

India, Saudi Arabia bolster bilateral ties in chemicals and fertilisers sector

Highlighting strong economic ties between India and Saudi Arabia, the visit by Union Health and Chemicals and Fertilisers Minister, JP Nadda, to Dammam and Riyadh focused on enhancing bilateral cooperation in the chemicals and fertilisers sector, according to an official statement.

Nadda led a high-level delegation for the two-day official visit over the weekend. The minister held discussions with the Saudi Minister of Industry and Mineral Resources, Bandar bin Ibrahim Al Khorayef, in Riyadh on mechanisms to strengthen partnership in fertilisers, petrochemicals and pharmaceutical sectors.

They witnessed the

signing of long-term agreements between Maaden and Indian companies — IPL, KRIBHCO and CIL — for supply of overall enhanced 3.1 million metric tonnes of D i a m m o n i u m Phosphate (DAP) fertiliser per annum for five years from 2025-26 onwards, with further extension of five years with mutual consent, the official statement said.

In 2024-25, India’s imports of DAP fertiliser from Kingdom of Saudi Arabia were 1.9 million MT, reflecting around 17 per cent increase over 1.6 million MT imported during FY 2023-24.

Both sides underscored their commitment to broadening the

scope of bilateral relations to include other key fertilisers such as urea, along with DAP aiming to further ensure India’s fertiliser security.

According to the ministry, discussions were also held on facilitating mutual investments, with a focus on exploring opportunities for Indian Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) to invest in the Saudi fertiliser sector, and reciprocally, Saudi investments in India.

Additionally, the leaders deliberated on avenues for collaborative research, especially in developing India-specific customised and alternative fertilisers to enhance agricultural productivity and sustainability.



Nadda also held a bilateral meeting with His Royal Highness Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman Al Saud, Minister of Energy, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and co-chair of the Economy and Investment Committee of the Strategic Partnership Council

between India and Saudi Arabia on ways to enhance the economic partnership between the two countries. He also met Abdulaziz Al-Rumaih, Saudi Vice Minister of Health in Riyadh. They discussed ways to enhance cooperation in the medical sector,

health services, pharmaceuticals, digital health solutions, and knowledge exchange. In this context, they noted the significance of the bilateral MoU on health signed during the recent State Visit of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Saudi Arabia.

WHO'S SELLING ANTIBIOTICS OTC?

CHENNAI: It is not a difficult task to get antibiotics over the counter at pharmacies in the city. Schedule H drugs are sold without prescription at most of the pharmacies in any nook and corner of the city without a prescription.

Just by describing the symptoms to pharmacists, one can procure some of the most commonly used antibiotics like Amoxicillin, Azithromycin, Ciprofloxacin, and Nitrofurantoin and many other schedule H drugs.

Self-medication with antibiotics is a major cause behind the rising incidence of antibiotic resistance. While pharmacies provide antibiotics without prescription and action is taken against them for selling schedule H drugs without prescription in the State, it is unfair to place the entire blame on them.

Pharmacists say that after the pandemic, the use of antibiotics like Azithromycin and Amoxicillin became quite common among the people, as they became aware of treatment protocols. There is a need for awareness on antibiotic resistance. These are basic essential antibiotics so they are readily available and are the most commonly used ones as well,” said S Ramachandran, former secretary of Tamil Nadu Druggists and Chemists Association.

He added that even if pharmacists deny giving medicines without prescription, consumers don’t accept it or insist on being given the drugs. If one store denies them medicines, they can easily get it from some other one. “In some cases, consumers also use old prescriptions or bring other people’s prescriptions. It is important to track the use of medicines from the stage of manufacturing to the consumption to ensure that pharmacists and consumers both do not abuse or overuse antibiotics,” said Ramachandran.

Antibiotics are not advised by medical practitioners for viral infections, as they should be used only if there is a bacterial infection. Former WHO Chief Scientist Soumya Swaminathan had pointed out that during the pandemic, the use of antibiotics for common cold and flu increased manifold and the resistance patterns surged since then. Doctors advise that people should avoid taking medicines for common cold and flu without a pre-

scription as it can lead to increased risks of antimicrobial resistance. Experts also emphasise that there needs to be more research and innovation to understand which antibiotics work for a particular infection.

