EVALUESERVE | IP and R&D

March 2026 Edition

IPRD SPARK

Inside This Edition

Curated insights shaping the future of Intellectual Property and R&D.

Welcome to IPR&D Spark | March Edition

Every breakthrough begins as an idea. But turning that idea into real-world impact requires more than creativity alone—it requires the systems that support, protect, and scale innovation. Intellectual property plays a crucial role in this journey, shaping how ideas move from research labs to industries and markets.

In this edition of **IPR&D Spark**, we bring together developments from across the global IP and technology landscape. From evolving patent policies and landmark legal decisions to emerging technologies transforming industries, each story reflects how innovation continues to reshape the world around us.

Today, breakthroughs rarely happen in isolation. Advances in artificial intelligence influence life sciences, regulatory shifts redefine technology strategies, and discoveries in one field quickly ripple across others.

As innovation accelerates across industries, one question remains:

Are our frameworks for protecting and managing intellectual property evolving at the same pace as the technologies they aim to support?

– Editorial team

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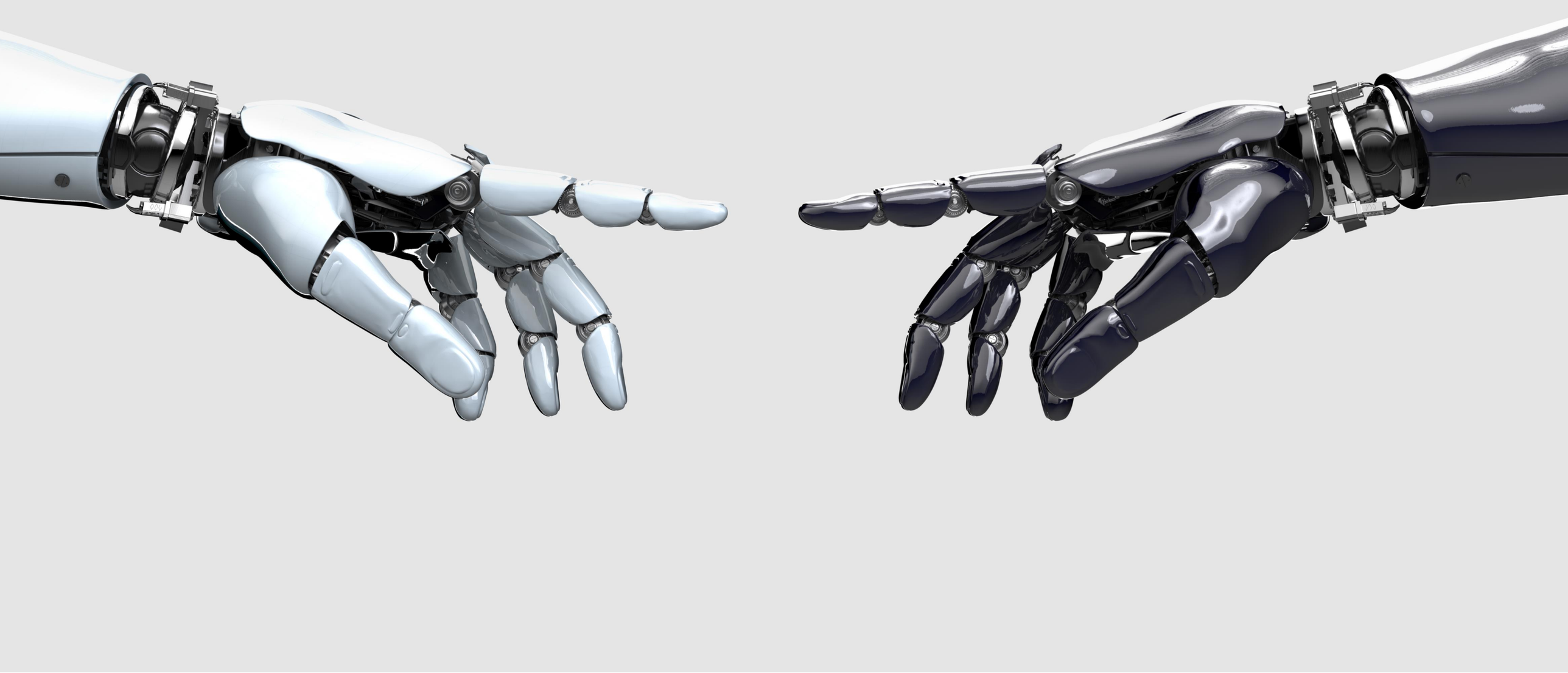


Industry News

Key Industry Developments and Updates

Policy & Patent Updates

USPTO Issues Guidance on Anonymous Requests for Ex Parte Reexamination of Previously Challenged Patents

By: Christy Titus George

Feb' 26: In February 2026, the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) issued guidance addressing anonymous requests for ex parte reexamination involving patents that have previously been challenged through inter partes review (IPR) or post-grant review (PGR) proceedings.

Under the America Invents Act, petitioners in IPR or PGR proceedings—and their real parties in interest or privies—are subject to statutory estoppel provisions that may prevent them from pursuing subsequent USPTO proceedings on grounds that were or could have been raised earlier.

The new notice clarifies that when filing an anonymous reexamination request through a registered practitioner, the requester should include an affirmative statement confirming that the real party in interest is not subject to these estoppel restrictions and identifying the relevant prior IPR or PGR proceedings.

The guidance aims to enhance transparency and ensure compliance with estoppel provisions while preserving the ability to file requests anonymously. (Source).

WIPO Reviews Application for IMPI to Become an International Searching and Examining Authority under the PCT

By: Jitendra Shreemukh

Feb' 26: During the 33rd session of the PCT Committee for Technical Cooperation held in Geneva (February 2–6, 2026), the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) reviewed the application of the Mexican Institute of Industrial Property (IMPI) for appointment as an International Searching Authority (ISA) and International Preliminary Examining Authority (IPEA) under the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT).

If approved by the PCT Assembly, IMPI is expected to begin operations as an ISA/IPEA in January 2027, providing international search and examination services primarily for Spanish-language applications.

