



### CUTS Seeks a Year Extension for SMEs to Adopt Indian Nutrition Rating 01 November–30 November, 2022

Raising concerns regarding the Draft Regulations on Display of Indian Nutrition Rating on Food Labels with FSSAI, CUTS International has said that there should be exception for the small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and they must be given a grace period of 12 months or lesser to adopt the rule. CUTS has written to FSSAI Chairperson, Parliamentary Committee on Health and Family Welfare highlighting key areas of concern in the draft. Submitting key recommendations on the draft regulation, it suggested to adopt simple, interpretive 'high in' style warning label, which is mandatory rather than being voluntary. Referring to the experiences of other countries, CUTS flagged the possibilities on how the industry can easily manipulate the proposed INR system that is mentioned in the draft notification. The draft in the current format, if finalised, will lay down the rules for rating food products based on nutrition content on the front of packet throughout India, and could have vast potential to confuse consumers, if not thoroughly revised.

On a different note, health care continues to be expensive in India. Depending upon your disease, these costs can be between manageable to monumental, and if not admitted to the hospital, all borne by you. As is infamously quoted, India's Out-Of-Pocket-Expenditure (OOPE) for health is one of the highest in the world at 63 percent in 2018.

On the other side, COP27 has taken a definite step towards addressing the pending issues by adding loss and damage funding as an official agenda. With extreme weather events bringing climate change closer to most inhabitants of the earth, the climate conference presents an opportunity for world nations to demonstrate their ability to take concerted action to check global warming.

While world leaders are focused on issues such as net zero and climate finance, adequate attention is not being paid to the health impact of climate change. There is a need for more in-depth studies into the relationship between environment and public health.

On a happy note, the new **National List of Essential Medicines (NLEM)**, released by the Union Health Ministry in September, has now been brought under the Drug Prices Control Order, which fixes ceiling prices for these essential formulations based on average cost to retailers. The gazette notification was issued on November 11 by the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers, which is responsible for ensuring the pricing cap.

In this background, the start of the new series of CUTS Occasional News Wrap (ONW) through this third volume on the issue captures various dimensions of health regulations expressed by way of selective write-ups, op-eds, articles, news, etc. in the month of November, 2022.

	Article/Op-ed	Key Takeaway
1	<p><b>Why is Healthcare Expensive in India?</b></p> <p><i>By Ovee Karwa</i>  <i>Health Express</i>  <i>November 02, 2022</i></p>	<p>You're in India. You fall ill. What do you do?</p> <p>They will treat you for free, but there is a chance that the doctors themselves are <u>missing</u>, and you might have to wait for the whole day in a queue awaiting your turn, missing your day's earnings. In both these hospitals, your concerns will be addressed by the doctor in less than 2-2 and a half minutes, and your medical history is unlikely to be taken.</p>
2	<p><b>FTAs: There Must Be No Compromises On Health</b></p> <p><i>By Jyothi Datta</i>  <i>PTI</i>  <i>November 08, 2022</i></p>	<p>The negotiations must be conducted in a transparent manner especially on issues regarding intellectual property. Every time countries negotiate a trade deal, public health workers are forced to keep their ear to the ground, to ensure there is no trade-off on health. And that seems to be the case this time too, in the build-up to the proposed Free Trade Agreement (<a href="#">FTA</a>) between India and the United Kingdom.</p>
3	<p><b>COP27: Urgent Need to Focus on Health Impact of Climate Change</b></p> <p><i>Policy Circle</i>  <i>November 8, 2022</i></p>	<p>World leaders and senior officials have descended on Sharm El Sheikh in Egypt to take part in the UN climate change conference. <u>COP27</u> has taken a definite step towards addressing the pending issues by adding loss and damage funding as an official agenda. With extreme weather events bringing climate change closer to most inhabitants of the earth, the climate conference presents an opportunity for world nations to demonstrate their ability to take concerted action to check global warming.</p> <p>While world leaders are focused on issues such as net zero and climate finance, adequate attention is not being paid to the health impact of climate change. There is a need for more in-depth studies into the relationship between environment and public health.</p>
4	<p><b>Government Brings Listed Essential Drugs Under Price Cap</b></p> <p><i>The Indian Express</i>  <i>Anonna Dutt</i>  <i>November 16, 2022</i></p>	<p>The new <b>National List of Essential Medicines (NLEM)</b>, released by the Union Health Ministry in September, has now been brought under the Drug Prices Control Order, which fixes ceiling prices for these essential formulations based on average cost to retailers. The gazette notification was issued on November 11 by the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers, which is responsible for ensuring the pricing cap.</p>

