



News Updates: February 13, 2014

Intellectual Property/Compulsory License/Patents

Publication: Business Standard

Edition: National

Date: February 13, 2014

Headline: [T S Vishwanath: A duel on drugs](#)

Synopsis: The discussions between the SA govt and pharma giants on intellectual property policy should keep both the needy and the inventor in mind. The South African government and large pharmaceutical companies are in combat mode regarding the proposed national policy on intellectual property (IP) that hopes to improve access to medicines for the poorer sections of the population. Many developing countries and the civil society have backed the proposed policy, and Pretoria is seeking to implement it at the earliest. The battle is getting serious with the South African Health Minister Aaron Motsoaledi comparing the industry campaign to "genocide".

Publication: The Times of India

Edition: National

Date: February 13, 2014

Headline: [India faces US sanction threat](#)

Synopsis: India is facing multiple threats on its trade and investment policies. After the USTR (US Trade Representative) targeted India earlier this week, another federal agency, International Trade Commission (ITC), is holding hearings on February 12-14 to decide the course of investigations, which could potentially lead to imposing trade sanctions against the country. Though the complaints against India are non-specific about tariffs and customs procedures, and more specific about local content and technology transfer requirements, they could cover wide-ranging sectors including agriculture, biotechnology and pharma, and even manufacturing and services.

Publication: The Hindu

Edition: Online

Date: February 12, 2014

Headline: [Drug patents lead to genocide in healthcare: Yusuf Hamied](#)

Synopsis: Free competition is the only way to reduce drug prices, said the veteran chemist and chairman of generic pharmaceutical company Cipla. In a few years, India will feel the devastating impact of product patents, which the country had reintroduced in 2005, taking away the legal freedom to manufacture affordable life-saving drugs that are not available in India, veteran chemist and chairman of generic pharmaceutical company Cipla Yusuf Hamied has said.

Publication: The Financial Express

Edition: Online

Date: February 13, 2014

Headline: [US trade group seeks action against India's 'unfair policies'](#)

Synopsis: After dragging India to WTO on solar projects, US International Trade Commission (USITC) on Wednesday started a probe into the impact of Indian trade and investment policies on US economy. In a media teleconference Linda Dempsey, vice-president of organised by US-based National Association of Manufacturers, said that the investigation has been taken in the wake of deteriorating trade relations between India and the US.

Publication: The Hindu

Edition: Online

Date: February 13, 2014

Headline: [U.S. probing 'discrimination' in Indian trade policies](#)

Synopsis: India's policies for regulating foreign trade and investment, particularly in the context of intellectual property rights (IPR) affecting the pharmaceutical industry, were in the crosshairs of the US Congress this week, as a lengthy investigation was launched into whether such policies were harming the US economy by discriminating against American firms. The "fact-finding" investigation on 'Trade, Investment, and Industrial Policies in India: Effects on the US Economy,' which kicked off on Wednesday, is being undertaken by the US International Trade Commission upon authorisation by the Senate Finance Committee and the House of Representatives' Ways and Means Committee.

Drug Regulatory/FDA/Drug Pricing

Publication: The Telegraph

Edition: National

Date: February 13, 2014

Headline: [Questions on health transfer](#)

Synopsis: Sections of India's public health community have expressed outrage at the government's decision to transfer India's top health bureaucrat amid speculation that he had questioned the nomination of a tainted doctor to the country's apex medical regulator. The government yesterday transferred the Union health secretary Keshav Desiraju, a 1978-batch IAS officer, to the consumer affairs ministry in what is being interpreted in some health circles as an abrupt and unjustified transfer. Union health minister Ghulam Nabi Azad was today quoted by the Press Trust of India as saying: "These are administrative things... officers' and ministers' portfolios change — it is a regular affair."

Publication: The Economic Times

Edition: National

Date: February 13, 2014

Headline: Merck Sereno supports India's Two-Tier Drug Pricing Policy (No link available, scan attached)

Synopsis: At a time when the US Chamber of Commerce may think India to be an inhospitable terrain for innovation, Big Pharma does not agree. Merck Sereno in his interview to ET spoke about supporting lower prices for emerging markets and opposing incremental innovation.

Publication: Business Standard

Edition: Online

Date: February 12, 2014

Headline: [Lapses by some pharma cos overshadowed good things: FDA chief](#)

Synopsis: On her maiden visit to India, US Food and Drug Administrator (FDA) Margaret A Hamburg has said recent lapses in quality by a handful of pharma companies has overshadowed the good things done by other Indian companies, who emphasise on quality products and practices. "Unfortunately, the many Indian companies that understand good manufacturing and quality processes have been overshadowed by recent lapses in quality at a handful of pharmaceutical firms," Hamburg, currently on an India trip, said in a blog posted on the FDA website.

Publication: The Hindu Business Line

Edition: Online

Date: February 12, 2014

Headline: [Union Health Secretary Keshav Desiraju transferred](#)

Synopsis: Keshav Desiraju, the Health Secretary with the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has been transferred to the Ministry of Consumer Affairs. According to sources in the Ministry of Health the decision to remove Desiraju was taken on Tuesday following issues with the Cabinet Secretariat. Sources said, more rejigs in the alignment of top officials is likely in the coming days.

Similar reports in

Business Standard - [Health Secretary transferred](#)

The Pioneer - Health Secy shunted from Ministry (Scan attached)

Millennium Post - Ghulam Nabi Azad shunts out honest officer for 'tained' favorite (Scan attached)

The New Indian Express - Health secretary shunted out (Scan attached)

Publication: Pharmabiz

Edition: Online

Date: February 13, 2014

Headline: [US FDA listens to Indian concerns on regulatory scrutiny, but maintains rules are same for all countries](#)

Synopsis: US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has assured India to help Indian companies to 'identify operational problems' and 'initiate measures for self-correction', but claimed that it adopted uniform standards for all the countries, even as the industry captains raised the concerns about the increased regulatory scrutiny with the visiting US FDA commissioner Dr Margaret Hamburg. The US FDA also showed interest to enhance and widen the scope of collaboration with the Indian regulatory authority based on the new statement of intent signed between both the sides.

General Industry

Publication: The Economic Times

Edition: National

Date: February 13, 2014

Headline: AstraZeneca's Move to Shut R&D Unit has entrepreneurs worried (No link available, scan attached)

Synopsis: British drugmaker AstraZeneca's decision to close its research and development centre in Bangalore is causing angst amongst biotechnology entrepreneurs in the country.

Publication: Deccan Herald

Edition: Online

Date: February 13, 2014

Headline: [It's quality that matters](#)

Synopsis: For the past few years there are frequent newspaper reports that India is facing a huge shortage of basic doctors to meet the WHO recommended minimum doctor population ratio of 1:1,000. The ratio is used as the gospel truth by all Indian health policy makers and planners. A close scrutiny clearly indicates that the recommendations are somewhat arbitrary and on very weak scientific footing. The two parameters that have been used to arrive at the concept are the magnitude of coverage of measles immunisation and births conducted by skilled attendants. It is patently wrong to use these paramedic skills, which do not need physicians, as criteria to develop the notion of the minimum doctor population ratio. Yet, most probably overawed by the weight of the international agencies, the recommendations were just blindly accepted by the high level expert group (HELG) of the Planning Commission. The disastrous effects they would have on quality of medical education were ignored.