The initiative aims to strengthen regional participation in the PCT system and improve access to international patent services for applicants across Latin America and the Caribbean, while supporting the broader decentralization of global patent search and examination resources. (Source).

JPO updates handbook for PCT international search and preliminary examination

By: Dinesh Sharma

Feb' 26: In February 2026, the Japan Patent Office (JPO) released an updated version of its Handbook for PCT International Search and Preliminary Examination, providing detailed guidance on procedures followed by the JPO when acting as an International Searching Authority (ISA) and International Preliminary Examining Authority (IPEA) under the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT).

The January 2026 revision incorporates editorial updates and minor procedural changes reflecting amendments to the PCT Regulations, Administrative Instructions, and guidelines on minimum documentation and prior art.

By outlining the operational criteria and examination practices applied by the JPO, the handbook aims to improve transparency, predictability, and consistency in the handling of international patent applications processed through the office. (Source)

Policy & Patent Updates

USPTO Introduces Opt-In Process for Ceremonial Patent Grant Copies

By: Anuj Raj

Feb’ 26: In February 2026, the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) announced a procedural update introducing an opt-in system for ceremonial copies of patent grants, reflecting the office’s ongoing transition toward fully digital patent issuance.

Since April 2023, the USPTO has issued patents electronically through its eGrant system, while mailing courtesy ceremonial paper copies to applicants. Under the new process, applicable to issue fee payments made on or after March 9, 2026, ceremonial copies will no longer be sent automatically.

Instead, applicants may request one by selecting a dedicated checkbox on the PTOL-85b issue fee transmittal form or via the Patent Center web-based payment interface.

The change is intended to improve administrative efficiency, reduce costs, and minimize paper waste while maintaining the availability of commemorative patent copies for applicants who request them. (Source).

Legal Watch

Key Legal Developments in the IP Landscape

Landmark IP Rulings

Ericsson sues Acer over 4G, 5G wireless patent licensing

By: Divya Arora

Feb' 26: Ericsson has filed a lawsuit in Delaware federal court against Acer, seeking a declaration that it does not infringe Acer's patents tied to 4G and 5G wireless standards.

The Swedish telecom giant argued that Acer failed to meet its obligation to license standard-essential patents on fair, reasonable, and non-discriminatory (FRAND) terms and had threatened litigation.

The move follows Acer's recent lawsuit in Texas federal court against Ericsson's customers Verizon, T-Mobile, and AT&T, accusing them of infringing Acer's patents through their use of Ericsson's cellular base stations.

Ericsson's complaint said Acer's actions signaled an imminent threat of a direct infringement suit against Ericsson's equipment. Source

UK Supreme Court Sets Landmark Ruling on AI and Software Patents

By: Divya Arora

Feb' 26: The UK Supreme Court has issued a landmark judgment on AI and software patentability in *Emotional Perception v. Comptroller General of Patents, Designs and Trademarks*. The Court held that the long-standing Aerotel four-step test for assessing patent eligibility should no longer be followed. Under Aerotel, claims were construed, contributions identified, exclusions considered, and technicality checked.

Applying this framework, the UKIPO had rejected a patent for an ANN-based system that recommended semantically similar media files, ruling it fell within the computer program exclusion. The High Court later overturned that decision in 2023, finding the invention was not excluded under the UK Patents Act 1977, which bars patents for business methods and computer programs "as such."

However, the Court of Appeal reversed in 2024, siding with the UKIPO. Emotional Perception then appealed to the Supreme Court, which has now clarified the law, signaling a major shift in how AI and software inventions will be assessed for patentability in the UK going forward. Source

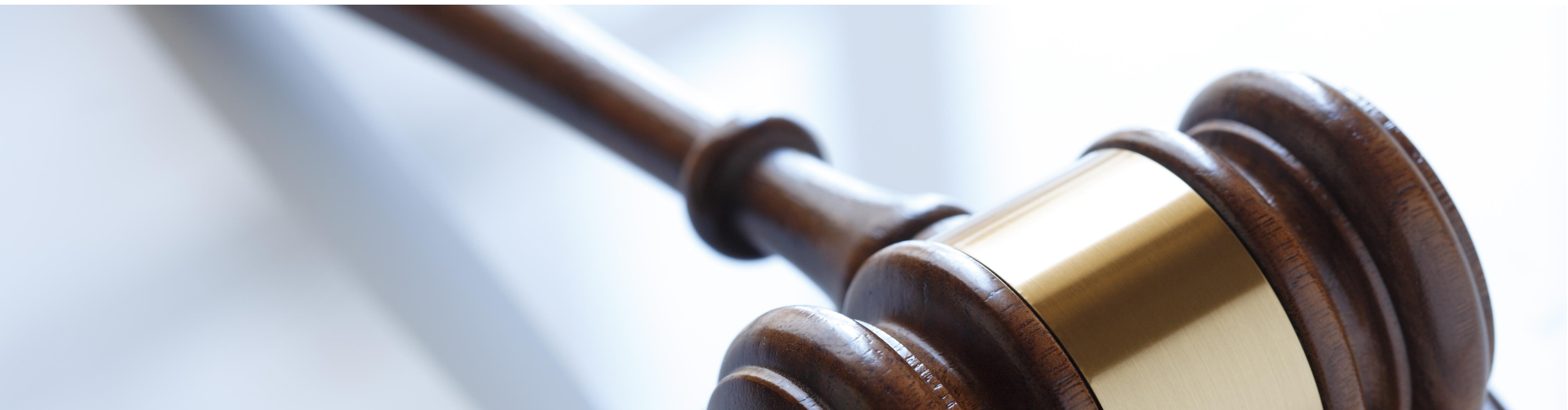
Apple's Texas trial win over Optis has implications for UK Supreme Court hearing in June/July: 500M-300M-zero – February 13, 2026

By: Rahul Bhattacharya

Feb' 26: A jury in the Eastern District of Texas cleared Apple of infringement of all five patents-in-suit. As a result, Optis is not entitled to any payment from Apple under U.S. law.

