



News Updates: May 31 – June 02, 2014

Modi government

Publication: The Economic Times

Edition: National

Date: May 31, 2014

Headline: [Government to distribute free medicines through public hospitals](#)

Synopsis: The government will soon start work on distributing free medicines through public hospitals across the country, health minister Harsh Vardhan said on Friday, reviving a plan that former prime minister Manmohan Singh had promised in his Independence Day speech in 2012 but did not implement due to apparent lack of resources. Vardhan plans to revive the central council of health (CCH), a body that comprises health ministers of all states in the country as well as experts, to take the discussion forward on firming up the model to implement the programme.

Similar report in-

Deccan Herald - [Health Minister Vardhan pushes for free medicine scheme](#)

Publication: Business Standard

Edition: National

Date: June 2, 2014

Headline: Health minister to meet PM over proposed policy *(scan attached)*

Synopsis: More than a decade after India's last health policy, the government is planning a new one. The health ministry, headed by Harsh Vardhan, is deliberating on the key areas to be included in a comprehensive policy, it is learnt. Vardhan is believed to have conveyed to senior health ministry officials, in the many meetings that he has had with them, that among the things to be attended to immediately is the new health policy.

Publication: Business Standard

Edition: National

Date: June 01, 2014

Headline: [Modi dissolves ministerial groups to fast-track decision making](#)

Synopsis: Putting an end to the practice of prolonging decisions among groups of ministers, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday ordered ministries and departments to resolve pending issues themselves. Modi directed the dissolution of nine empowered groups of ministers and 21 groups of ministers. In case of "difficulties", the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) and the Cabinet Secretariat will step in. The move was aimed at empowering ministries and departments, said an official PMO release, and would expedite decisions and fix accountability. Ministries and departments would now process issues pending before the ministerial groups and take decisions themselves.

Similar reports in-

The Times of India- [Modi government scraps ministerial panels](#)

The Economic Times- [Prime Minister Narendra Modi ensures ministers take decisions faster](#)

The Hindustan Times- [Why PM Narendra Modi doesn't need ministerial groups](#)

The Indian Express- [The control panel](#)

Publication: The Pioneer

Edition: National

Date: May 31, 2014

Headline: [Health mission set for major overhaul](#)

Synopsis: National Health Mission (NHM), the UPA's ambitious scheme, is all set for a major shake-up in the new NDA regime. Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan is mulling inclusion of deadly diseases such as Malaria, Encephalitis, Chikungunya, Dengue, TB, measles and leprosy, besides non-communicable diseases such as diabetes, as components of NHM's sub-missions for rural and urban areas to be supported by e-governance. Till now, these diseases are being covered under separate programmes. Vardhan also stressed on the steps to sort out human resources crunch in the NHM's rural component, National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) — which has failed to deliver desired results in the rural areas despite its inception in 2005. The NRHM's other component National Urban Health Mission has remained a non-starter till date even though it was cleared by the Cabinet in May last year.

Publication: The Hindustan Times

Edition: National

Date: June 01, 2014

Headline: [The new NDA: Risks, challenges for key ministries](#)

Synopsis: A PMO-driven government, merged ministries, 'minimum government', 10-point priorities and a 100-day agenda — less than a week after Narendra Modi took over as Prime Minister, a new set of buzzwords have captured the public sphere. The new government has projected an image of a coherent, energetic and most importantly, different, team at work. It is too early to judge if this image will translate into reality, for India's governance matrix is far more complex than the spin that any regime seeks to put out. Three innovations of the Modi cabinet stand out, and carry risks and opportunities. PM Modi will closely monitor each ministry, and take the final call on 'all policy issues'. This willingness to accept that the buck stops with him displays confidence, and worked well in the Gujarat context. The election mandate is for Modi's 'strong leadership'.

Science and Innovation/R&D/Drug Quality

Publication: The Economic Times

Edition: National

Date: June 02, 2014

By-lined article: Hari Pulakkat

Headline: [Getting basic scientific rules right, new govt should increase investments in R&D](#)

Synopsis: Given that investments in scientific research are key for long-term economic growth, many observers of the Indian economy will be looking forward to the new government increasing investments in R&D. Successive governments have talked for two decades about raising it to 2% of India's GDP, but India's R&D spending still hovers around 0.9%. Increasing investments is not easy and will take time. But the government can make a good start if it focuses on a few things that need no investment. It can start by getting the country's scientific leadership in place. For the first time, one secretary is handling three scientific departments. The secretary of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR) retired in December and secretary of the Department of Science and Technology (DST) retired in April. The previous government did not try to get replacements for them in time, and they are now overseen by the secretary of the Department of Biotechnology (DBT). A quick decision on these two appointments will be a good beginning. The next step will be to get a good advisory mechanism in place for policymakers.

Publication: The Financial Express

Edition: National

Date: June 02, 2014

Headline: [Despite efforts, new molecules elude Indian pharma](#)

Synopsis: Indian pharma firms have tried for more than a decade now to develop new molecules but they've had little luck so far. Over the last 15 years or so, several of them, including Glenmark, Biocon Cadila Healthcare, Dr Reddy's Laboratories, have put in the time and resources to try and discover some blockbuster drug or other but their efforts haven't paid off. At least four of Glenmark's experimental drugs were returned or abandoned by partners, according to HSBC analysts. Apart from

Crofelemer — a treatment for HIV-related diarrhoea and in-licensed from San Francisco-based Napo Pharmaceuticals — none of its pipeline drugs has fructified into marketable products.

