

# THE STRATEGIC EVOLUTION OF INDIA'S



PHARMA &  
HEALTHCARE  
COMPANIES  
*in the Next Decade*

## *Executive Summary*

India's pharmaceutical and healthcare companies are entering the coming decade not only from a position of strength, but also with a clear intention to evolve.

At WalkWater, we feel this is an inflection point worth watching closely. Over the last 15 years, through our executive search lens working with players across the sector, we have observed the industry's centre of gravity has shifted steadily. Indian pharma and healthcare companies are growing globally and at the same time are becoming more deliberate about where and how they will play in the global value chain.

The industry is now reshaping itself into a globally integrated, strategically diversified ecosystem.

# Economic backbone of a nation

India's pharma sector remains one of the country's most important industrial sectors.

The sector also anchors a meaningful share of GDP and sustains millions of direct and indirect jobs across manufacturing, packaging, logistics, distribution, and allied healthcare supply chains.

## India's Pharma Industry: Growth Outlook to 2030

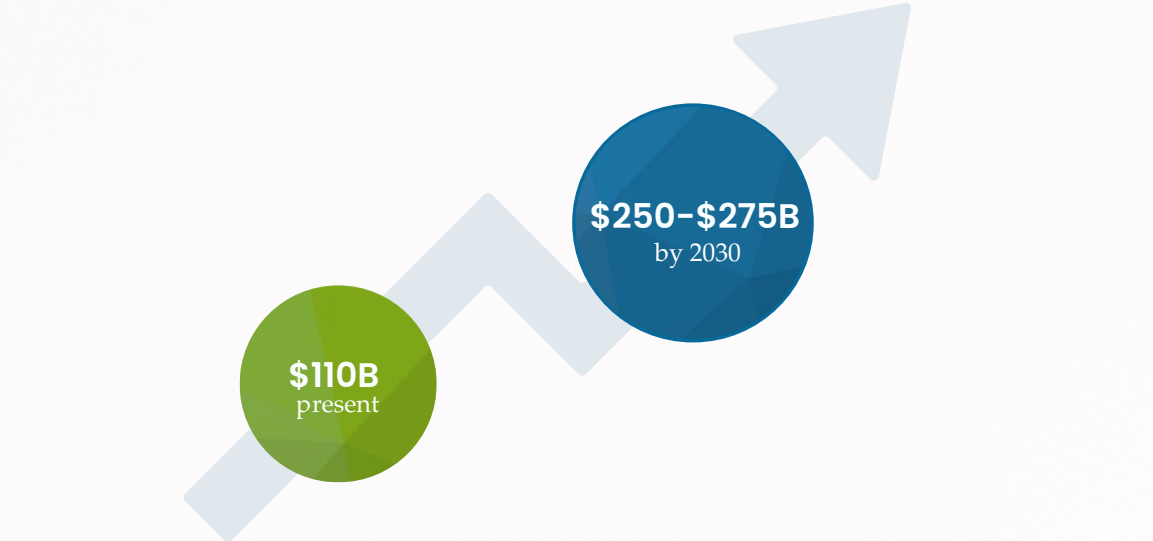
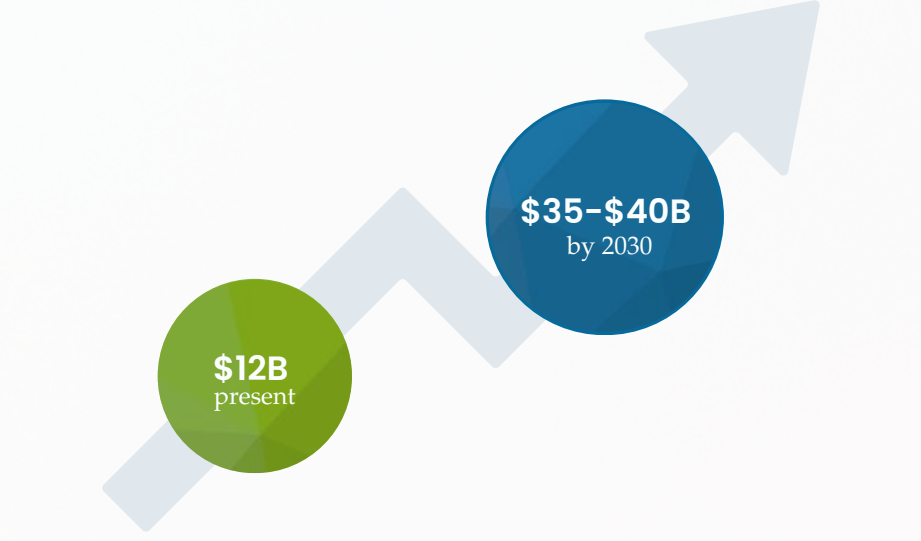
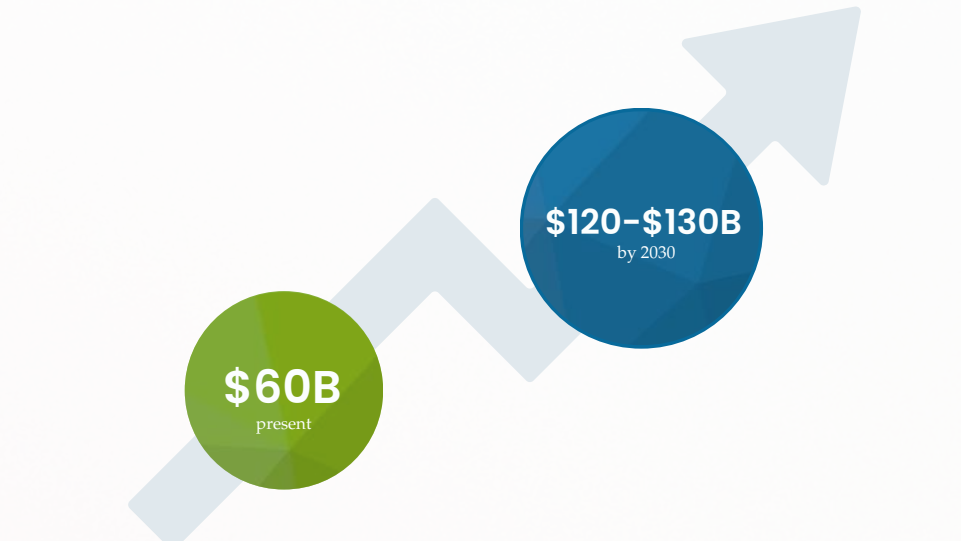
The Pharma sector is expected to grow from USD 60 B -> USD 120-130 B, driven by exports, biosimilars, and specialty formulations.