The summary notes that a significant development for the ongoing legal battle between Apple and Optis Wireless Technology, a federal jury in Marshall, Texas, delivered a complete defense verdict on February 12, 2026, finding that Apple did not infringe any of the five patents-in-suit. This outcome marks a decisive reversal for Optis, as it effectively shields

Apple from the massive financial damages—previously reaching as high as $506 million and $300 million in earlier, now-vacated trials—and casts doubt on the strength of Optis's current licensing strategy. While this U.S. victory offers Apple substantial relief, the broader conflict remains complex, particularly as Optis continues its efforts in the United Kingdom to secure a global FRAND royalty rate, with a pivotal UK Supreme Court hearing slated for mid-2026. Source



Landmark IP Rulings

U.S. Patent and Trademark Office and Department of Justice reaffirm importance of injunctions to protect Innovation filing a statement of interest – 27 February 2026

By: Rahul Bhattacharya

Feb' 26: The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) and the Department of Justice Antitrust Division (DoJ) filed a statement of interest in Collision Communications, Inc. v. Samsung Electronics Co., et al. in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Texas. The statement concerns the grant of injunctions in patent proceedings, and whether non-practicing entities can be awarded injunctions.

By emphasizing that patents are unique assets whose value is inherently difficult to calculate, the statement challenges the assumption that monetary damages are an adequate substitute for the "right to exclude," particularly when future royalties are speculative.

For litigators managing nationwide portfolios, this intervention helps calibrate arguments on appeal and anticipate how similar fact patterns—where "efficient infringement" is a defense—might fare before the Federal Circuit.

It also flags a burgeoning policy trend that could reshape licensing negotiations and settlement strategies, as the government seeks to ensure that research-heavy firms maintain strong enforcement leverage in parallel with district court infringement proceedings. Source

Techno Spotlight

Breakthroughs Shaping the Future of Technology

Chemicals & Material

Breakthrough Device Could Slash Ethylene's Massive Carbon Footprint

By: Rachna Gupta

Feb' 26: In a new study from Northwestern University, Ted Sargent's team reports an electrolyzer designed to push ethylene production toward a cleaner model by linking waste and renewable electricity. The device uses electricity to turn syngas into ethylene. Syngas is a mixture of carbon monoxide and hydrogen that can be made by gasifying plastic waste.

The new electrolyzer has three innovations. It uses electricity to create ethylene from syngas; a waste gas produced from plastic. It uses a novel material to help catalyze the reaction. And it does so in an efficient way reducing the overall energy needed for the system. (Source)

New Calcium-Ion Battery Could Challenge Lithium for Clean Energy

By: Rachna Gupta

Feb' 26: Scientists at The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology have unveiled a major advance in calcium-ion battery technology that could reshape the future of clean energy storage. The team has reported a major advance in calcium-ion battery (CIB) development that could influence how energy is stored in everyday technologies.

By integrating quasi-solid-state electrolytes (QSSEs), scientists created a new type of CIB designed to improve both performance and environmental sustainability. The innovation could support renewable energy storage, electric vehicles, and other power-hungry applications. (Source)

Scientists Finally Solve a 30-Year-Old Cancer Mystery Hidden in Rye Pollen

By: Rachna Gupta

Feb' 26: Nearly 30 years after rye pollen molecules were shown to slow tumor growth in animals, scientists have finally determined their exact three-dimensional structures. Researchers noticed something surprising in rye pollen: two naturally occurring molecules seemed to slow tumor growth in animal studies.

The finding drew interest, but the science hit a wall because no one could pin down a crucial detail that determines how a compound behaves in the body: its exact three-dimensional shape. Chemists at Northwestern University now report that they have solved that long running structural puzzle. By assembling the molecules step by step in the lab, the team confirmed the true 3D structures of secalosides A and B. (Source).

A Shimmering Liquid Metal Could Unlock the Future of Green Hydrogen

By: Rachna Gupta

Feb' 26: A new liquid-metal process powered by light could reshape how hydrogen is produced. Scientists have found a new way to make clean hydrogen from water using liquid metal and light, and it works with both freshwater and seawater.

Instead of relying on electricity to split water, the process uses sunlight to trigger chemistry at the surface of tiny metal droplets, releasing hydrogen gas. (Source).

Key M&A/Strategic Alliances

Feb' 26:

- **Asahi Kasei** acquires **Aicuris** for €780 Million. (Source).
- **UPM** and the **University of Eastern Finland** to collaborate (Source).
- **Holcim** invests in Capsol to scale its advanced carbon capture technology. (Source).

Australia Launches World-First Personalized mRNA Vaccines for Childhood Brain Cancer

By: Aparajita Basu

Feb’ 26: : Australia has launched PaedNEO-VAX, a world-first clinical trial using personalized mRNA vaccines to treat children with aggressive or treatment-resistant brain tumors. Backed by a $2.578 million government investment, the trial is led by The University of Queensland and SAHMRI, with Providence Therapeutics providing mRNA technology.

