



News Updates: July 26- 28, 2014

NPPA issue

Publication: The Financial Express

Edition: National

Date: July 27, 2014

Headline: Open Letter- [Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw urges PM Narendra Modi to cure pharma sector](#)

Synopsis: Chairperson of the Confederation of Indian Industry national committee on biotechnology Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw has written an open letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, requesting his intervention for the health of the pharma sector. Mazumdar-Shaw, also CMD, Biocon, wrote that the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority's (NPPA's) decision to impose ceiling prices on 348 essential drugs under the National List of Essential Medicines (NLEM), by adopting a simple average price formula, has been to the industry's disadvantage and will deter investments in research and high quality manufacturing and distribution. "The forced price discounting imposed by NPPA has done collateral damage to our indigenous industry, which has only strengthened our external competitors, especially China. For example, Indian manufacturers of Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (APIs) or bulk drugs have found it difficult to compete with Chinese API producers and Indian drug companies are now increasingly importing APIs from China. This has led to the shutting down of many API plants and discontinuance of many important APIs, especially antibiotics," she wrote.

Publication: The Hindu

Edition: National

Date: July 27, 2014

Headline: [Pharma companies go to court over new price controls](#)

Synopsis: Major Indian pharmaceutical companies have filed a petition in the High Court in Mumbai protesting the price cuts ordered by the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) a fortnight ago which they feel would be detrimental to industry interests. The Indian Pharmaceutical Alliance (IPA), whose members include leading Indian pharmaceutical manufacturers such as Sun Pharmaceuticals, Lupin, Cadila Healthcare, and Dr. Reddy's Laboratories, filed the petition which comes up for hearing next week.

Similar reports in-

Business Standard-[Pharma firms go to HC against use of special power for price cuts](#)

Pharmabiz- [Drug cos move Bombay HC challenging NPPA's July 10 notification over price control](#)

Publication: The Hindu Business Line

Edition: National

Date: July 26, 2014

By-line article: Nalinakanthi V, Principal Research Analyst

Headline: [Just what the doctor ordered](#)

Synopsis: The article justifies the recent move by the National Pharma Pricing Authority (NPPA) to restrict the price of 108 anti-diabetes and cardiovascular drugs. The article says that both the producer and the consumer will benefit in the long run, as lower prices will improve dosage compliance, boost pharma volume growth, and increase efficiency on the manufacturing side making Indian drug firms more competitive globally.

Publication: The Financial Express

Edition: National

Date: July 26, 2014

Headline: [Biocon expects minimal impact of price cuts](#)

Synopsis: On the recent NPPA announcement, the report quotes Arun Chandavarkar, Joint MD Biocon, "The impact on Biocon is not very significant because these drugs at the moment do not contribute significantly to revenue."

Website: Pharmabiz

Edition: Online

Date: July 26, 2014

Headline: [KDPMA upset over price cuts of 108 drugs; insists govt to take industry into confidence](#)

Synopsis: The Association represented by a section of the pharma industry said that while such price cuts would benefit the patients, there was also need to see the state of affairs of the industry which was engaged in the manufacture of these medicines. A big handicap for the industry is the provision in the DPCO 2013 order which states that prices of drugs which are slashed could not be taken off the production line.

Health care

Publication: The Times of India

Edition: National

Date: July 28, 2014

Headline: [US hospitals are fined millions for unethical acts, Indian ones go free](#)

Synopsis: Even as no action has been taken by the Indian government on hospitals giving doctors a cut for referring patients to them and for carrying out unnecessary procedures, in the US more than six hospitals have been fined several million dollars since the beginning of the year for exactly such practices. In the face of hard evidence of doctors getting commissions and cuts, health minister Dr Harsh Vardhan recently promised he would refer the matter to the ethics committee of the Medical Council of India — ironically, a body he had himself referred to as "a big source of corruption". In contrast, there has been a systematic crackdown in the US on healthcare fraud through the Health Care Fraud Prevention and Enforcement Action Team (HEAT) initiative, which was constituted in May 2009 by the attorney general's office and the health and human services department.

