

# OPPI Coverage Dossier February 2025

## INDEX

S.no	Date	Publication	Edition	Link
<b>Financials</b>				
1	2-Feb	The Hindu BusinessLine	Print +Online	<a href="#">Critical medicines under Patient Assistance Programmes get some basic customs duty relief</a>
<b>Mainlines</b>				
2	2-Feb	Times of India	Print+Online	<a href="#">Union Budget 2025: Sanjeevani to critically sick patients</a>
<b>Online and Trade</b>				
3	1-Feb	Express Pharma	Online	<a href="#">Some gaps in Union Budget 2025, but positive policy-level clarifications: Anil Matai, OPPI</a>
4	3-Feb	Pharmabiz	Online	<a href="#">OPPI sees Union Budget 2025 paves way for an innovation-driven healthcare landscape in India</a>
5	1-Feb	Medical Buyer	Online	<a href="#">Responses – Union Budget</a>
6	1-Feb	Biovoice	Online	<a href="#">Budget 2025: OPPI hails initiatives for inclusive &amp; innovation-driven healthcare landscape</a>
7	11 -Feb	Fortune India	Print+Online	<a href="#">Global Pharma's India Bet: MNCs Make India A Hub For Healthcare Innovation and Medical Research</a>
8	18-Feb	BWHealthcare World	Online	<a href="#">The Role Of Innovation In India's Biopharmaceutical Future</a>

# FINANCIALS

<b>Publication</b>	The Hindu Business Line
<b>Date</b>	2- Feb
<b>Edition</b>	Print+Online
<b>Headline</b>	<a href="#">Critical medicines under Patient Assistance Programmes get some basic customs duty relief</a>

# Customs duty relief for critical medicines under Patient Assistance Programmes

**PT Jyothi Datta**  
Mumbai

An expansion of the Patient Assistance Programmes (PAP) is expected with the Budget exempting 37 critical medicines from the basic Customs duty (BCD), provided the drugs are given away free.

Medicines from 10 multinational companies are listed in the PAPs named in the Budget. PAPs help ease the price burden on patients as under an arrangement, expensive drugs for cancer and other diseases from these companies are provided sometimes entirely free or at a reduced price or discount.

Companies benefiting from this directive should have a cost savings of at least



Patients with cancer, rare diseases and other chronic illnesses could also see some relief

5 per cent and that should assist in greater patient coverage under PAPs, said Hitesh Sharma, Partner and National Life Sciences tax leader, EY India. Industry watchers said the BCD varied across different medicines. The Budget said: "Specified drugs and medicines under Patient Assis-

ance Programmes run by pharmaceutical companies are fully exempt from BCD, provided the medicines are supplied free of cost to patients. I propose to add 37 more medicines, along with 13 new patient assistance programmes."

Anil Matai, Director-General, Organisation of Pharmaceutical Producers of India (OPPI), agreed the BCD exemption would help expand the programme to more patients, besides encouraging more companies to participate in similar schemes.

### LIFE-SAVING MEDICINES

In fact, patients with cancer, rare diseases and chronic illnesses could also get some relief, said industry watchers, as the Budget exempted

36 life-saving drugs and medicines from BCD. Another six life-saving medicines were added to the list attracting concessional Customs duty of 5 per cent.

Also, full exemption and concessional duty are being extended to bulk drugs for the manufacture of the above, the FM said.

Public health voices, however, urged the government to ensure the benefits are passed on to patients. KM Gopakumar, with the Third World Network, said drug pricing is not transparent, and similar measures in the past have not benefited patients. The Budget also outlined daycare cancer centres in all district hospitals in the next 3 years. The FM said, "200 centres will be established in 2025-26."