“People in India are not aware of how to use antibiotics. We cannot blame clinicians or pharmacists alone for the rising incidence of antibiotic resistance. People are directly approaching pharmacies and buying

He added that awareness needs to be across all stakeholders. Though the central government has a plan in place to prevent the surge of antibiotic resistance, the implementation of the same needs more awareness and education among the public.

Earlier this year, the Union Health Ministry had urged all doctors in medical colleges and medical associations to make it a mandatory practice to mention indications and reasons for prescribing antibiotics.

The Director General of Health Services Dr Atul Goel has also appealed to all pharmacists to strictly implement schedule H and H1 of the Drugs and Cosmetics Rules and stop over-the-counter sale of antibiotics and sell them only on the prescription of qualified doctors. The appeal highlighted We cannot blame clinicians or pharmacists alone for the rising incidence of antibiotic resistance. People are directly approaching pharmacies and buying antibiotics over the counter without getting proper lab tests done for the bacterium, and they don’t even take the full course —Dr Ramesh Nachimuthu, National Joint Coordinator, IIMAR antibiotics over the counter. The lab tests for the bacterium are not done. Also, patients only buy half the course of antibiotics prescribed to them to save money. They only take limited doses and once they feel a little better, they discontinue the drugs, this leads to antibiotic resistance,” says Dr Ramesh Nachimuthu, National Joint Coordinator IIMAR and a scientist working on Bacteriophage Research and Therapy.

Doctors advise that people should avoid taking medicines for common cold and flu without a prescription as it can lead to increased risks of antimicrobial resistance that the misuse and overuse of antimicrobials are one of the main drivers in the development of drug-resistant pathogens.

Many Older Adults Take Daily Aspirin to Cut Cardiovascular Disease Risk, Despite Dangers

Older adults are still likely to take a daily, low dose aspirin for the primary prevention of cardiovascular disease, even though doing so carries significant risks.

Using aspirin to ward off heart attack and stroke used to be a no-brainer. Doctors previously recommended it for both primary and secondary prevention Trusted Source of cardiovascular disease.

However, following the results of three major aspirin trials in 2018, guidance around aspirin has shifted. It is generally no longer recommended for individuals who have not had a heart attack or stroke. However, it is still recommended for patients who have already experienced a cardiovascular event and are trying to prevent another from occurring.

Aspirin no longer carries a blanket recommendation because of the potential risks it carries, particularly bleeding risk and anemia. Trusted Source

Both the American Heart Association and the United States Preventive Services Taskforce have changed their guidelines in recent years to indicate that aspirin isn’t right for all patients and does carry risks. Despite these changes, new data reveals that many Americans who should not be taking daily aspirin still are, particularly those at the highest risk for harm.

In a research letter published in the Annals of Internal Medicine, researchers found that 18.5 million Americans aged 60 or older, about one in three, were still using aspirin for primary prevention of CVD. Many of them, about 3.3 million, were doing so without medical advice. “This practice was supported by evidence prior to 2018. It naturally takes some time for new data to percolate and reach physicians and patients and for these to translate into changes in management. Potentially, there may also be a component of lack of awareness and hesitancy to change medical management,” Mohak Gupta, MD, a Cardiology Fellow at Houston Methodist Hospital and First Author of the letter, told Healthline.

Older Americans continue to take aspirin. Gupta’s research utilized self-reported health data between 2012 and 2021. The sample of 186,425 American adults is a snapshot

of the US population, representative of roughly 150 million people. More than half the participants were women, and about one-third were non-white.

Compared to ten years ago, fewer adults are using aspirin for the primary prevention of CVD, but the number is still high. The number of adults without CVD who reported using aspirin was 14.4%, down from 20.6% in 2021.

