakhs of cancer patients in the country. While healthcare issues on drugs were consuming its share of time, the Supreme Court came out with a controversial verdict by scrapping the holding of a single common entrance test (NEET) for admission to MBBS, BDS and post-graduate courses in all medical colleges, paving the way for private colleges to conduct their own examination.

Publication: Business Standard

Edition: Online

Date: December 25, 2013

Headline: [Firms are ready to pay for talent... we want a more diverse mix in our intake: Vivek Sane](#)

Synopsis: Management schools in India are much more than only the IIMs, believes Vivek Sane, Director, Symbiosis Institute of Business Management (SIBM). His own institute, ranked among the top 20 B-schools in India, is taking various measures to keep pace with its clientele. Leading companies like Mahindra & Mahindra, Asian Paints, Aditya Birla Group, Reliance Industries, Pidilite, Citi Group, J P Morgan, Goldman Sachs, ITC, GSK and Wipro have visited. Other than placements, we have been encouraging students to participate in international competitions. Every year, we have students who come in the top three on any large corporate event, and these students get picked up by companies even before the placement season.