# Mainlines

<b>Publication</b>	The Times of India
<b>Date</b>	2- Feb
<b>Edition</b>	Print+Online
<b>Headline</b>	<a href="#">Union Budget 2025: Sanjeevani to critically sick patients</a>

# Sanjeevani To Critically Sick Patients

## Step Reduction In Import Duties For Life-Saving, Rare Diseases And Cancer Medicines

TEAM TOI

Typically, most high-priced therapies used in cancer and other critical ailments are imported into the country by MNCs, and additional import duties further escalate their prices. As a result, these life-saving treatments often remain out of reach for the poor and even the middle class, pushing them to indebtedness. At present, finished formulations are levied a customs duty between 5% and 10%, while bulk drugs (raw materials) around 10%.

In India, there has been an alarming rise in cancer, with 15 lakh people diagnosed with the ailment and many more undiagnosed cases.

Sudarshan Jain, secretary general of Indian Pharmaceutical Alliance, said: "Exemptions and concessional duty on essential medicines will improve drug access to critical treatments nationwide. The establishment of cancer centres

in district hospitals and the expansion of medical education will strengthen the healthcare workforce and infrastructure. Research fellowships and focused funding will propel innovation in Indian pharma. The thrust on medical tourism, 'Heal in India', increased FDI limit in the insurance sector

and nutritional programmes underscore a holistic approach towards public health, further positioning India as a global healthcare hub."

Meanwhile, the domestic industry also renewed its longstanding request for a GST waiver on cancer and chronic therapies. "While the customs

duty waiver is welcome, I hope this extends to GST relief for indigenously available medicines for cancer, rare diseases, and chronic conditions like autoimmune diseases to truly benefit the patients," Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, chairperson, Biocon Group, said.

Satish Reddy, chairman, Dr Reddy's Laboratories, said the budget measures including cancer day care centres, medical education, custom duty exemptions for life-saving drugs, and encouragement to medical tourism and 'Heal in India' will boost the country's healthcare ecosystem. 'Heal in India' came in for appreciation from across the spectrum. The initiative will be promoted in partnership with the private sector along with capacity building and easier visa norms.

Abhay Sol, chairman and MD of Max Healthcare Insti-

tute, also said the 'Heal in India' medical tourism initiative will further position India as a global healthcare destination. Preetha Reddy, executive vice chairperson, Apollo Hospitals, said the 'Heal in India' initiative reinforces India's leadership in global healthcare.

The Rs 20,000 crore fund earmarked for private sector-driven R&D is also expected to boost innovation in healthcare. Dr Krishna Ella, executive chairman, Bharat Biotech, said he was pleased to see the strong focus on research, development, and innovation. "This investment will play a crucial role in driving significant breakthroughs and advancing progress," he said.

"The relief on lifesaving drugs, particularly for cancer and rare diseases, is a crucial step towards improving patient care and making treatments more affordable," he said.

9

THE  
CO  
SH

1 Now su  
1 Jewelle  
platinum  
is set to  
duced ct

2 Swe  
bed  
An im  
costin  
accou

3 G  
Dai  
An l  
at R  
on a  
38.5

4  
dut  
Nil  
lal  
—  
E  
e  
F



HELPING HAND

# ONLINE & TRADE

<b>Publication</b>	Express Pharma
<b>Date</b>	1-Feb
<b>Edition</b>	Online
<b>Headline</b>	<a href="#">Some gaps in Union Budget 2025, but positive policy-level clarifications: Anil Matai, OPPI</a>

*Anil Matai, Director General, OPPI observes that while some gaps remain, OPPI is committed to facilitating and partnering with the government to bridge these gaps and ensure successful implementation*

The Union Budget 2025 reflects the government's strong commitment to strengthening India's healthcare ecosystem through progressive and patient-centric initiatives.

The plan to establish 200 daycare cancer centers in the next fiscal year, as part of a broader effort to equip all district hospitals with such facilities over the next three years, is a pivotal step toward enhancing accessibility to specialised cancer care, particularly in underserved regions.

Ahead of the budget, we emphasised the need for policy-level clarifications, particularly the expansion of exemptions for life-saving drugs and oncology medications from import duty to reduce treatment costs.