Publication: Deccan Herald

Edition: National

Date: July 28, 2014

Headline: [Regulator needed to end doctors' unethical practice](#)

Synopsis: Going by recent events, Illich's trenchant criticism of Western medical establishments is also pertinent to healthcare in India. Last month, the debate flared when an article by an Australian doctor, David Berger, on corruption among Indian doctors appeared in the 'Personal View' section of the prestigious British Medical Journal. Reputed doctors and CEOs of large corporate chain hospitals challenged what Dr Berger characterised as "kickbacks and bribes (that) oil every part of the healthcare machinery". They defended their position on television claiming that the entire profession is being blamed because of a small minority. But is this commentary in a leading medical journal about a rare practice among a few errant doctors? Why should an article that is not even based on primary research anger doctors so much? While self-regulation in the medical profession has clearly failed, a critical assessment of our health system reveals a strong competitive market-oriented system, rather than a system that privileges people's health and well-being.

Publication: Daily News & Analysis

Edition: National

Date: July 26, 2014

Headline: [Government spending and private investments in healthcare is need of the hour: Prathap C Reddy](#)

Synopsis: India's healthcare industry is at a crucial crossroads today. While we continue to chart a course towards modernity and economic development, 40% of Indians remain deprived of the benefits of modern healthcare. In 2011, the country had the dubious distinction of overseeing the highest number of deaths of under-five children in the world. While the country has made admirable progress on many healthcare parameters, the per-capita government expenditure on health is an abysmal \$15, compared to the global average of \$517. The challenges to universal access to healthcare, or to use the government's axiom of "health for all" remains four fold – creating infrastructure to reduce bed shortages, training and upskilling of the healthcare workforce, accessibility to a health system that is contemporary and technologically advanced and a paradigm shift from curative to preventive medicine to tackle the rising disease burden of non-communicable diseases (NCD's).

Publication: The Hindu

Edition: National

Date: July 28, 2014

Opinion piece: Arvind Virmani, former Executive director, IMF and Chief Economic Advisor, Finance Ministry.

Headline: [Investing in health through hygiene](#)

Synopsis: According to the National Sample Survey of 2004-05, 1.9 per cent of Indian households defined themselves as hungry for some part of the year. Based on the same survey, the Planning Commission determined the proportion of poor according to the then prevailing national poverty line in 2004-05, which was between 21.8 per cent and 27.5 per cent. Malnutrition in children under three years of age as measured by the National Family health survey 2005-06 (NFHS 3) was much higher. Stunted and underweight children constituted 38.4 per cent and 45.9 per cent of children under three. The cross-State correlation between poverty rates and malnutrition rates was around 0.7 (using either Mixed Reference Period or Uniform Reference Period based estimates). At least 30 per cent of this cross-State variation in nutritional status of children was therefore totally uncorrelated with the variation of poverty rates across States.

Publication: The Asian Age

Edition: National

Date: July 27, 2014

Headline: [Government hospital patients may get free drugs, diagnostics](#)

Synopsis: In a bid to reduce "out-of-pocket" expenses on healthcare, the government is considering rolling out a National Health Assurance Mission that will give entitlement to free drugs and free diagnostics to the patients in government healthcare centres. An expert group that has been constituted for preparing a comprehensive background paper for the purpose is all set to give its recommendations in the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) this Sunday. Sources in the PMO say that the scheme may be rolled out as early as Independence Day.

Publication: Business Standard

Edition: Online

Date: July 25, 2014

Headline: [No significant increase in bud allocation for health, edu: Govt](#)

Synopsis: There have been hardly any increase in public spending in key social sectors in the last four years, with government allotting 3.3 and 1.4 per cent of GDP on education and health expenditure respectively in 2013-14 compared to 3.3 and 1.3 per cent in 2012-13, Lok Sabha was informed today. The percentage GDP expenditure figures for education and health in 2010-11 were 3.1 pc and 1.3 pc and in 2011-12 were 3.1 pc and 1.2 pc respectively, marking in fact a decrease in

health budget, Health Minister Harsh Vardhan said.

