



## India Proposes Medical Countermeasure Coordination Platform to Set Standards

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India, under its G20 presidency during third G20 Health Working Group, has proposed a medical countermeasure coordination platform that will help set norms and standards for the common public good, equity and a voice for the global south to effectively deal with challenges of any Covid-like pandemic. The mechanism will focus on strengthening the global application of digital health.

On the other side, Union Home Minister Amit Shah praised the Indian government's holistic approach to revolutionizing healthcare, citing initiatives such as Ayushman Bharat and Swachh Bharat Abhiyan.

In one of his article, Health Minister Mansukhh Madavia quoted 'Imagine a world without the internet today, where computer networks didn't talk to each other. People in one country might continue to reinvent the wheel in use for years in another part of the world. Without a standardised internet protocol, our version of reality would have looked radically different – one with many local area networks but no common internet to plug into'. He is saying this in context of usage of digital tools in public health.

Here, Civil society organisations have asked the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India to withdraw the provision requiring even small manufacturers to get all their food products tested and lab reports uploaded onto a portal. Alleging that the order would kill small manufacturers financially unviable for lakhs for small businesses to conform to the new order.

Finally, the prevalence of diabetes and other metabolic non-communicable diseases (NCD) in India is considerably higher than previously estimated, according to a new study. These are diet-related NCDs and the finding is a stern reminder that there should be clear warnings on packaged foods. But the Indian journey of front-of-pack labelling so far is the one marked by delays and dilutions.

In this tenth volume of Occasional News Wrap, various dimensions of health regulation issues have been captured, which appeared by way of op-eds, articles, news etc. during the month of June, 2023.

| S.N. | Article/Op-ed  | Key Takeaway  |
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| 1.   | <p><b>G20: India proposes medical countermeasure coordination platform to set standards for public good</b></p> <p><i>PTI</i><br/> <i>June 4, 2023</i><br/> <i>By <u>Anonna Dutt</u></i><br/> <i>Indian Express,</i><br/> <i>Hyderabad</i></p> | <p>India, under its G20 presidency during third G20 Health Working Group, has proposed a <a href="#">medical countermeasure</a> coordination platform that will help set norms and standards for the common public good, equity and a voice for the global south to effectively deal with challenges of any Covid-like pandemic. The mechanism will focus on strengthening the global application of <a href="#">digital health</a>. It took close to one and half years during the Covid pandemic to get a fuller understanding of the challenges related to equity and that the world is not safe, if every country is not secure in terms of being able to control any outbreak.</p>                                     |
| 2.   | <p><b>Central government taking holistic approach to revolutionise healthcare, says Union Home Minister Amit Shah</b></p> <p><i>PTI</i><br/> <i>June 4, 2023</i></p>   | <p>Union Home Minister Amit Shah praised the Indian government's holistic approach to <a href="#">revolutionizing healthcare</a>, citing initiatives such as Ayushman Bharat and Swachh Bharat Abhiyan. Speaking at the silver jubilee celebrations of Amrita Hospital in Kochi, Shah also highlighted the contributions made by Mata Amritanandamayi in promoting India's spiritual culture and traditions.</p>  |
| 3.   | <p><b>Report says 2.3 billion people globally use polluting fuel to cook; 675 million have no electricity</b></p> <p><i>The Economic Times</i><br/> <i>June 6, 2023</i></p>  | <p>Up to 2.3 billion people around the world are still using polluting fuels to cook and 675 million don't have electricity, according to a report released Tuesday by five international organisations. The report said that at current rates, 660 million people are projected to be without electricity and 1.9 billion won't have clean cooking opportunities by 2030. That's the target date to achieve a <a href="#">United Nations Goal</a> set in 2015 "to ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy ..</p>  |
| 4.   | <p><b>One World One Health</b></p> <p><i>By Mansukh Manadaviya</i><br/> <i>Times of India</i><br/> <i>June 9, 2023</i></p>   | <p>Imagine a world without the internet today, where computer networks didn't talk to each other. People in one country might continue to reinvent the wheel in use for years in another part of the world. Without a standardised internet protocol, our version of reality would have looked radically different – one with many local area networks but no common internet to plug into. This alternate reality is similar to the flux in the digital health space today. On the edge of disruptive technologies, it awaits direction, <a href="#">standardised framework</a> and a decisive nudge from the international leadership to ensure innovations can be scaled up to benefit billions in the Global South.</p> |