We are pleased with the addition of 36 new medicines to the list of drugs fully exempt from customs duty, along with six new drugs that qualify for partial exemptions. Additionally, 13 patient assistance programmes have been included under this exemption framework, which will further ease the financial burden on patients requiring critical therapies.

The introduction of a national framework to promote Global Capability Centers (GCCs) in tier-two cities is a positive step, and we look forward to their establishment and the resulting economic boost.



<b>Publication</b>	Pharmabiz
<b>Date</b>	3-Feb
<b>Edition</b>	Online
<b>Headline</b>	<a href="#">OPPI sees Union Budget 2025 paves way for an innovation-driven healthcare landscape in India</a>

## **OPPI sees Union Budget 2025 paves way for an innovation-driven healthcare landscape in India**

*Our Bureau, Bengaluru*

*Monday, February 3, 2025, 17:45 Hrs [IST]*

Organisation of Pharmaceutical Producers of India (OPPI) sees that initiatives collectively pave the way for a stronger, more inclusive, and innovation-driven healthcare landscape in India.

Anil Matai, director general, OPPI, said that this year budget reflects the government's strong commitment to strengthening India's healthcare ecosystem through progressive and patient-centric initiatives. The plan to establish 200 day care cancer centers in the next fiscal year, as part of a broader effort to equip all district hospitals with such facilities over the next three years, is a pivotal step toward enhancing accessibility to specialized cancer care, particularly in underserved regions.

Ahead of the budget, we emphasized the need for policy-level clarifications, particularly the expansion of exemptions for life-saving drugs and oncology medications from import duty to reduce treatment costs. We are pleased with the addition of 36 new medicines to the list of drugs fully exempt from customs duty, along with 6 new drugs that qualify for partial exemptions. Additionally, 13 patient assistance programs have been included under this exemption framework, which will further ease the financial burden on patients requiring critical therapies, he added.

The introduction of a national framework to promote Global Capability Centers (GCCs) in tier-two cities is a positive step, and we look forward to their establishment and the resulting economic boost. While some gaps remain, OPPI is committed to facilitating and partnering with the government to bridge these gaps and ensure successful implementation. Additionally, the increase of 10,000 medical seats this year, with a goal of 75,000 additional seats over five years, reflects a decisive push towards bridging the talent gap and building a skilled healthcare workforce. We remain committed to working alongside policymakers to further strengthen the sector and address areas that require continued attention, said the OPPI chief.

<b>Publication</b>	Medical Buyer
<b>Date</b>	1-Feb
<b>Edition</b>	Online
<b>Headline</b>	<a href="#">Responses – Union Budget</a>

**Anil Matai, Director General, Organisation of Pharmaceutical Producers of India**

“The Union Budget 2025 reflects the government’s strong commitment to strengthening India’s healthcare ecosystem through progressive and patient-centric initiatives. The plan to establish 200 daycare cancer centers in the next fiscal year, as part of a broader effort to equip all district hospitals with such facilities over the next three years, is a pivotal step toward enhancing accessibility to specialized cancer care, particularly in underserved regions.

We are pleased with the addition of 36 new medicines to the list of drugs fully exempt from customs duty, along with 6 new drugs that qualify for partial exemptions. Additionally, 13 patient assistance programs have been included under this exemption framework, which will further ease the financial burden on patients requiring critical therapies.

The introduction of a national framework to promote Global Capability Centers (GCCs) in tier-two cities is a positive step, and we look forward to their establishment and the resulting economic boost. Additionally, the increase of 10,000 medical seats this year, with a goal of 75,000 additional seats over five years, reflects a decisive push towards bridging the talent gap and building a skilled healthcare workforce.

<b>Publication</b>	Biovoice
<b>Date</b>	1 Feb
<b>Edition</b>	Online
<b>Headline</b>	<a href="#">Budget 2025: OPPI hails initiatives for inclusive &amp; innovation-driven healthcare landscape</a>

**New Delhi:** Reacting to the Union Budget 2025-26, the Organisation of Pharmaceutical Producers of India (OPPI) has termed it positive and reflecting the government’s strong commitment to strengthening India’s healthcare ecosystem through progressive and patient-centric initiatives.