Publication: The Economic Times

Edition: Online

Date: July 25, 2014

Headline: [Efforts on to strengthen NCDC: Government](#)

Synopsis: Despite various efforts, vector-borne diseases could not be totally eradicated, therefore, government has upped steps to ensure that least number of people are affected by it. Health Minister Harsh Vardhan informed the Lok Sabha that government undertakes year round activities to ensure control of vector-borne diseases.

Clinical trials

Publication: Deccan Herald

Edition: National

Date: July 26, 2014

Headline: [The other side of the coin](#)

Synopsis: The first global trials were conducted in India around 20 years ago by global research-based companies, who have a strong focus on ethics, quality and compliance in the way they conduct trials. Their standard operating procedures are even stricter than the law of the land. They regulate themselves even more stringently than the applicable local regulatory requirements. Why? Because they have the most to lose. Millions of dollars are spent in doing a trial appropriately. Naturally, it is in a company's interest to do the trial correctly so that the data is credible and patient safety is not compromised. They stand to lose the most if falsified data is the basis for approval.

Website: Pharmabiz

Edition: Online

Date: July 26, 2014

Headline: [Pharma sector benefits from 'Virtual Man' as it can clinical trials by 40%: Prof PV Mallya](#)

Synopsis: Pharma industry has begun to witness major transformation with the evolution of Virtual Man that is seen to decrease clinical trials and enable researchers understand the biology of diseases. Some companies using Virtual Man have been able to reduce clinical trials by 40 per cent and decrease the number of patients participate in human studies by two thirds, said Prof Prakash V Mallya, director, Centre for Pharmaceutical Professional Advancement, Krupanidhi College of Pharmacy. Virtual Man is a 3D scan of the human body. Now new technologies like the Virtual Man are a catalyst for an R&D overhaul. In the competitive landscape of pharmaceutical marketing, drug delivery devices are product differentiators. Drug companies are adopting virtual R&D to increase innovation, have an in-depth knowledge about the human body and the pathophysiology of disease.

UN Health Development Report 2014

Publication: The Indian Express

Edition: National

Date: July 26, 2014

Headline: [Number 135](#) (editorial)

Synopsis: India has improved, but only just, on the human development index, the United Nations' composite measure for overall well-being that takes into account life expectancy, income and education. According to the UN Human Development Report 2014 released this week, India ranks 135 on a list of 186 countries. It has become a stock routine to try to shock the system by counting out the conflict-ridden countries among which India resides on the ranking table. To shockingly little effect. All the more reason why the list of failures embedded in the statistics bears telling, and

retelling, and it is particularly useful to weigh the new parameters for meaningful development that the HDR lays out. Of late, India's political discourse has taken on board a range of entitlement measures — from employment guarantee and food security to right to education — but in a piecemeal, compartmentalised fashion. It is valuable to have repeated documentary pointers such as this one as a nudge towards comprehensive planning and implementation.

Publication: The Indian Express

Edition: National

Date: July 26, 2014

Opinion piece: A K Shiva Kumar, member of the advisory panel and senior advisor to the UNDP's Human Development Report Office

Headline: [Addressing vulnerabilities](#)

Synopsis: The 2014 Human Development Report (HDR) draws attention to the urgent need to address human vulnerabilities and build resilience as conditions for accelerating and sustaining progress. Human insecurity stems from not only low and uncertain incomes, but from many other sources, including inadequate access to health, food and shelter, unsafe environments, and inadequate protection of civil and political freedoms. Individuals experience vulnerability when they become physically weak, economically impoverished, socially dependent, publicly humiliated or psychologically harmed. Families feel vulnerable when they do not have access to good quality affordable healthcare, when they are exposed to unsafe environments, or when safety is compromised when societies are faced with crime and violence. At the same time, all new born babies are vulnerable to diseases, just as all women are to domestic violence. Preparing citizens for a less vulnerable future entails strengthening the intrinsic resilience of communities and countries. The HDR recommends how to do this.

