



News Updates: July 24, 2014

Drug pricing- NPPA issue

Publication: Mail Today

Edition: Online

Date: July 24, 2014

Headline: [Drug firms in the dock: National pricing authority files cases against top firms to recover Rs 3,600 crore](#)

Synopsis: If the rising cost of private healthcare wasn't bleeding patients dry already, the government has now found that top pharmaceutical companies continue to sell medicines above officially fixed prices. The pricing anomaly has been caught by National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) which has filed 22 cases this year alone, sending out demand notices that add up to Rs.221.78 crore. Only Rs.54.23 crore of this has been recovered from pharmaceutical companies so far. It's a disease that refuses to go away. The NPPA registered 1,040 cases between 1997 and June 2014 against major companies. Of the total Rs.3603.04 crore of the overcharged amount, interest included, the NPPA has only been able to recover only `341.11 crore from pharma companies in these 17 years.

Story picked up online by:

India Today- [Top pharmaceutical companies under scanner for selling medicines at high rates](#)

Business Today- [Drug firms in dock for selling medicines above NPPA fixed prices](#)

Website: Pharmabiz

Edition: Online

Date: July 24, 2014

Headline: [Pharma cos refuse to cut prices of 108 products despite NPPA order on July 10](#)

Synopsis: Although National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) has fixed the prices of 108 formulation packs of 50 non scheduled drugs in antidiabetic and cardiovascular segments effective from July 10, 2014 in the wider public interest, the revised prices of these formulations have not been implemented as yet by the pharma manufactures in the country. While the industry feels that prices of drugs are not in the interest of their business, NPPA maintains that companies have a mandate to abide by the new gazette notification failing which they will be held liable in contravention to the provisions of Drug Price Control Order (DPCO) - 2013.

Website: PharmAsia

Edition: Online

Date: July 24, 2014

Headline: [India Price Cuts May Cause Broad Fallout, Industry Warns](#)

Synopsis: With the government showing no signs of relenting on its order to cut the prices of dozens of drug brands, the Indian pharma industry has warned of a number of adverse implications that may affect product availability, scar government reputation and leave smaller companies gasping for survival.

Patents

Website: India Education Diary

Edition: Online

Date: July 24, 2014

Headline: [Steps taken for Modernization and Strengthening of Intellectual Property Offices](#)

Synopsis: The Plan Scheme for Modernization and Strengthening of Intellectual Property Offices was implemented in the 11th Five Year Plan. This plan scheme has been continued in the 12th Five Year Plan also. The Plan scheme has led to substantial improvement in the infrastructure of the Intellectual Property Office, upgradation of IT facilities and human resource augmentation. Measures taken during 11th Plan, inter-alia, include construction of an International Search Authority (ISA) / International Preliminary Examining Authority (IPEA) building in Delhi for enabling the patent office to function as an ISA/IPEA and construction of the Trade Marks Registry Complex at Ahmedabad.

Health sector/ Modi government

Publication: The Times of India

Edition: National

Date: July 24, 2014

Editorial: Sanjiv Sankaran

Headline: [Is it time for a public health cadre on the lines of IAS or IPS?](#)

Synopsis: Creation of a national public health cadre, similar to other specialised services such as IAS or IPS, is an idea whose time has come. Different groups of experts who had been asked by governments to suggest improvements in India's healthcare system have all made this suggestion. Other than being important to enhance national health indicators, an improved public health system will also be a potent tool to combat poverty. The cost associated with creating a standalone public health cadre will be more than offset by gains to people in terms of a check on healthcare expenses.

Publication: The Times of India

Edition: Chennai

Date: July 24, 2014

Headline: Docs, diagnostic centres are bleeding patients dry (link unavailable; scan attached)

Synopsis: Union health minister Harsh Vardhan on Tuesday said in the Lok Sabha that doctors and diagnostic centres were colluding to rip off patients by making them take costly and unnecessary tests. He said the health department secretary would conduct a probe of revelations in a sting by a television channel that spurred the minister's admission.