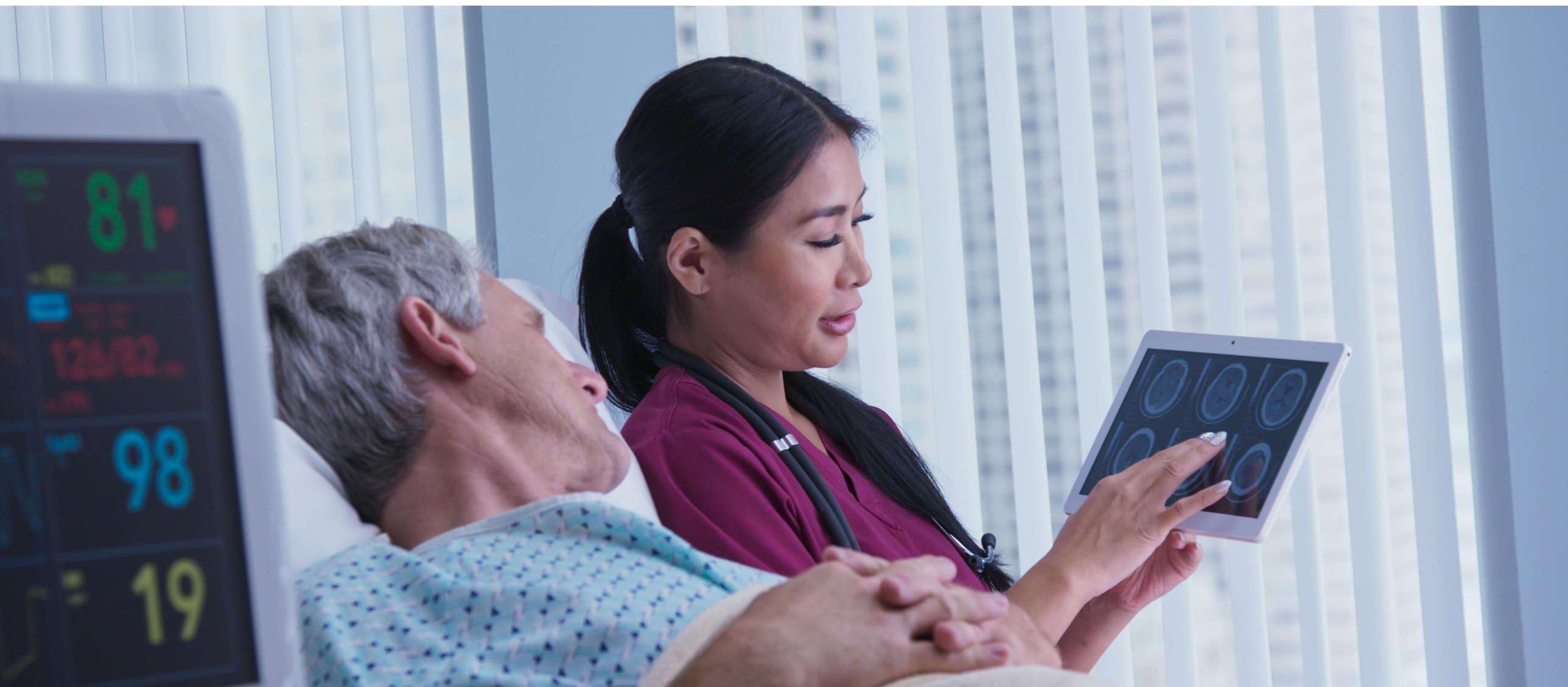
Running across eight pediatric hospitals, it will offer customized vaccines tailored to each child’s tumor. According to clinical lead Professor Jordan Hansford, Phase I will assess safe dosing, while Phase II will evaluate tumor-control and quality-of-life outcomes. Brain tumors remain the leading cause of disease-related death in Australian children. (Source).

China Achieves Breakthrough Stem-Cell Reversal of Diabetes

By: Aparajita Basu

Feb’ 26: Chinese researchers have achieved a breakthrough by using stem cell therapy to reverse both type 1 and type 2 diabetes, shifting treatment from long-term management to potential cure.

In a key case, lab-grown insulin-producing pancreatic cells were transplanted into a patient with type 2 diabetes, allowing them to stop insulin and medication entirely. Another earlier case showed a type 1 patient producing insulin naturally for over a year after receiving reprogrammed islet cells. While the results offer hope for millions worldwide, researchers caution that larger clinical trials are needed to confirm long-term safety and effectiveness. (Source).



Life Sciences

OrthoQA: A RAG-Powered AI Tool Transforming Orthodontic Education

By: Deepak Kumar

Feb’ 26: OrthoQA, a retrieval-augmented AI tool built from 18 orthodontic textbooks to deliver accurate, citation-backed answers for orthodontic education. Using the University of Florida’s NaviGator and HiPerGator infrastructure, OrthoQA improves factual completeness and contextual precision compared to non-RAG models.

Benchmarking identified GPT-4o and Claude-3.5-Sonnet as the strongest overall models, while OrthoQA’s performance was comparable to ChatGPT-4o and LLaMA-3.1-70B in expert evaluations.

Designed for secure academic environments, OrthoQA offers a reliable, domain-specific alternative to unrestricted general-purpose AI tools. (Source)

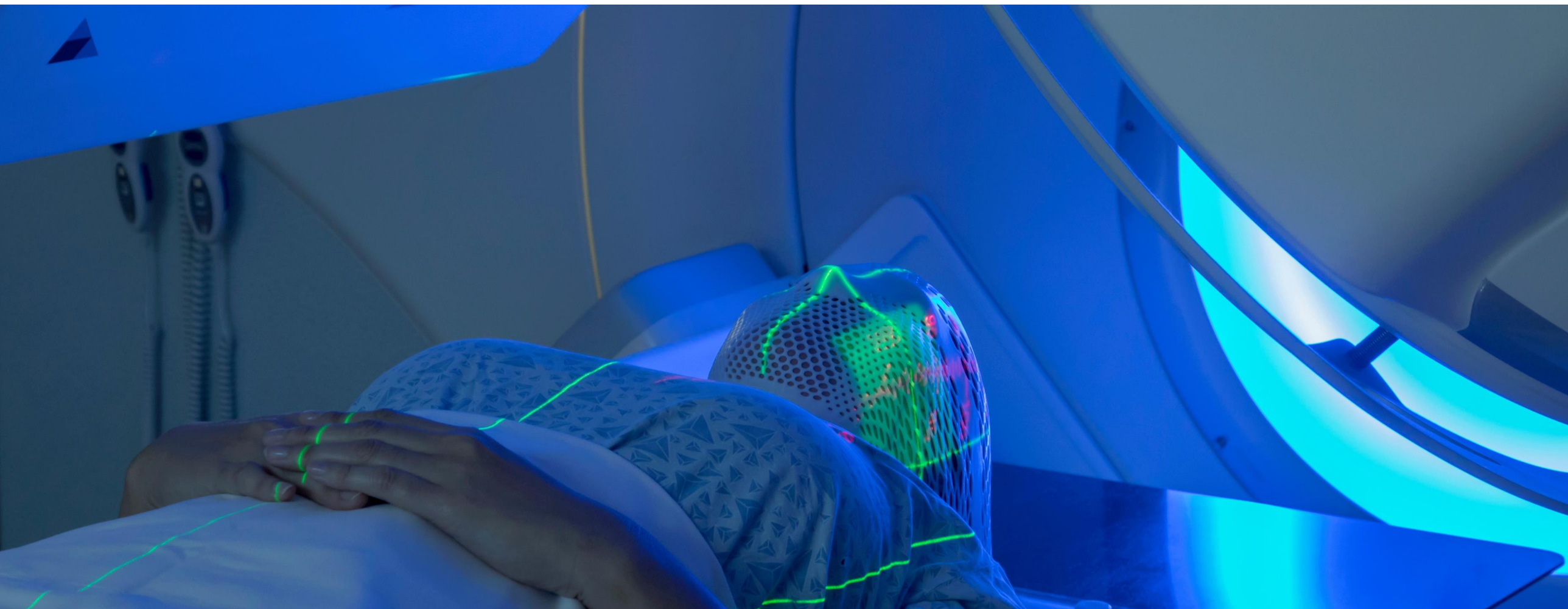
MIT Unveils Portable Ultrasound Sensor for Early Breast Cancer Detection