However, when stratified by age, a different picture emerges: for adults 70 and older, 38% are still using aspirin. That’s important because bleeding risks become more prominent with age.

“The older adults are the most vulnerable since they are at higher risk of bleeding. They take more medications, and that can have more drug interactions with aspirin potentially causing more risk of bleeding,” Parul M. Goyal, MD, an Associate Professor of Medicine and Director of Medicine for Seniors at Vanderbilt University Medical Center who wasn’t affiliated with the study, told Healthline.

The study authors write that their findings have real-world implications; despite changing regulations, there is a disparity or knowledge gap about these changes among patients, particularly older ones. Patients and healthcare providers must have serious conversations about the risks and benefits of daily aspirin use.

“Doctors should engage in risk-benefit discussions with patients using aspirin for primary prevention, especially for adults 60 years of age and older, and discontinue aspirin where appropriate— such as in older patients, those at high bleeding risk,” said Gupta.

Why recommendations for daily aspirin use have changed

A trio of studies in 2018 represented a seismic shift in the perception of aspirin for primary CVD prevention. Those studies, the ASCEND trial, the ASPREE trial, and the ARRIVE trial Trusted Source, looked at the risks and benefits of aspirin in different patient populations, including those with diabetes and the elderly. The trials highlighted the potential danger of bleeding events, especially in otherwise healthy individuals, and helped to reshape aspirin recommendations.

These Foods Rich In Healthy Fats Can Help Lower Bad Cholesterol



Foods rich in healthy fats can help lower LDL (bad) cholesterol. Healthy fats, particularly monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats, can reduce LDL cholesterol levels when they replace saturated and trans fats in the diet. These fats work by lowering the amount of cholesterol absorbed by the body and promoting HDL (good) cholesterol, which helps remove excess LDL from the bloodstream. Additionally, foods high in omega-3 fatty acids (a type of polyunsaturated fat) reduce triglycerides and have anti-inflammatory properties, further supporting heart health and potentially reducing the risk of heart disease. In this article, we share a list of foods rich in healthy fats that can help reduce bad cholesterol levels.

10 Foods rich in healthy fats that can help lower bad cholesterol

1. Avocados
High in monounsaturated fats, avocados help reduce LDL cholesterol and raise HDL levels. They also contain fibre, which further aids cholesterol management by binding to excess LDL and removing it from the body.
2. Olive oil
Extra virgin olive oil is rich in monounsaturated fats and antioxidants, which improve heart health by lowering LDL levels without affecting HDL. Its anti-inflammatory properties also protect blood vessels, reducing heart disease risk.
3. Nuts
Almonds, walnuts, and pistachios are loaded with monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats, which decrease LDL cholesterol. Walnuts, in particular, are high in omega-3 fatty acids, further reducing heart-related inflammation and promoting cardiovascular health.



4. Fatty fish
Salmon, mackerel, and sardines are excellent sources of omega-3 fatty acids, which lower LDL cholesterol, reduce triglycerides, and decrease inflammation. Omega-3s also support the elasticity of blood vessels, enhancing heart health.
 5. Chia seeds
These tiny seeds contain omega-3 fatty acids, fibre, and antioxidants, which together help lower LDL levels. The fibre in chia seeds binds to cholesterol in the digestive system, preventing its absorption.
 6. Flaxseeds
High in both omega-3 fats and fibre, flaxseeds support cholesterol management by reducing LDL levels. They also contain lignans, plant compounds that benefit heart health and may help lower blood pressure.
 7. Dark chocolate
High-quality dark chocolate with at least 70% cocoa contains monounsaturated fats and antioxidants that can improve cholesterol levels. It boosts HDL cholesterol and can lower LDL oxidation, which is beneficial for cardiovascular health.
 8. Coconut oil
Though high in saturated fat, coconut oil has a unique medium-chain fatty acid structure that may raise HDL levels, thereby improving the LDL-HDL balance. Use it in small amounts to prevent excessive saturated fat intake.
 9. Eggs
Egg yolks contain healthy fats and are a source of HDL-boosting nutrients like choline. While they contain cholesterol, studies show that eggs do not significantly raise blood cholesterol levels in most people and may actually improve the LDL-HDL ratio.
 10. Tofu
Made from soybeans, tofu is rich in polyunsaturated fats, which help lower LDL cholesterol. Soy protein, found in tofu, has been shown to reduce cholesterol levels when part of a heart-healthy diet.
- Add these foods to your diet in moderation to reduce bad cholesterol levels and boost your overall health.

