



News Updates: June 18, 2014

New Government

Publication : Wall Street Journal

Date: June 17, 2014

Headline: [India's New Trade Minister Nirmala Sitharaman](#)

Edition : Online

Summary : Indian Commerce and Industry Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, has taken over during a tough time for the country as it battles with a chronic current-account deficit, an economic slowdown and dwindling international interest in the India opportunity. While many voters, executives and investors are hopeful the Bharatiya Janata Party and Prime Minister Narendra Modi will lead the country back to better days, Ms. Sitharaman said things may get worse before they get better. Asia's third largest economy after China and Japan is going to have to make "hard decisions," because it just doesn't have the funds right now to spend its way out of the slowdown, she told The Wall Street Journal in one of her first interviews since taking office less than a month ago. The 55-year-old also spoke about boosting investor sentiment, taxes, encouraging trade with China and clarifying India's stand to the United States on intellectual property rights.

Here are some edited excerpts from the interview.

IPR

Publication : The Economic Times

Date: June 17, 2014

Headline: [Nirmala Sitharaman discusses intellectual property rights related issues with officials](#)

Edition : Online

Summary : Amidst the US targeting India's intellectual property rights regime, Commerce and Industry Minister Nirmala Sitharaman today discussed various IPR related issues with her officials. "Was briefed on intellectual property rights (IPR) matters, including developments in IP offices. Data exclusivity, patentability criteria, US special 301 process discussed," Sitharaman said in her tweet. The Obama administration had been strongly criticising India's investment climate and IPR laws, especially in the pharmaceutical and solar sectors. India has always maintained its IPR regime is fully compliant with all international laws and that it would drag the US to the WTO's dispute settlement mechanism if it takes any adverse unilateral step against the country in IPR-related matters.

Drug pricing

Publication: The Economic Times

Edition: National

Date: June 17, 2014

Headline: [National Pharma Pricing Authority must Reinvent Itself as a Vigilant Price Monitor: Chandra Prakash Singh, outgoing Chairman](#)

Synopsis: Chandra Prakash Singh, outgoing chairman of the National Pharma Pricing Authority (NPPA), who oversaw India's transition to a new drug pricing policy, discussed that the drug pricing regulator must work closely with states and gear up for a new role. Edited excerpts:

Q. More than Rs 3,000 crore that NPPA estimates drug companies have overcharged over the past two decades is stuck in courts. Is there any possibility of an out-of-court settlement or some innovative way to recover it?

A. Speaking of innovative mechanisms, I read reports indicating that the finance minister plans to conduct risk assessment of pending cases on tax recovery and focus on cases where amount to be recovered and chances of recovery are high. But unlike tax cases, ..

Regulation

Publication: Business Standard

Edition: National

Date: June 18, 2014

Headline: [Policy tweaks in US shift Indian pharma's focus](#)

Synopsis: Indian drug makers may have to revamp their strategies to maintain their grip on the world's largest pharmaceutical market - the United States. The recent changes in the American law on generic drugs, many of which are reflected in the functioning of the US Food and Drug Administration, or USFDA, are likely to impact Indian pharmaceutical companies which clock 40-60 per cent of their consolidated revenues through exports to that country. The patent laws, changed last year to the first-to-file orFTF system, awards patents to companies that are first to file for protection of a new product rather than to the company that first invents a product. An FTF status also allows the company to enjoy the right to 180 days of exclusive sale in the US. So far, Indian pharmaceutical companies have focused on blockbuster medicines that are expected to go off-patent in the near future. Their aim has been not only to develop generic versions of such medicines, but also to win FTF for these and cash in on 180 days of monopolistic sale.

Access and affordability

Publication: Business Standard

Edition: National

Date: June 18, 2014

Headline: [Free drug distribution plan may face roadblocks](#)

Synopsis: The government's ambitious plan to implement the free drug distribution programme on priority might face capacity constraint roadblocks. While the government plans to procure 348 essential medicines for the project in bulk, the generic drug manufacturing industry is hesitant to dedicate capacities on low margins. The industry complains it is already selling those 348 essential medicines at a regulated price. Besides, prices of other medicines are also being indirectly capped by the regulator, leaving no room for them to either invest in building new facilities or expand the current ones. Moreover, drug makers say the government's procurement price would be further low from its already fixed ceiling price, which may be unviable for the industry to dedicate capacities.