## India's MedTech: Growth Outlook to 2030

The Medtech devices sector is expected to growing from USD 12 B » USD 35-40 B, led by domestic manufacturing, device innovation, and PLI incentives.

## India's Healthcare Services: Growth Outlook to 2030

The Healthcare Services sector is expected to grow from from USD 110 B » USD 250-275 B, propelled by hospital expansion, diagnostics, and digital health.



### Key Drivers

-  **Export Boom**  
Global Generics & Vaccine Demand

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-  **Innovation Focus**  
Biosimilars & Speciality Drugs

### Key Drivers

-  **Local Manufacturing**  
Made in India Devices

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-  **Innovation Focus**  
Advanced Technologies

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-  **PLI Incentives**  
Government Support

### Key Drivers

-  **Hospital Expansion**  
New facilities & Bed Capacities

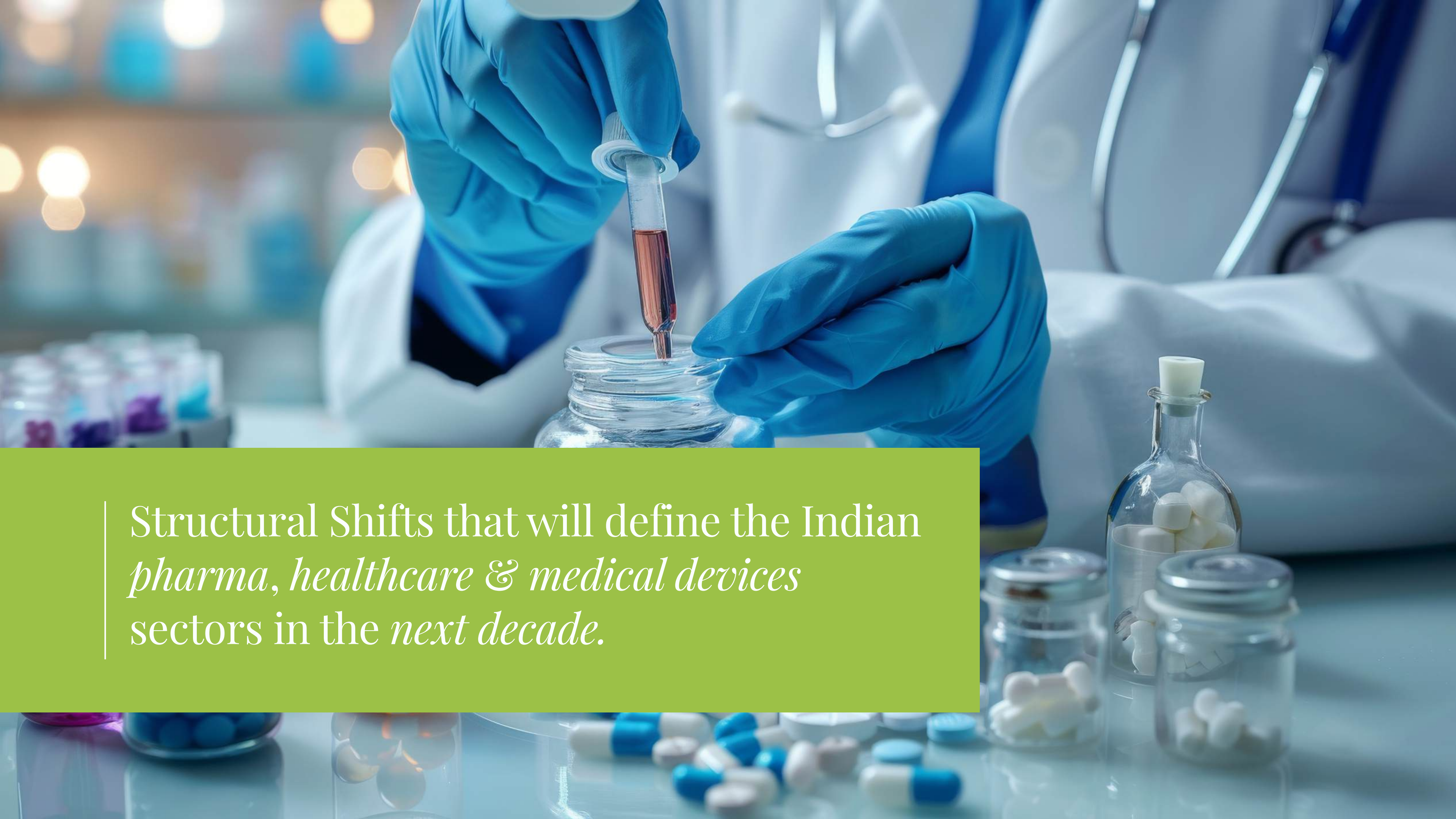