Publication: The Financial Express

Edition: National

Date: June 02, 2014

By-lined article: Srinath Reddy, President Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI)

Headline: [Invest in health for development](#)

Synopsis: The health ministry is in good hands with an able and experienced health professional like Harsh Vardhan at the helm. Whether the health of the nation will improve substantially over the next five years depends not only on the vision and vigour of his leadership but even more so on how high a priority the Prime Minister and the finance minister will accord to health as an integral component of the development agenda. India faces multiple health challenges which, if not tackled urgently and effectively, will seriously slow down our economic growth and increase inequalities in many dimensions. Apart from confronting the continuing challenge of under nutrition and infections in childhood, unsafe pregnancy, TB, malaria and AIDS, health services have also to counter and contain the onslaught of cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, cancers, chronic respiratory diseases and mental disorders. This requires a strengthening of health systems across the country, through rapid infusion of financial and human resources. Higher levels of public financing are required, to provide a wide range of needed health services and also to ensure that the health system has the required work force, infrastructure, drugs and equipment to fully and appropriately utilise the funds allocated. There has to be a break from the previous vicious cycle of underfunding resulting in a weak health system. This has to be replaced by a virtuous cycle of allocating more money for health to generate more health for the money.

Publication: Pharmabiz

Edition: Online

Date: June 02, 2014

Headline: [CDSCO rebuts concern over quality of Indian made drugs; will clarify its stand at ICDRA](#)

Synopsis: Reiterating his commitment to ensure best healthcare services to the patients, Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) Dr GN Singh has stressed that Indian drug regulators have always maintained a strict vigil in ensuring quality of the drugs that are manufactured throughout the country. Dr Singh strongly defended that there have been no lapse or compromise on quality parameters from the Indian drug regulators as efficacy of the drugs and safety of the patients have always remained to be the top priority. Rubbishing claims levelled by media expressing growing concern among overseas regulators over the quality of Indian made drugs, Dr Singh pointed out that Indian drug regulatory norms are amongst one of the stringent regulatory norms followed across the globe. Which again is painstakingly implemented through professional expertise leaving no place for error because it is the life of the patients at risk.

General Industry

Website: NDTV

Edition: National

Date: May 30, 2014

Headline: ['Breathtaking Progress' Against Cancer but Challenges Remain](#)

Synopsis: Cancer researchers say major progress is being made against a malady that kills more than seven million people worldwide each year, but funding is short and many challenges remain. Convincing people to eat healthy, exercise and quit smoking could drastically cut back on many preventable cancers, and a host of environmental factors that may lead to cancer have yet to be solved by science, experts say. "Scientifically the field of oncology has never been more exciting," said Clifford Hudis, president of American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO). He cited new targeted therapies that take aim at the cellular functions of tumours, leading to progress against some difficult to treat cancers. Also, immunotherapy is an exciting field that uses a patient's own immune system to attack tumours, and is showing promise against melanoma, leukaemia, and a handful of other cancers.

Publication: The Hindu

Edition: National

Date: May 31, 2014

Headline: [Trauma of dividing healthcare](#)

Synopsis: Preparing for June 2, when the new States of Telangana and the successor State of Andhra Pradesh will come into being, is akin to being on a razor edge for officials in charge of dividing the healthcare assets. Every level of the government health sector faces challenges but only those assets and manpower that are “divisible” would be considered initially. Officials have alluded to the need for patience from both governments with regard to managing the health services in the two States. The biggest fear here is the possibility of a collapse of the State-run tertiary hospitals in Hyderabad, which attract the largest number of patients and also have the highest number of MBBS and super-specialty seats as 50-60 per cent of professors and associate professors in the tertiary teaching hospitals, Gandhi Hospital and Osmania General Hospital, in Hyderabad are from the Seemandhra region.

Publication: DNA

Edition: Mumbai

Date: May 31, 2014

Headline: [Sun strikes \\$400 m deal to supply generics at discounted prices](#)

Synopsis: Pharma major Sun Pharmaceutical Industries said it would supply generics at discounted costs to a third party for an upfront \$400 million in order to manage its cash flow and debt better. Sun Pharma founder and managing director Dilip Shanghvi, in an earnings call, said, "We did this deal to manage our cash flow and debt in a better manner. The \$400 million comes to us offhand but this has nothing to do with our fiscal 2015 guidance." Though he did not disclose the tenure of the contract, Shanghvi said this deal may see a drop in the topline.

Publication: Pune Mirror

Edition: Pune

Date: June 01, 2014

Headline: [Tracking the rise of expensive NCDs](#)

Synopsis: While infectious diseases remain a heavy burden for the country, non-communicable diseases (NCDs) account for more than 36 million deaths globally each year and in India, according to World Health Organisation (WHO), it is estimated to account for 53 per cent of deaths. Now, in an effort to develop a consolidated registry of NCDs for the first time, Bharati Vidyapeeth's Institute of Environment Education and Research (BVIEER) in Pune, in collaboration with the Institute of Geography, University of Cologne (UoC), is testing a surveillance system for keeping track of NCDs, such as diabetes, cancer, hypertension and asthma, which are known to be on the rise world-wide.

Publication: The Asian Age

Edition: National

Date: May 31, 2014

Headline: [DCGI suspends Ranbaxy's supply](#)

Synopsis: In a major development, the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) has suspended supplies from one of Ranbaxy's manufacturing units to the European Union (EU). The DCGI inspects domestic manufacturing facilities supplying to the European Union (EU), on behalf of its regulator. Based on the inspection of Ranbaxy's Toansa plant in Punjab, the DCGI recently suspended Ranbaxy from exporting pharmaceutical products to European countries. "Due to the suspension of written confirmation to EU from Toansa plant, ranbaxy cannot export to EU till they comply with the set standards," said a senior official in the health ministry.