By: Ashmita Bera

Feb’ 26: MIT researchers have developed a portable ultrasound sensor that could enable more frequent breast-cancer screening for people at high risk. The system includes a compact ultrasound probe and a low-cost processing module, producing real-time 3D images when connected to a laptop.

Unlike traditional bulky machines, the device is affordable, lightweight, and requires minimal operator skill, making it suitable for clinics, rural settings, and potentially home use.

Early tests showed accurate imaging of breast cysts, and ongoing clinical trials aim to refine the technology further. Future versions may integrate with smartphones and evolve into a fully wearable screening tool. (Source)



Hi-Tech

New Method Doubles LLM Training Speed Using Idle Compute

By: Atul Kumar Pal

Feb’ 26: Researchers from MIT and collaborators have developed a method to enhance the training efficiency of large language models (LLMs) by utilizing idle computational resources. LLMs, known for their prowess in complex tasks like advanced programming and multistep planning, require significant computation and energy.

The new approach involves training a smaller, faster model to predict the outputs of the larger reasoning LLM, which the larger model then verifies. This adaptive system activates the smaller model only when processors are idle, thus accelerating the training process without additional overhead.

The method has demonstrated the ability to double training speed while maintaining accuracy, potentially reducing costs and improving energy efficiency for applications such as financial forecasting and risk detection in power grids. (Source)

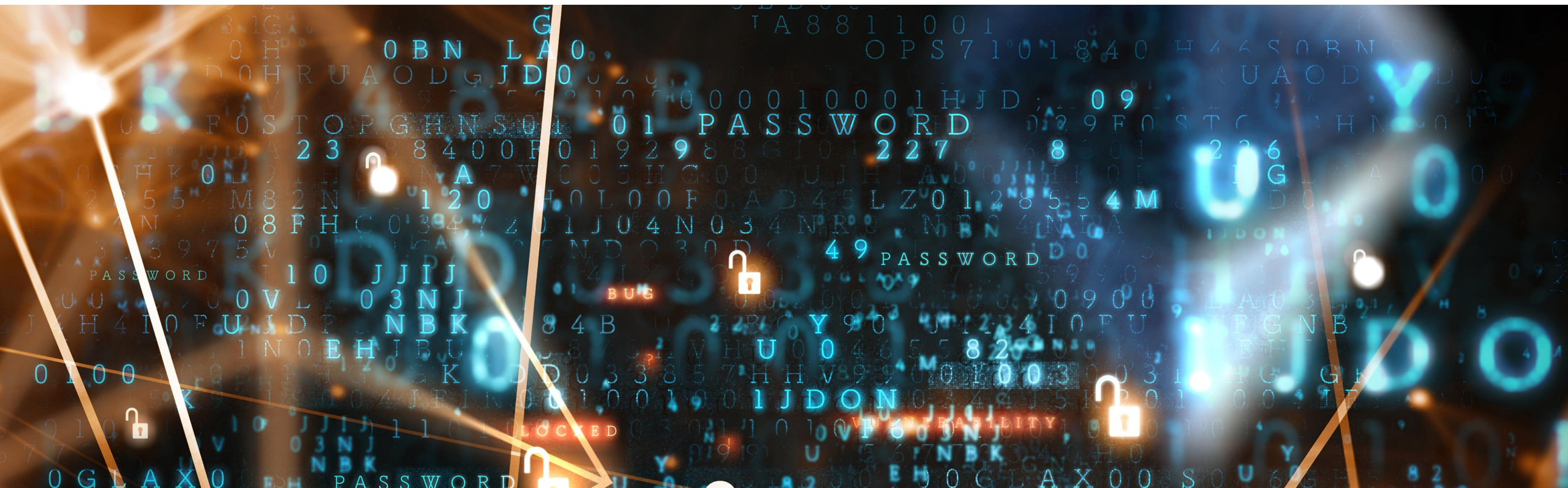
Chip-Level Progress for Future Cryptography

By: Atul Kumar Pal

Feb’ 26: MIT engineers have developed a new manufacturing method that enables secure, fingerprint-based authentication for CMOS chips without relying on external storage. Because every chip naturally contains tiny variations from the fabrication process, each one carries a unique “fingerprint” that can be used for device authentication.

The new approach splits a specially designed chip during fabrication so that both halves share the same unique fingerprint, allowing them to authenticate each other directly.

This removes the need for storing security data on third-party servers, reducing potential vulnerabilities and computational overhead.
Compatible with standard CMOS manufacturing and requiring no special materials, the technique could be particularly valuable for power-constrained systems—such as ingestible medical sensors paired with wearable monitoring devices—that need secure communication without intermediary systems. (Source)



Hi-Tech

AI-Enhanced Soft Robots Gain Human-Like Motion Adaptability

By: Chandandeep Kaur

Feb’ 26:A new AI control system enables soft robotic arms to learn multiple tasks once and adapt to new scenarios without retraining, bringing them closer to human-like adaptability. This makes them more versatile, reliable, and suitable for applications in assistive robotics, rehabilitation, and wearable medical devices.

By overcoming limitations in adaptability and stability, the system allows robots to transfer skills across tasks, respond to changing conditions, and operate safely—reducing downtime and costs in industries such as manufacturing, logistics, inspection, and healthcare.