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-  **Diagnostics & Telehealth**  
Labs & Digital Care

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-  **Preventive Care**  
Insurance & Wellness





Structural Shifts that will define the Indian  
*pharma, healthcare & medical devices*  
sectors in the *next decade*.

## WalkWater believes the following Six structural shifts are defining the next decade:



An aerial photograph of a large container ship sailing on the ocean, viewed from the stern. The ship is heavily loaded with colorful shipping containers in shades of red, blue, yellow, and white. The ship's white superstructure and bridge are visible at the top of the frame. The ocean is a deep blue with visible ripples and a wake behind the ship. A semi-transparent dark blue overlay covers the bottom left portion of the image, containing text.

*Structural Shift 1*

Indian pharma  
looking west

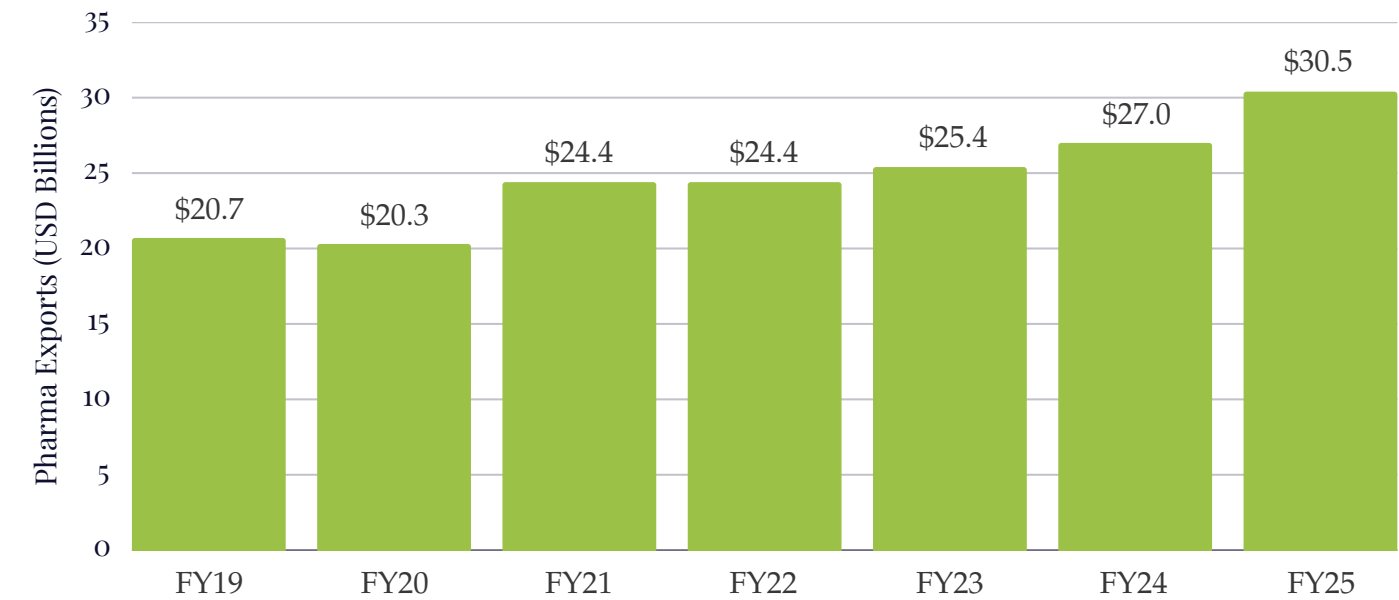
## Structural Shift 1 Indian pharma looking west