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| 5. | <p><b>Civil society groups urge FSSAI to withdraw mandatory testing and reporting of food products</b></p> <p><i>KV Kurmanath</i><br/>Hindu Business Line<br/>June 9, 2023</p>                      | <p>Civil society organisations have asked the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) to withdraw the provision requiring even small manufacturers to get all their <a href="#">food products tested</a> and lab reports uploaded onto a portal. A recent FSSAI order directed all the FBOs (food business operators that manufacture, re-pack and re-label) to carry out the tests and upload the results.</p>   |
| 6. | <p><b>India needs to restore faith in 'world's pharmacy' Without Indian-made generics, pharmacies across the world would be much emptier</b></p> <p><i>Bloomberg Opinion,</i><br/>June 12, 2023</p> | <p>Indians have long been proud of their pharmaceutical sector. It's a big exports earner in a country that can't have too many. It boasts a number of well-regarded, profitable companies. And its exports to other developing countries allow us to think of ourselves as benefactors, and therefore leaders, of the Global South. Our success exporting <a href="#">generic medicines</a> in particular has led us to take a dim view of modern patent protections and we have soaked up the approval of anti-Big Pharma activists...</p> |
| 7. | <p><b>FSSAI has no reason 'to not have warning labels' on packaged foods</b></p> <p><i>By Amit Khurana</i><br/>Down to Earth<br/>June 12, 2023</p>  | <p>The prevalence of diabetes and other metabolic non-communicable diseases (NCD) in India is considerably higher than previously estimated, according to a new study. These are diet-related NCDs and the finding is a stern reminder that there should be clear warnings on packaged foods. But the Indian journey of <a href="#">front-of-pack labelling</a> so far is the one marked by delays and dilutions.</p>  |
| 8. | <p><b>More India-Made Cough and Cold Syrups Under WHO Lens</b></p> <p><i>By Vishwanath Pilla</i><br/>E T Bureau<br/>Economies Times<br/>June 22, 2023</p>   | <p>"To date this situation has impacted more than 20 products with two countries of origin (India &amp; Indonesia) and more than 15 different manufacturers," WHO spokesperson Margaret Harris told ET. All the products are syrup-based such as paracetamol, cough, and vitamins. WHO added that though the investigations in the impacted countries are ongoing, a link has not yet been established but certainly, more India made cough syrup are going to through <a href="#">WHO scanner</a>.</p>                                      |
| 9. | <p><b>Self-regulatory body for pharma industry on cards: Mansukh Mandaviya</b></p> <p><i>Sohini Das</i><br/>Business Standard<br/>June, 23 2023</p>   | <p>Amid rising global scrutiny of India-made medicines, Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya on Friday said there were plans to have a <a href="#">self-regulatory body</a> for the pharmaceutical industry. Stressing that India has a zero-tolerance policy for any sort of quality compromise, Mandaviya said a joint squad of regulators from both the state and Centre had been formed for inspections of plants.</p>  |

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| 10. | <p><b>97% sanitation workers, 95% waster-pickers, 82% security guards exposed to air pollution: Study</b></p> <p><i>PTI</i><br/><i>June 30, 2023</i></p> | <p>A study conducted by Chintan environmental research and action group found that a significant number of sanitation workers, waste-pickers, and security guards in India are exposed to air pollution during their work. The research revealed that a large percentage of these workers suffer from respiratory illnesses as a result. The study recommends providing Personal Protective Equipment (<a href="#">PPE</a>) and training on its use, as well as implementing measures such as gargling after work, hand and face washing facilities, and heated bottles during winter.</p> |
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