Similar reports in-

International Business Times (India)- [Nexus between Doctors and Diagnostic Clinics Swindling Patients, Says Minister](#)

The Times of India (Chennai)- Standardised prices for lab tests may be a solution, say activists (link unavailable; scan attached)

Publication: The Times of India

Edition: Online

Date: July 24, 2014

Headline: [Declare all commissions in healthcare illegal: Jan Swasthya Abhiyan](#)

Synopsis: The Jan Swasthya Abhiyan (JSA), a network of organizations working on public health issues, has written an open letter to Union health minister Dr Harsh Vardhan expressing concern regarding recent media reports on health sector corruption and asked the government to declare all payments of kick-backs and commissions at every level as illegal. The letter sought monitoring of compliance to this through citizens committees and tax audits. "Such corruption, predominantly in the private sector, leads to huge increases in the costs of care, causes impoverishment and compromises health outcomes for individuals and for society," pointed out JSA adding that such corruption was "in danger of becoming the acceptable norm of behavior, to

be universalized by policy".

Publication: The Hindu

Edition: Online

Date: July 24, 2014

Headline: [India intensifies war against Japanese encephalitis](#)

Synopsis: The Centre has launched a major war against Japanese encephalitis which claims hundreds of young lives and causes high morbidity among children in several States across the country during monsoon. Within weeks of taking over, Union Health and Family welfare Minister, Dr Harsh Vardhan said that his priority would be to ensure 100 per cent immunisation against the killer disease. Expressing extreme distress over the "runaway conquest of encephalitis," Dr Harsh Vardhan said it was high time extraordinary steps were taken to stymie it. He said the need was to immunise children against JE in the affected areas by carrying out a drive on the lines of the Pulse Polio campaign.

Similar reports in-

The Hindustan Times- [Encephalitis outbreaks kill about 550 across India](#)

The Indian Express- [With 3 more deaths, encephalitis toll now 108](#)

Publication: The Indian Express

Edition: Online

Date: July 24, 2014

Headline: [Opposition: Budget let down people](#)

Synopsis: The Opposition on Wednesday slammed the NDA government's maiden budget in Rajya Sabha saying it lacked the vision and let down the people who believed in the "dreams" sold by BJP. The ruling side, however, countered the offensive saying the budget will take the country on the path of speedy economic growth and ensure human development.

Obamacare

Publication: The Asian Age

Edition: National

Date: July 24, 2014

Headline: [US: Obamacare whiplashed by conflicting rulings](#)

Synopsis: A US federal appeals court delivered a potentially crippling blow to President Barack Obama's healthcare law on Tuesday by limiting insurance subsidies, but a second court issued a contradictory ruling on the issue. The opposing verdicts, just hours apart, brought what one US senator described as "chaos and confusion" to the status of Obamacare, with likelihood growing that the Supreme Court will need to weigh in.

WTO

Publication: Daily News & Analysis

Edition: National

Date: July 24, 2014

Headline: [The WTO dilemma](#) (Editorial)

Synopsis: At the forthcoming WTO negotiations, India should insist on continuing food subsidy. Trade facilitation must be delinked from this issue, though it is a difficult choice. Between now and July 31, India faces a difficult choice over WTO. A major agreement — WTO's first since 1995 — on trade facilitation is set to come into effect from the end of July. India will have to take a decision whether to go along with the rest of WTO members and accept its implementation.

Alternatively, India may be isolated, if its implementation is opposed. At stake for India is its programme for food subsidy. The trade facilitation agreement was arrived at the Bali meeting of WTO in December last year. The meeting had a three-point agenda: first — an agreement about trade facilitation, second — a farm agreement and third — addressing the concerns of the least developed countries.

Publication: The Economic Times

Edition: National

Date: July 24, 2014

Headline: [India will not back WTO protocol unless concerns addressed](#)

Synopsis: Govt will not support a trade protocol ahead of a July 31 deadline unless concerns about its food subsidies are met, two senior government officials said on Wednesday, a position that threatens to derail a landmark global trade deal. The determination to link its food subsidy programme, aimed at supporting the poor, to backing the protocol raises the stakes at a World Trade Organization meeting on Thursday, with one Western diplomat calling India's position "suicide."