Indo – US ties

Publication: The Financial Express

Edition: National

Date: July 26, 2014

Headline: [India needs to revitalize its economy to be global player: US](#)

Synopsis: India needs to revitalize its economy to reach the potential as a strategic power across the Asia region and across the globe, a top US official has said. "For India to be the power and reach the potential as a strategic power across the Asia region, across the globe, its first order of business will be revitalizing its economy," Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asia Nisha Desai Biswal told lawmakers at a Congressional hearing. The United States, she said, has a deep interest in partnership with India in that quest and partnering with the Prime Minister Narendra Modi in that quest.

Publication: The Telegraph

Edition: Online

Date: July 26, 2014

Headline: [Trade cloud on US talks](#)

Synopsis: The Narendra Modi government's threat to block a key World Trade Organisation pact has injected early tension into its ties with the US and could cloud crucial talks with secretary of state John Kerry next week. Kerry will be accompanied by commerce secretary Penny Pritzker for the Indo-US strategic dialogue here on July 31, and the divide between the two nations on the WTO trade facilitation agreement would be a key component of the bilateral talks, senior Indian and American officials have told The Telegraph.

WTO

Publication: The Economic Times

Edition: Online

Date: July 28, 2014

Headline: [Reasons why West is blaming India for World Trade Organisation stalemate](#)

Synopsis: The US & EU have come down hard on India for its stand on Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) at the WTO. The US has warned it can't be 'business as usual' after the position India has taken.

Similar reports in-

The Economic Times- [Delink Farm Subsidy & Trade Facilitation](#)

Business Standard- [WTO standoff: India may lose 'Peace Clause' if Bali pack fails](#)

The Hindustan Times- [Fair deal for our farmers: India means business at WTO](#)

The Financial Express- [US disappointed over India's stance in WTO](#)

The New Indian Express- [India Backtracks on TFA over Food Subsidy Row](#)

The Asian Age- [India blocks WTO tariff deal](#)

Deccan Chronicle- [India's firm stand at WTO welcome](#)

The Telegraph- [West doublespeak on subsidies](#)

First Post- [India threatens to block WTO deal over food security, prompts angry US rebuke](#)

Publication: The Financial Chronicle

Edition: National

Date: July 26, 2014

Headline: [Game of Brinkmanship](#) (editorial)

Synopsis: India on Friday forcefully told WTO general council in Geneva that the July end deadline be shifted to December end in view of stonewalling by industrialised nations to find a permanent solution on food security, an issue that affects 600 million poor in the world. While tremendous progress has been made on trade facilitation, as it would open up \$1 trillion of additional global trade, industrialised nations were dragging their feet on two other issues of importance to developing countries, food security and issues pertaining to least developed countries.

Publication: The Indian Express

Edition: National

Date: July 28, 2014

Headline: [Pick your battle](#) (editorial)

Synopsis: India is threatening to veto the implementation of the Trade Facilitation Agreement, which is part of the Bali package agreed on last year and is due to be ratified by the WTO general council by July 31. The TFA places a common obligation on all WTO members to streamline border procedures for the easier movement of goods. The Indian government is insisting that the deadline for the accession protocol that would implement the TFA be extended until its concerns on food security and public stockholding are met. As per current WTO requirements, food subsidies cannot exceed 10 per cent of the value of foodgrain production calculated based on 1986-88 prices. There can be no doubt that this method of calculation is arbitrary and outdated — it does not take into account the huge increase in food prices since. India wants these norms to be renegotiated, as they clearly have domestic political implications. However, the gains from such a stance are limited. India needs to rethink its stand in deeper ways.