In medical settings, these robots can adjust to patients’ needs, improving outcomes. Researchers aim to scale the technology for more complex environments and faster operations, with potential use in industrial automation and autonomous systems.(Source)

Physics-Integrated Generative AI Enhances Real-World 3D Design

By: Atul Kumar Pal

Feb’ 26: MIT researchers have developed **PhysiOpt**, a physics-integrated generative AI system that enhances real-world 3D design using a pre-trained model familiar with thousands of shapes. Unlike traditional approaches, it leverages “shape priors” to generate accurate 3D models without additional training.

This enables faster and more realistic design creation, up to **10× faster per iteration** than comparable methods like DiffIPC—bridging the gap between concept and physical products such as custom-designed items.
Future developments aim to incorporate vision-language models, allowing PhysiOpt to predict constraints like loads and boundaries, further simplifying and automating the design process.
(Source).

Nestlé to sell off remainder of ice cream business

By: Simmi Kapoor

Feb' 26: Nestlé announced it was in talks to sell its remaining in-house ice cream business, adding to planned disposals of water and vitamin assets as CEO Philipp Navratil pushes to streamline the sprawling Swiss consumer food giant.

Nestle had already handed the reins of its European and U.S. ice cream units to Haagen-Dazs owner Froneri, a joint venture it established with European buyout firm PAI Partners in 2016.

It is now in advanced talks to sell ice cream businesses with around 1 billion Swiss francs ($1.3 billion) in annual sales in Canada, Chile, Peru, Malaysia, China and Thailand to Froneri, including brands KitKat ice cream and Coffee Crisp. (Source).

Nestlé Launches Vital Line to Support "Smart Aging" for Adults 40+

By: Akshyansh Kumar

Feb' 26: Nestlé has introduced Nestlé Vital, a new line of science-backed beverage powders designed to support energy, muscle strength, cognitive function, sleep quality, and recovery for adults over 40.

The range features a dual-routine system—morning shakes for focus and energy, and evening shakes for rest and muscle repair. Nestlé says demand for healthy-aging solutions is rising as half of the global population will be over 40 by 2040.

Positioned within the company's global "Smart Aging" initiative, Nestlé Vital launches first in Latin America and will roll out to Europe and Asia next. (Source).

Consumer Goods

Tide Unveils World-First Laundry Breakthrough: Introducing Tide evo, the Fiber-Detergent Tile

By: Simmi Kapoor

Feb’ 26: : Tide®, P&G's trusted laundry detergent brand, launched Tide evo, a 100% concentrated, waterless tile with six cleaning layers, Tide is introducing an entirely new product format that addresses modern consumers’ everyday laundry needs and preferences.

Tide evo activates instantly in cold water, leveraging cleaning technologies like all-in-one scrubbers, pre-treaters, brighteners and fresheners, all with no fillers, no extra water and no plastic bottles.

The launch of Tide evo responds to the demand of more from laundry care products in the U.S., driven by a growing focus on cleanliness and hygiene, more frequent washing, and a rising demand for innovative products consumers can feel good using. (Source).

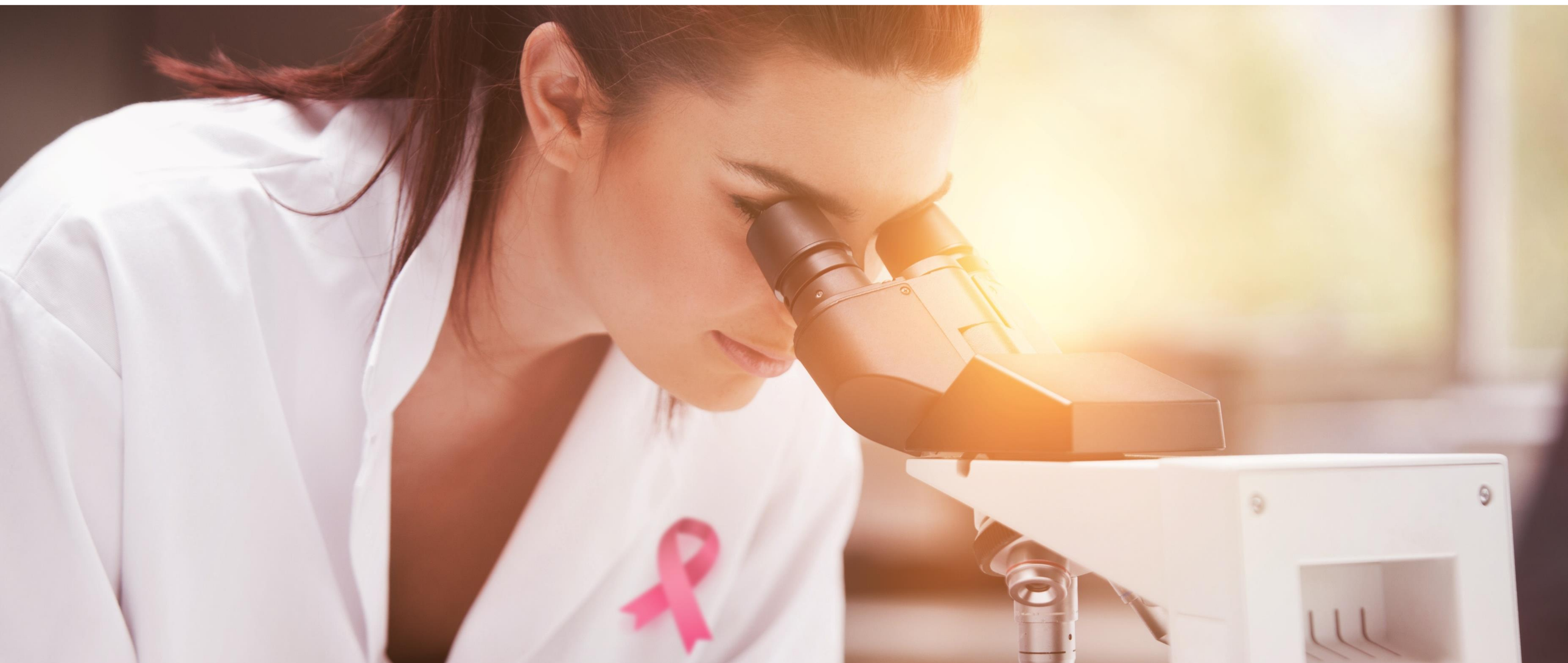
Danone Pushes for Nutrition to Become a Standard Part of Cancer Treatment

By: Akshyansh Kumar

Feb’ 26: Danone has partnered with the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC) to advocate for medical nutrition as a core component of cancer care rather than an optional add-on.