Similar reports in-

Business Standard- [India to block WTO trade facilitation pact](#)

The Indian Express- [India at WTO: The global trade facilitation agreement row](#)

Moneycontrol- ['Conflicting signals coming from India on WTO Agreement'](#)

General Industry

Publication: The Hindu

Edition: National

Date: July 24, 2014

Headline: [Act against ill-equipped medical institutions: HC](#)

Synopsis: The Madras High Court Bench here has observed that it is high time for the Centre and the Medical Council of India (MCI) to act against "ill-equipped medical institutions that play with the lives of the people" by paying doctors for just lending their names and signing attendance registers without being present in the institutions to treat patients. Justice K.K. Sasidharan made the observation while dismissing a writ petition filed by a radiologist based here against summons issued to him by the MCI. The apex council of medical professionals had asked him to appear before its Ethics Committee to defend the charge of him having lent his name to Arupadai Veedu Medical College Hospital in Puducherry.

Publication: The Hindustan Times

Edition: National

Date: July 24, 2014

Headline: Transparency is non-negotiable (editorial) (link unavailable, scan attached)

Synopsis: The Lancet, one of the world's top medical journals, on Tuesday reported that malaria infected 60.7 million and killed more than 116,000 people in India in 2013. This is in stark contrast with India's official figure in 2013: 881, 730 cases of infection and 440 deaths. Much as we try, it's impossible to test every person with fever for malaria. Less than 1% cases are sick enough to need treatment at a health care. The result is that the actual cases reported are a tiny fraction of the reported numbers.

Website: Reuters

Edition: Online

Date: July 23, 2014

Headline: [Bill Clinton says AIDS-free generation 'within reach'](#)

Synopsis: An AIDS-free generation is within reach if early treatment is provided to people infected with HIV and help scaled up for women and children, former U.S. president Bill Clinton said on Wednesday. Addressing an international conference on AIDS in the Australian city of Melbourne, Clinton said much progress has been made since the world started fighting the AIDS epidemic.

Website: Reuters

Edition: Online

Date: July 24, 2014

Headline: [Health insurer group asks Gilead to cut hepatitis C drug price](#)

Synopsis: A prominent U.S. health insurer trade group on Wednesday called on Gilead Sciences Inc to lower the cost of its hepatitis C drug Sovaldi after the drugmaker reported nearly \$3.5 billion in sales for the treatment in its second quarter.

Website: Pharmabiz

Edition: Online

Date: July 24, 2014

Headline: [Sun Pharma - Ranbaxy merger to create US\\$ 4 billion Indian pharma entity](#)

Synopsis: After the completion of the merger process of Ranbaxy Labs with the Rs. 16,000 crore Sun Pharma, the merged entity will stand up as the largest Indian pharmaceutical company in the country. The success of merger will depend on effectively resolving quality issues with foreign regulators, focus on investments in research & development and tapping of upcoming opportunities with the expiration of patents. Besides, the management decision to realign employees, R&D activities, marketing and financial matters will also be crucial for its future outlook. Considering the huge size of merger, Sun Pharma has appointed McKinsey & Company to look into the restructuring of activities including regulatory issues, product portfolios, capacity utilisation, employees, field work and R&D investments.

Publication: The Asian Age

Edition: National

Date: July 24, 2014

Headline: [CRY starts nationwide immunisation initiative](#)

Synopsis: Child Rights and You (CRY), an NGO working for the betterment of underprivileged children, has launched a nationwide immunisation initiative 'Happy First Birthday' that aims to ensure 42,971 children across India receive mandatory vaccines in the first year of birth. Statistics reveal that an estimated 11.6 lakh children die every year within one year of birth, due to lack of immunisation. According to an estimate, almost 10 per cent of the beneficiaries of this scheme would be from the state of Maharashtra in the very first year of the launching.

Publication: The Telegraph

Edition: National

Date: July 24, 2014

Headline: [Stress on controlling TB than HIV](#)

Synopsis: A new study revealing a poor decline in the incidence of tuberculosis (TB) over the past decade suggests that India should invest more of its scarce health resources into TB control and research than on HIV control, researchers have said. The study, published on Tuesday in medical journal The Lancet, has shown that the annual rate of decrease of TB in India between 2000 and 2013 has been 1.13 per cent. India's prevalence of TB in 2013 was 275 per 100,000 people, much higher than the global average of 162 per 100,000. By contrast, the annual rate of decrease in the incidence of HIV infections in India over the same period was 11.8 per cent, while in malaria it was

around 3.3 per cent, according to the study by an international consortium of researchers led by the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME) in Seattle.