Publication: Financial Chronicle

Edition: National

Date: June 18, 2014

Headline: [Premium from HNIs boosts health insurance business](#)

Synopsis: Great wealth often jeopardises good health— that's one conclusion to be drawn from the growing incidence of lifestyle diseases. Considering the rapidly rising costs of medical interventions, more and more high net worth individuals are seeking appropriate insurance cover. On their part, focusing on the potential of this segment, health insurers are introducing products with high sum insured and additional benefits that cover their entire health needs.

Publication: Time

Edition: National

Date: June 18, 2014

Headline: [US Healthcare system ranked the worst in the world](#)

Synopsis: The U.S. health care system has been subject to heated debate over the past decade, but one thing that has remained consistent is the level of performance, which has been ranked as the worst among industrialized nations for the fifth time, according to the 2014 Commonwealth Fund survey 2014. The U.K. ranked best with Switzerland following a close second. The Commonwealth Fund report compares the U.S. with 10 other nations: France, Australia, Germany, Canada, Sweden, New

Zealand, Norway, the Netherlands, Switzerland and the U.K. were all judged to be superior based on various factors. These include quality of care, access to doctors and equity throughout the country. Results of the study rely on data from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the World Health Organization and interviews from physicians and patients.

General Industry

Publication: The Financial Express

Edition: National

Date: June 18, 2014

Headline: [Hilleman Labs to make India research & manufacturing hub](#)

Synopsis: Betting big on vaccine research for developing countries, Hilleman Laboratories, a 50:50 joint venture between Merck & Co and UK-based Wellcome Trust, is set to make India its research and manufacturing hub. While Merck Sharp & Dohme Corp (MSD) is a global healthcare leader offering a diversified portfolio of prescription medicines, vaccines and animal and consumer health products, Wellcome Trust is a global charitable foundation.

Also appeared in

The Times of India - [More affordable oral cholera vaccine soon](#)

The Hindu - [Cheaper, more effective oral cholera vaccine on the cards](#)

Business Standard - [Hilleman Labs partners with Gotovax AB for cholera vaccine](#)

Publication: The Economic Times

Edition: Online

Date: June 18, 2014

Headline: [Novartis submits meningitis B drug for US approval](#)

Synopsis: Swiss drugmaker Novartis BSE 0.00 % said on Tuesday it had submitted its meningitis B vaccine Bexsero for adolescents and young people to the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for marketing approval. Bexsero, a broad coverage vaccine to help protect against meningitis B, is already approved in 34 countries including across the European Union, Canada and Australia, Novartis said.

Publication: The Economic Times (Reproduced from PTI)

Edition: National

Date: June 18, 2014

Headline: [Cipla buys 60% stake in Sri Lankan co for \\$14 million](#)

Synopsis: Pharmaceutical firm Cipla LtdBSE 5.81 % today said it has acquired 60 per cent stake in a new company in Sri Lanka for USD 14 million (nearly Rs 85 crore) to market its product in the country. Cipla (Mauritius) Ltd, a wholly owned subsidiary of the Indian company, has signed a definitive agreement with its existing Sri Lankan distributor for acquisition of 60 per cent stake in a new company, CiplaBSE 5.81 % said in a filing to the BSE.

Also appeared in

The Financial Express - [Cipla buys 60% stake in Sri Lankan firm for \\$14 m](#)

Financial Chronicle - [Cipla buys 60% stake in Sri Lankan co for \\$14m](#)

The Hindu Business Line - [Cipla to pick up 60% in Sri Lankan firm](#)

Publication: The Times of India

Edition: Mumbai

Date: June 18, 2014

Headline: [Anti-diabetic drug tops India's pharma sales](#)