“The plan to establish 200 daycare cancer centers in the next fiscal year, as part of a broader effort to equip all district hospitals with such facilities over the next three years, is a pivotal step toward enhancing accessibility to specialized cancer care, particularly in underserved regions,” said Anil Matai, Director General, OPPI.

“Ahead of the budget, we emphasized the need for policy-level clarifications, particularly the expansion of exemptions for life-saving drugs and oncology medications from import duty to reduce treatment costs. We are pleased with the addition of 36 new medicines to the list of drugs fully exempt from customs duty, along with 6 new drugs that qualify for partial exemptions. Additionally, 13 patient assistance programs have been included under this exemption framework, which will further ease the financial burden on patients requiring critical therapies,” Matai added.

<b>Publication</b>	Fortune India
<b>Date</b>	11-Feb
<b>Edition</b>	Online
<b>Headline</b>	<a href="#">Global Pharma's India Bet: MNCs Make India A Hub For Healthcare Innovation and Medical Research</a>



**“MNCs ARE POISED TO TAP THIS EXPANDING MARKET BY INVESTING IN R&D, DIGITAL HEALTHCARE.”**

**Anil Matai**, director general,  
Organisation of Pharmaceutical  
Producers of India

many aspects of the value chain from innovation, R&D and scaled-up manufacturing to data analytics and AI-led transformation,” says Matai. He adds this will build capability, skills and talent and ensure adoption of innovative methods to reduce the cost of delivering healthcare. “The push for universal health coverage and increased government spending on healthcare will provide a favourable environment for global pharmaceutical companies to expand reach and contribute to India’s healthcare ecosystem,” says Matai.

In fact, the government has taken several steps to make India a preferred destination for pharmaceutical MNCs.

<b>Publication</b>	BW HealthcareWorld
<b>Date</b>	18-Feb
<b>Edition</b>	Online
<b>Headline</b>	<a href="#">The Role Of Innovation In India's Biopharmaceutical Future</a>

Innovation is the driving force behind progress in the biopharmaceutical sector, with the potential to shape healthcare systems, improve public health, and contribute to economic prosperity. As India seeks to expand its pharmaceutical market to USD 120-130 billion by 2030, it is essential to shift from volume-based growth to value-based innovation. The Government of India's Amrit Kaal blueprint - Vision Pharma 2047 envisaging India as 'Vishwaguru' (global leader) in innovation & research underscores the commitment and recognition on the part of the Government of India that research and innovation are critical means for enabling India to pivot from the volume based to value based pharmaceutical industry. India has long been recognised as the 'pharmacy of the world' and has a robust and diverse pharmaceutical ecosystem. Strategic investments and forward-looking policies are crucial for our transformation to 'pharma powerhouse to the world'. We need to conceive a strategy that not only meets the expectations of India's aspirations but also contributes to the vision of Viksit Bharat@2047, as envisaged by our honourable Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji.

Innovation and Research & Development (R&D) are indispensable for advancing medical science and addressing new health challenges. The Indian pharmaceutical industry, often referred to as the 'Pharmacy of the World,' is poised to deliver high-quality, innovative healthcare solutions. It is already a key player globally, exporting to over 200 countries and ranking as the third largest by volume, with a market size of USD58 billion, comprising USD30 billion in exports and USD28 billion in domestic consumption, and aspires to grow to USD130 billion by 2030. However, to maintain its competitive edge, there is a need for India to focus on research and innovation while also ensuring that the drugs are accessible to the entire population and that high-quality India-manufactured drugs meet global standards, especially in regulated markets like the U.S. and Europe. Additionally, sustained investment in healthcare R&D infrastructure and collaboration in research is necessary for developing innovative solutions to global health issues, including future pandemics.