Lenovo's 2024 ThinkPad is all set for the AI era



You can’t escape a Lenovo ThinkPad at most airport departure zones and lounges. It’s one of the ultimate symbols for road warriors who get stuff done on the go. Lenovo has given the ThinkPad an AI boost to equip for a whole new era. The Lenovo ThinkPad T14s Gen 6 - AMD is the first-ever x86 Lenovo ThinkPad to feature next-gen AI capabilities with 50 TOPS of processing power.

The big story is under the hood. The ThinkPad T14s AMD Gen 6 is propelled by an AMD Ryzen AI 7 PRO 360 processor, delivering up to 50 TOPS of AI processing power. It’s ideally suited for advanced data analysis and real-time machine learning. It’s paired with an integrated AMD

Radeon 880M GPU. It’s the perfect blend for rendering high-quality visuals, crucial for content creation and other graphics-intensive tasks. And then there’s Windows 11 that further leverages AI for elevated productivity and personalised computing experiences.

Whether you’re a number cruncher or a Content creator, you will appreciate the 14-inch WUXGA display that delivers 400 nits of brightness. Lenovo keeps the screen to body ratio to 88%, making it an immersive display.

This stellar display is backed by over 17 hours of battery life that will please those road warriors who are flitting between airports and multiple client meetings. (Rs 1,38,000 onwards)

'Youth Spiritual Summit' in Varanasi to kick off special drive against drug addiction: Mansukh Mandaviya

Union Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports Mansukh Mandaviya on Monday said that a ‘Youth Spiritual Summit’ will be organised in Varanasi from July 18 to 20, which will mark the beginning of special and intensive drive to free the youngsters of drug addiction and also prepare themselves to become ‘torchbearers of Amrit Kaal’ while shaping their role in the nation-building.

The transformative initiative themed under ‘Nasha Mukti Yuva for Viksit Bharat’ will seek to tap the youth for empowering ‘yuva shakti’ and also fostering a drug-free society. Addressing a press conference in the capital, Mansukh Mandaviya said, “The summit will pave the way for a massive grassroots movement — Jan?Andolan —



to identify the drug sources, eradicate them at the root, and build a drug-free India.” The Union Minister, further underscoring the country’s youth as the “Torchbearers of Amrit?Kaal — the path to a Viksit?Bharat,” said that over 65?per cent of India’s population is under 35, and this makes them the driving force behind the nation’s growth. Echoing Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s visionary call for a Viksit?Bharat by 2047, he emphasised that our young generation must lead from the front, not

only as beneficiaries but as changemakers shaping India’s destiny. He cautioned that substance abuse remains one of the gravest threats confronting the youth today and said that if they get trapped in drug abuse at a young age, this only ruins their future but also impacts national progress. He said that the government has been running a holistic, inclusive, and future-oriented anti-drug campaign in partnership with NGOs, educational institutions, and spiritual organisations to confront the drug menace.

The three-day Summit to be held along the sacred ghats of the River Ganga will see 500 youth delegates drawn from the youth wings of 100 spiritual organisations, who will deliberate and ideate actionable strategies for eradicating drug addiction.

The Summit’s four plenary sessions will cover: understanding addiction and its impact on youth; dismantling peddler networks and commercial interests; effective campaigning and outreach; and charting a comprehensive commitment t o w a r d Nasha?Mukt?Bharat by 2047.

Keynote addresses by experts, moderated panel discussions, and open whiteboard forums will further ensure that every delegate contributes to shaping this national strategy.