Publication: The Hindu

Edition: National

Date: July 26, 2014

Headline: [India ties TFA to deal on food subsidies](#)

Synopsis: India on Friday said at the World Trade Organisation (WTO) General Council meeting in Geneva that the failure of the trade body to work in the interests of all its members and to deliver meaningfully on the "development" mandate of the Doha Development Round would pose a far

more serious risk to its credibility than any other factor. India suggested that the adoption of the Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) be postponed till satisfactory progress is made on the issue of finding permanent protection for India's minimum support prices to farmers against the WTO subsidy caps that are benchmarked to food prices of the 1980s. India's statement came after fellow WTO members accused India of being a spoilsport to have blocked the TFA on Thursday.

FDA/ Drug quality

Publication: The Times of India

Edition: Online

Date: July 28, 2014

Headline: [FDA's inspection drive draws flak](#)

Synopsis: The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) officials have intensified the drive to inspect the licences of 15,000 drug wholesalers in the state. However, some have alleged that during inspection, FDA officials ask for information like bank statements, annual turnover and profit margins, which do not come under the purview of enquiry rules. Drug wholesalers have alleged that the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) officials, during inspection, ask for information like bank statements, annual turnover and profit margins which do not come under the purview of officials' enquiry rules. The wholesalers say that the irrational data sought from them causes unnecessary harassment.

Research/ Innovation

Publication: The Hindu

Edition: National

Date: July 26, 2014

Opinion piece: V.V. Krishna is professor in science policy, Centre for Studies in Science Policy, JNU and Editor-in-Chief, Science, Technology and Society, Sage

Headline: [A disappointment for scientific community](#)

Synopsis: After a decade-long policy paralysis in science, technology and higher education research during UPA I and II, the Indian science community was waiting with optimism. To its disappointment, the budget did not commit any substantial funding that the field of Science and Technology (S&T) deserves. It also failed to give any signals to strengthen the research and innovation base of our ailing 700 universities and 30,000-plus colleges.

FDI- Insurance

Publication: The Times of India

Edition: National

Date: July 28, 2014

Headline: [Move to hike insurance FDI brings JVs' stake pricing back in focus](#)

Synopsis: The government's decision to increase foreign direct investment cap in the insurance sector to 49% could reopen the prickly issue of pricing the additional 23% stake sale to the foreign partner. One of the larger companies where the issue is likely to arise is Bajaj Allianz Life and General Insurance, where the Indian promoter has said that pricing would happen at market value despite an earlier agreement for a stake sale at a formula that offered a fixed return. Most insurance joint ventures have given their foreign partner the right of first refusal to buy additional stake up to 49%. This includes large insurers like SBI Life and HDFC Life. HDFC chairman Deepak Parekh said in the recent AGM that Standard Life has the first right to buy stake for an additional 23% at market price if limits are raised.

Publication: The Financial Chronicle

Edition: National

Date: July 26, 2014

Opinion piece: Kshitij Jain, MD & CEO, Exide Life Insurance

Headline: [FDI will be GAMECHANGER](#)

Synopsis: The insurance industry has seen some positive news recently. The Union budget focused on giving insurance the right wind to perform. The raising of the FDI cap to 49 per cent in the insurance sector would in the medium to long term ensure overall development not just of the sector but the country at large. At this stage, the industry also needs long-term capital for growth and expansion, which only FDI can bring in. This will facilitate better distribution networks, technology and product innovation and offerings to ensure an improved customer experience. Whilst these are positives from the budget, one must credit the insurance regulatory and development authority (Irda), which has been continuously striving to protect the interests of policyholders and making the industry more transparent and attractive for consumers. It has been introducing regulations that will benefit the policyholder and ensure the development of the industry since the time it was opened to private players in 2000.

General Industry

Publication: Daily News & Analysis

Edition: National

Date: July 28, 2014

Headline: [This is going to be challenging year in the US market: Glenn Saldanha](#)

Synopsis: As the chairman and managing director of Glenmark Pharmaceuticals, Glenn Saldanha oversees a fast-growing organisation that spans from an India-focused branded generics business to a significant export market across major emerging and developed economies. Glenmark's branded generics presence is spread across five regions – Asia including India, Central Eastern Europe, Africa, Latin America and CIS. In less than five years, Glenmark has established itself among the top 25 generics companies in the US and also built a sizeable API business (active pharmaceutical ingredients) in a short span. He spoke with Soumonty Kanungo post the announcement of its quarterly earnings last week.