With up to 70% of cancer patients experiencing malnutrition, leading to poorer outcomes and up to 40% of related deaths, Danone highlights that integrating nutritional support into oncology protocols could save Europe an estimated €17 billion annually by reducing complications and improving treatment tolerance.

The company is also advancing its “Working with Cancer Pledge,” while its Nutricia brand continues to offer tailored nutritional solutions supported by digital tools and educational resources for patients, caregivers, and healthcare professionals. (Source).



FDA Updates Menopausal Hormone Therapy Labels, Removes Boxed Safety Warnings

By: Basharat Ahmed Sofi

Feb' 26: The US FDA has approved labeling updates for six menopausal hormone therapy (HRT) products, removing longstanding boxed warnings related to cardiovascular disease, breast cancer, and probable dementia.

The change follows reassessment of evidence from the Women's Health Initiative study and newer clinical data indicating benefits when HRT is initiated within 10 years of menopause.

The update applies to therapies across multiple categories, including systemic estrogen, progestogen, and vaginal estrogen products, and aims to improve access to scientifically informed treatment options for menopausal symptoms (Source).

Danone Pushes for Nutrition to Become a Standard Part of Cancer Treatment

By: Kritesh Parihar

Feb' 26: Danone has partnered with the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC) to advocate for medical nutrition as a core component of cancer care. With up to **70% of cancer patients experiencing malnutrition**, contributing to poorer outcomes and up to **40% of related deaths**, the company highlights that integrating nutritional support into oncology protocols could save Europe an estimated **€17 billion annually**.

Danone is also advancing its "Working with Cancer Pledge," while its Nutricia brand—including products like Fortimel—provides tailored nutritional solutions supported by digital tools and educational resources for patients, caregivers, and healthcare professionals.(Source).

IMDRF Releases Reliance Playbook and Standardized Adverse Event Terminology Framework

By: Latika Sharma

Feb' 26: The International Medical Device Regulators Forum (IMDRF) has released two guidance documents to enhance global medical device regulation.

A new regulatory reliance playbook outlines how authorities can leverage assessments by trusted regulators to streamline reviews, reduce duplication, and optimize resources.

In parallel, an informational document standardizes adverse event terminologies, providing structured coding systems to harmonize reporting, reduce ambiguity, and improve early detection of safety signals across jurisdictions (Source1;.Source2).

ICH Finalizes Hormonized M15 Guideline to Standardize Model-Informed Drug Development

By: Mayank Kakkar

Feb' 26: The International Council for Hormonization (ICH) has adopted the M15 guideline on model-informed drug development (MIDD), reaching Step 4 and becoming ready for global implementation.

The guideline establishes harmonized principles for using mathematical and statistical models to support drug development and regulatory decision-making. It outlines expectations for model evaluation, documentation, and regulatory submissions, while assessing model influence, risk, and consequences of incorrect decisions.

By standardizing MIDD practices such as PBPK, exposure-response modeling, and AI-based approaches, the guideline aims to improve development efficiency and reduce unnecessary patient exposure (Source).

FDA Proposes ‘Plausible Mechanism Framework’ for Individualized Therapies Targeting Rare Genetic Conditions

By: Kritika Sharma

Feb’ 26: The US FDA has proposed a draft guidance introducing a “plausible mechanism” pathway to support the development of individualized therapies for ultra-rare diseases.

The framework allows approval of treatments targeting specific genetic or molecular abnormalities when randomized controlled trials are impractical. Evidence may include a single well-controlled clinical investigation supported by natural history data and a mechanistic rationale.

The approach is particularly relevant for genome editing and RNA-based therapies and could enable master protocols covering multiple mutations within a single gene, potentially accelerating development and regulatory review of highly targeted treatments (Source).

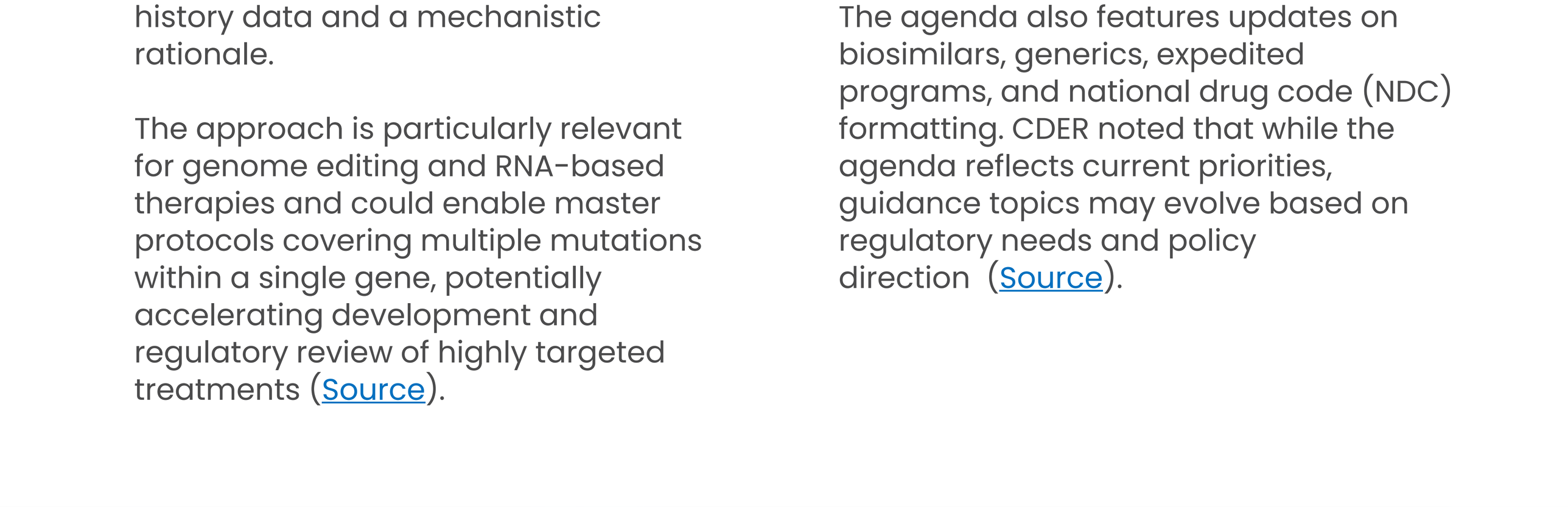
FDA CDER Guidance Agenda Signals Focus on Digital Health and AI-Enabled Pharmaceutical Manufacturing