5	<p><b>India-UK FTA Lands in Row Over Patent Ever greening</b></p> <p><i>Live Mint</i>  <i>By Priyanka Sharma/Ravi Dutta Mishra</i>  <i>November 17, 2022</i></p>	<p>A clause allowing patent ever greening in the India-UK free trade agreement will harm India's generics industry and the UK's <u>healthcare service</u> that is dependent on Indian drugs, The Lancet warned, prompting the UK to declare the future of its health service is "not on the table".</p> <p>Controversy ballooned after a leaked draft intellectual property chapter of the FTA was said to include a clause that would allow British pharma companies to 'evergreen' their drug patents. Ever greening is the practice of companies filing for patent extensions by making minor changes to their drugs just before the patent expires at 20 years.</p>
6	<p><b>Private Medical Students Freed from 'Bondage'</b></p> <p><i>Times of India</i>  <i>By Dhananjay Mahapatra</i>  <i>November 19, 2022</i></p>	<p>In a big relief to MBBS students in private colleges, the Supreme Court said that private medical colleges cannot force students to sign <u>bonds</u> for serving the alma mater as resident doctors after graduation- a practice that's quite common across the country and students are often charged hefty amounts for violating such imposed conditions. A bench of Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud and Justice Hima Kohli gave this ruling, while dismissing an appeal filed by R D Gardi Medical College in Ujjain..</p>
7	<p><b>Health Ministry Includes Coronary Stents in National List of Essential Medicines</b></p> <p><i>PTI</i>  <i>Healthworld.com</i>  <i>November 20, 2022</i></p>	<p>The Union health ministry has notified the inclusion of coronary stents in the <u>National List of Essential Medicines, 2022</u>, a move that will help make these life-saving medical devices more affordable. The move is based on the recommendations by an expert committee constituted to review the inclusion of stents in the list based on requirement. The National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) will now fix the price of coronary stents.</p>
8	<p><b>Rising Antimicrobial Resistance Must Be Tackled Quickly</b></p> <p><i>Amar Patnaik</i>  <i>The Hindu Business Line</i>  <i>November 21, 2022</i></p>	<p>Covid-19 placed enormous stress on health systems worldwide. As we emerge from the pandemic, greater emphasis must be placed on creating not only equitable but also more resilient healthcare systems, especially against the background of the impending climate crisis and the increased occurrence of zoonotic diseases. Rising Antimicrobial Resistance (<u>AMR</u>) is one such public health hazard that can debilitate health infrastructure if multi-sectoral and synchronised policies are not implemented in time.</p>

9	<p><b>FSSAI Proposes Regulations for Genetically Modified Food</b></p> <p><i>PTI</i> <i>November 22, 2022</i></p>	<p>FSSAI has come out with draft regulations for <a href="#">Genetically Modified Food</a>, proposing mandatory prior approval from the regulator to manufacture, sell and import food or ingredients produced from genetically-modified organisms. The proposed Food Safety and Standards (Genetically Modified Foods) Regulations, 2022 will apply to Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) intended for food use, as per the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI). The regulations, once implemented, will also be applicable to food ingredients produced from GMOs that contain modified DNA as well as for food ingredients produced from GMOs that do not contain modified DNA but includes ingredients/additives/processing aids derived from GMOs.</p>
10	<p><b>Digital Health will be a Key Priority in India's G20 Presidency</b></p> <p><i>By Perrine Katiyar</i> <i>ET Bureau</i> <i>November 26, 2022</i></p>	<p>Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare Mansukh Mandaviya says India remains alert about new variants of coronavirus and is on a mission to eradicate TB by 2025. He also assured that the <a href="#">Digital Health</a> will be a key priority in India's G20 Presidency in future.</p>
11	<p><b>Budget May Widen PAM-JAY Coverage</b></p> <p><i>Financial Express</i> <i>By Prasanta Sahu</i> <i>November 28, 2022</i></p>	<p>Ahead of the Budget for 2023-24, 15th Finance Commission chairman N K Singh suggested a slew of measures for the health sector, such as the inclusion of middle-class households in the flagship <a href="#">Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY)</a> scheme, a Uniform Health Code and a dedicated financial institution for the sector. To realise the potential growth in the health sector and to provide for universal health coverage, Singh said health needs to be shifted to the Concurrent List of the Constitution from the State List to help develop cohesive national policies for the development of the sector and boost health expenditure to 2.5% of GDP by 2025 from around 1% now.</p>