Publication: The Times of India

Edition: National

Date: July 28, 2014

Headline: [Hepatitis C medicine being imported for Rs 1 crore](#)

Synopsis: Even as a controversy rages on globally over the eye-popping price of US firm Gilead Science's hepatitis C drug at \$1,000 a pill, Indian patients have already begun importing the medicine from countries like Canada spending, in some cases, up to Rs 1 crore. The drug, Sovaldi (sofosbuvir), is believed to cure about 90% of patients with the common form of hepatitis C. However, at around \$84,000 for a 12-week course, it has many countries worried, with even US senators questioning the company's pricing.

Publication: The Times of India

Edition: National

Date: July 28, 2014

Headline: [No govt policy yet in place to beat killer disease](#)

Synopsis: Viral hepatitis kills approximately three lakh people across the country every year. An estimated 40 million people are currently infected with hepatitis B virus and another 12 million with hepatitis C virus. Still, India has either any national policy or a program to eliminate the disease that causes inflammation of liver. It kills more people in India than HIV/AIDS, malaria and dengue combined together.

Publication: The Economic Times

Edition: National

Date: July 26, 2014

Headline: [India not promoting Tenofovir, an HIV treatment drug that can also prevent the disease](#)

Synopsis: WHO's recommendation of using antiretroviral (ARV) medicines as a preventive drug against HIV/ AIDS opens up a new debate on how its use will be perceived among those who engage in unsafe sex. In the Indian context, the issue has been kept out of the public health debate due to the reluctance of healthcare providers, lack of awareness among doctors and the criminalisation of homosexuality. Despite the high success rate of ARVs, they are far from being promoted as preventive drugs in India, experts feel.

Publication: Business Standard

Edition: National

Date: July 26, 2014

Headline: [No new antibiotic since the 1980s!](#)

Synopsis: There is clearly something wrong with pharmaceutical innovation. Antibiotic-resistant infections sicken more than two million Americans every year and kill at least 23,000. The World Health Organization has warned that a "post-antibiotic era" may be upon us, when "common infections and minor injuries can kill." Yet the enthusiasm of the pharmaceutical industry for developing drugs to combat such a potential disaster might be best characterised as a big collective "meh." No major new type of antibiotic has been developed since the late 1980s, according to the WHO. From 2011 to 2013, the Food and Drug Administration approved only three new molecular entities to combat bacterial diseases - the lowest rate since the 1940s.

Publication: The Asian Age

Edition: National

Date: July 26, 2014

Headline: [India among highest users of antibiotics](#)

Synopsis: Two months after the World Health Organisation (WHO) cautioned against growing antibiotic resistance of bacterial disease across the world, a new study published in medical magazine The Lancet has raised serious questions over the issue of the increase in sale of the antibiotic drugs in the world by 36 per cent from 2000 to 2010. India, along with four more countries comprises 76 per cent of the sale.

Publication: The Hindu

Edition: Online

Date: July 28, 2014

Headline: [When Amitabh's voice did the trick to make India polio free](#)

Synopsis: When polio cases peaked in India in 2002, with 1,556 cases being detected, Amitabh Bachchan was made brand ambassador for the Polio Eradication Campaign. Bihar and Uttar Pradesh accounted for the maximum number of cases for which resistance from communities was one of the reasons. "Initially, we were not getting as many mothers and children as we wanted, to come to awareness camps. Then (ad guru) Piyush Pandey suggested that in my films I am known for speaking loudly, so why could I not talk in the same manner in the polio ads," Mr. Bachchan told a gathering of polio workers.

Similar reports in-

Business Standard- [Open to join polio campaign for Pak children: Bachchan](#)

The Financial express- [Amitabh Bachchan open to join polio campaign for Pakistani children](#)