By: Basharat Ahmed Sofi

Feb’ 26: The US FDA’s Center for Drug Evaluation and Research (CDER) has released its 2026 guidance agenda, outlining 81 planned guidance documents across 12 regulatory areas.

Key priorities include new guidance on the use of digital health technologies in clinical investigations and the application of artificial intelligence and machine learning in pharmaceutical manufacturing quality systems.

The agenda also features updates on biosimilars, generics, expedited programs, and national drug code (NDC) formatting. CDER noted that while the agenda reflects current priorities, guidance topics may evolve based on regulatory needs and policy direction (Source).



Chemical Safety & Regulatory Affairs

EMA Presented EudraLex GMP Update to Strengthen Control of Nitrosamine Impurities

By: Jiju Narayanan

Feb' 26: The European Medicines Agency (EMA) has proposed revising Annex 15 of the EU EudraLex GMP framework to strengthen controls against nitrosamine impurities in active substances.

The update would make Annex 15 requirements mandatory for all chemical and biologically active substance manufacturers, emphasizing robust validation, change control, supplier qualification, and oversight of outsourced activities.

The proposal also reinforces process knowledge, risk-based validation, and quality management to prevent contamination, reflecting lessons learned from nitrosamine findings in sartan medicines (Source).

Automobile, e-mobility, and Mechanical

This Hybrid Engine Prototype Promises New Levels Of Efficiency

By: Nitesh Kumar

Feb’ 26: Horse Powertrain has introduced the H12 Concept hybrid engine, boasting a peak brake thermal efficiency of 44.2 percent and up to 71 miles per gallon combined.

The engine features a 17:1 compression ratio, runs on 100-percent renewable fuel, and includes advanced systems like EGR, turbocharger, and ignition. Production is underway. (Source).

China Is Banning The 'Yoke' Steering Wheel

By: Nitesh Kumar

Feb’ 26: The Chinese government plans to ban yoke-style steering wheels starting January 1, 2027, citing safety concerns.

The new regulations will replace the decade-old standard and require impact testing at specific points on the steering wheel rim, which yoke-style wheels lack. This follows China’s recent ban on hidden electric door handles.(Source).

Stellantis Is Bringing Back Diesel Due To 'Customer Demand’

By: Sachin Patel

Feb’ 26: Stellantis is reviving diesel engines in Europe, responding to customer demand despite declining diesel sales.

The automaker will reintroduce diesel options in at least seven models, including Opel, Peugeot, Citroën, DS 7, and Alfa Romeo vehicles.

This move aims to differentiate Stellantis amid strong competition from Chinese electric vehicle manufacturers. (Source).

China Has A Plan To Avoid European Tariffs: Team Up With Ford

By: Sachin Patel

Feb’ 26: To avoid European tariffs, China plans to collaborate with Ford.

This strategic partnership aims to leverage Ford’s established presence in Europe, facilitating smoother market entry and reducing tariff impacts for Chinese automotive products. (Source).

Standard Essential Patents

Standard Essential Patent (SEP) Landscape

Japan Introduces New Mediation Framework for Global FRAND Disputes

By: Jitendra Shreemukh

Feb' 26: Japan is emerging as a new venue for resolving global SEP disputes after introducing procedures allowing courts to recommend non-binding global FRAND royalty rates during mediation.

The mechanism aims to reduce lengthy cross-border litigation between SEP holders and implementers. Historically, Japanese courts relied heavily on the top-down methodology for royalty valuation, but the new framework allows greater flexibility, including comparable license analysis.

The development may influence global SEP litigation strategies and increase Japan's role in international FRAND dispute resolution.
(Source).

InterDigital Expands Patent Offensive with New CDN Patent Suit Against Amazon

By: Jitendra Shreemukh

Feb' 26: InterDigital intensified its enforcement strategy by filing a new patent lawsuit against Amazon in the United States, asserting patents related to content delivery networks (CDN) that were acquired from a bankrupt technology company.

The patents reportedly relate to network delivery and streaming infrastructure technologies used to distribute digital media at scale. This new case adds another layer to the companies' ongoing global SEP dispute covering video compression and streaming technologies.

The move reflects InterDigital's broader strategy of targeting streaming platforms and digital media providers as licensing opportunities beyond traditional smartphone markets.
(Source).

Ericsson Launches First IoT SEP Enforcement Action at the Unified Patent Court

By: Jitendra Shreemukh

Feb' 26: Ericsson initiated one of the first IoT-related SEP enforcement actions at the Unified Patent Court (UPC) by filing a lawsuit against payment technology company Verifone.

The case involves patents essential to cellular connectivity standards used in IoT devices and payment terminals. Ericsson has requested the court to determine whether its licensing offer meets FRAND requirements.

The case reflects a growing trend of SEP enforcement extending beyond smartphones into sectors such as industrial IoT, connected devices, and fintech hardware. (Source).

Two Chinese Automotive Firms Join VIA's Qi Wireless Charging SEP Patent Pool

By: Jitendra Shreemukh

Feb' 26: VIA Licensing Alliance announced that Huizhou Longcheer Automotive Electronics and Huizhou Desay SV Automotive have become new licensees of its Qi Wireless Power patent pool.

The pool provides access to a large portfolio of standard-essential patents (SEPs) covering the Qi wireless charging standard, widely used in smartphones and automotive wireless charging systems. (Source).

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