



News Updates: May 29, 2014

Modi government

Publication: The Economic Times

Edition: National

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By- line article- Dinesh S Thakur: the whistle-blower responsible for exposing wrongdoing at Ranbaxy Laboratories that led to the company pleading guilty to seven counts of felony in a US District Court and paying \$500 million in penalties to the US government

Headline: [An open letter to PM Narendra Modi for an effective drugs regulator to revive the sector](#)

Synopsis: Dinesh Thakur states that for a country of over a billion people, we have historically done a poor job of providing effective services in delivery of healthcare and that the laws governing the pharmaceutical industry in India are colonial. He further stated that the most recent amendment in The Drugs and Cosmetics Act (1940) and the Rules (1945), which was in 2005 — have weakened the law and patient safety, than bringing it up to global standards. He said that the ministry of commerce and industry promotes the Indian pharmaceutical industry, but it doesn't have any knowledge of the quality of products it promotes. In his article, Dinesh has urged the government to elevate the role of the DCGI to an independent executive level which currently doesn't have any statutory power over state regulatory machinery now. In comparing the pharmaceutical industry to the telecom industry in India, he highlighted that the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has been instrumental in ensuring access to low-cost, good quality communication services reaching even the most remote parts of our country however the pharmaceutical industry doesn't have a regulator of TRAI's stature. He has further urged the government to help create an environment where the global pharmaceutical industry engages more productively in India rather than shipping its research and development and manufacturing facilities to China, an environment that restores the credibility of the industry allowing it to fulfil the promise of thousands of well-paying jobs to the young people here and one that makes public health a priority to help realize the hopes and dreams of a clean and healthy India.

Publication: The Economic Times

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Date: May 29, 2014

Headline: [Not by State-Funded Health Insurance](#)

Synopsis: The editorial states that universal health insurance, a top priority of the new government, is a flawed and an expensive idea. Instead the government must concentrate on own care facilities, effective regulation, expanding healthcare manpower and clean drinking water and sanitation.

Publication: The Hindu Business Line

Edition: National

Date: May 29, 2014

Headline: [PM's top 10 priorities for India to be unveiled soon: Principal Secretary Nripendra Misra](#)

Synopsis: Prime Minister Narendra Modi's top 10 priorities for the country are likely to be revealed on Thursday, said Nripendra Misra, in his first interview to the media after taking over as Principal Secretary in the Prime Minister's Office (PMO). "These, in Mr Modi's characteristic style, will necessarily have to be implemented in a time-bound manner," he added. Misra, who was hand-picked for the new role in a surprise move, having neither worked for nor having met Modi earlier, asserted that the PMO will have to reflect the image, personality and commitment of the PM. "The entire machinery will be geared up to fulfil the mandate of the new leader," he said. The 1967 batch IAS officer and former TRAI chairman said he saw the PMO, which is set to become an important power centre in the new dispensation, as playing three main roles. "Priority will be placed on implementation,

catalysing and facilitating inter-ministerial issues, and addressing concerns relating to the economy.”

Publication: The Indian Express

Edition: National

Date: May 29, 2014

Headline: [Harsh Vardhan praises Ramdev: 'He is doing health ministry's work'](#)

Synopsis: A day after taking charge, Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan showered praise on yoga guru Ramdev for his “exemplary” work on preventive health and said he is actually doing work that the ministry should be doing. He said he was grateful to Ramdev and not averse to roping him in to further his agenda of promotion of preventive health. In his first meeting with health officials on Monday, Harsh Vardhan had unveiled his vision of focussing on disease prevention — which he said is 80 per cent of the job — rather than on creation of infrastructure for their treatment. He told officials that building hospitals on which emphasis has always been, is actually the smaller part of ensuring health for all and measures like banning junk food in school and government office canteens and building playgrounds could be more effective measures.

Drug regulation/ Drug pricing

Publication: Business World

Edition: Online

Date: May 28, 2014

Headline: [Pharma & Health Ministries Together? Drug Cos Worry](#)

Synopsis: Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s “minimum government, maximum governance” mantra has kept the Indian pharmaceutical industry waiting as they fear that the restructuring exercise may see the department of pharmaceuticals, which regulates the prices of medicines, get attached to the health ministry – the government arm responsible for the quality of medicines – instead of its current parent ministry, the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilisers. The pharmaceutical industry’s concerns stem from the fact that the primary mandate of the department of pharmaceuticals is the promotion of the industry, unlike that of the health ministry which is more concerned about the health of the patient than the health of the industry.

Publication: The Economic Times

Edition: Online

Date: May 29, 2014

Headline: [Will try to bring down drug prices by 25-40 per cent: Ananth Kumar](#)

Synopsis: Fertiliser and Chemicals Minister Ananth Kumar today said he will talk to pharmaceutical companies and try to bring down prices of essential drugs by 25-40 per cent. Taking charge of the ministry, which has Department of Pharmaceuticals under its ambit, Kumar said the government is already working to bring down the prices of essential drugs by 25-40 per cent.

Similar reports in-

Business Standard- [Cut in drug prices top on Ananth Kumar's agenda](#)

Daily News & Analysis- [Pharma companies in a tizzy after minister talks of cutting essential drug prices](#)

General Industry

Publication: The Hindu

Edition: National

Date: May 29, 2014

Headline: [Avoiding doctor-centric health solutions](#)

Synopsis: The old adage ‘health is wealth’ was given legitimacy by no less a personage than

Professor Jeffrey Sachs, who in 2000, chaired the World Health Organization's Commission on Macroeconomics and Health (CMH). The CMH report brought forth indisputable evidence of the link between health, development and wealth, arguing that neglect of health entails real costs to the economy — in terms of household expenditures incurred on buying drugs rather than nutritious foods, investments for hospitals rather than factories that generate jobs and impair growth due to reduced productivity and so on. As these impacts are not as easily perceptible as say the closure of a factory, they are routinely forgotten in policy dialogues in India.

Publication: The New Indian Express

Edition: National

Date: May 29, 2014

Headline: [Rs 3,300 Crore Action Plan to Ensure Quality Healthcare](#)

Synopsis: The State Government has prepared a perspective plan for development of health infrastructure at primary and secondary level to provide quality healthcare. "A strategic perspective plan for the purpose has been prepared and put to action," Principal Secretary, Health and Family Welfare PK Mohapatra said after a meeting here. A three-year perspective plan was chalked out at the meeting chaired by Chief Secretary JK Mohapatra and decisions were taken to expedite the process of implementation, he said.