Synopsis: In a grim reminder of the rise of lifestyle diseases, particularly diabetes, an anti-diabetic

molecule has for the first time become the largest-selling formulation in the domestic pharma retail market. The formulation, which is also the most-prescribed anti-diabetic drug—a combination of glimepiride and metformin (marketed as Glycomet GP and Gluconorm-G)—has dethroned the popular class of anti-infective medicines, led by widely-used medicine brands like GSK's Augmentin (a combination of amoxicillin and clavulanic acid) in May. Widely-prescribed anti-diabetic drugs (glimepiride plus metformin) clocked sales of Rs 105 crore, surpassing the anti-infective therapy at Rs 103 crore, in the pharma retail market valued at Rs 6,636 crore, in May this year. Analysts tracking the market said the anti-infective therapy had always been ranked on top. The primary reason for the anti-diabetic molecule taking the lead is because of its faster growth, as well as the anti-infective molecule coming under price control.

Publication: Business Standard

Edition: Chennai

Date: June 18, 2014

Headline: Decks cleared for \$218-mn Orchid Pharma-Hospital deal (*scan attached*)

Synopsis: The debt recovery tribunal (DRT) here on Tuesday cleared the decks for Orchid Chemicals and Pharmaceuticals Ltd (Orchid Pharma) to transfer its penicillin and penem active pharmaceutical ingredient (API) business, along with a few facilities, to US-based Hospital, according to a \$200-million deal announced in August, 2012.

Publication: Reuters

Edition: Online

Date: June 18, 2014

Headline: [Novartis, Pfizer seek U.S. approval of meningitis vaccines](#)

Synopsis: Pfizer Inc and rival Swiss drugmaker Novartis AG on Tuesday said they had asked U.S. regulators to approve their vaccines to prevent meningitis infections in people aged 10 to 25. The companies are pushing for FDA approval of their respective vaccines following recent widely publicized outbreaks of the dangerous infectious disease at Princeton University and at the University of California at Santa Barbara (UCSB).

Portal: Bloomberg

Edition: National

Date: June 18, 2014

Headline: [Fake Antibiotics Feed Growing Worldwide Superbugs Threat](#)

Synopsis: Antibiotics now rank among the most counterfeited medicines in the world, feeding a global epidemic of drug-resistant superbugs. A new surveillance and reporting program in 80 countries led by the World Health Organization shows that counterfeit antibiotics are a growing problem in all regions of the world, rivaling fake versions of erectile dysfunction pills like Viagra. Infections become superbugs by gaining resistance when the treatments used against them aren't strong enough to kill them. It's a growing problem as substandard counterfeit drugs become more prevalent.

Publication: The Hindu Business Line

Edition: Hyderabad

Date: June 18, 2014

Headline: [As Actavis business improves, Aurobindo sees early turnaround](#)

Synopsis: Aurobindo Pharma Ltd, which acquired certain loss-making operations of Irish drug-maker Actavis Plc early this year, says the acquired business is improving in line with its expectations. In January, the Hyderabad-based drug-maker said it had acquired commercial operations of Actavis in seven Western European countries for €30 million (around ₹240 crore today). "Having seen the operations for the last two months, we are quite confident (about its turnaround). Things are in line with what the due diligence understanding was," CEO Arvind

Vasudeva said in the earnings conference call recently. He added the acquired business will be EBITDA-neutral in two years. Towards this, Aurobindo will bring some products of Actavis into the domestic market to take advantage of its lower active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs) and manufacturing costs over the next 18 to 24 months.

Publication: Business Standard

Edition: Mumbai

Date: June 18, 2014

Headline: [US launches, India biz key for Torrent Pharma](#)

Synopsis: In recent months, the Torrent Pharma stock has been an outperformer due to upgrades following its performance in the quarter ended March and moves to expand its domestic business, including the acquisition of Elder Pharma's branded formulation business in December 2013. Emkay Global has upgraded the company's FY15 earnings estimates 38 per cent to Rs 43.3. Analysts at Anand Rathi believe the strong growth momentum will be led by 8-10 generic launches in the US in FY15, faster growth in domestic business after the Elder consolidation and traction in the EU and other global markets. Given the growth prospects, the research firm believes the stock is attractively priced at 17 times its FY15 earnings estimates.