*A defining feature of the current cycle is the westward expansion of Indian pharma.*

Large Indian companies are not just exporting more products; they are building physical footprints overseas. They see the value of embedding themselves within regulated markets through acquisitions, while also using greenfield or subsidiary-led models to expand in high-growth geographies. This hybrid approach has become increasingly visible across the sector and is part of a broader strategy to be closer to the market, reduce concentration risk, and build greater resilience in supply chains.

## India Pharma Export Growth

Strong and consistent growth in pharma exports over the years, reaching a record high in FY25



Source: Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government of India

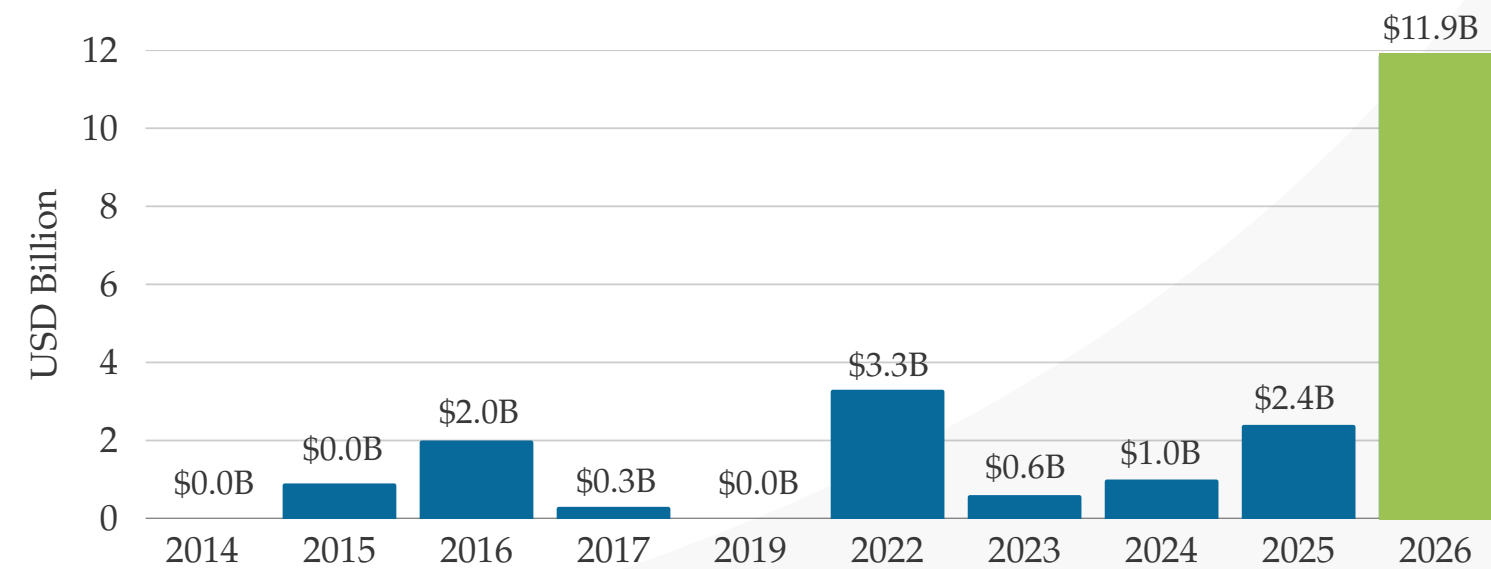


Indian pharma exports have grown at a **CAGR of 8.1%** (FY19 - FY25)

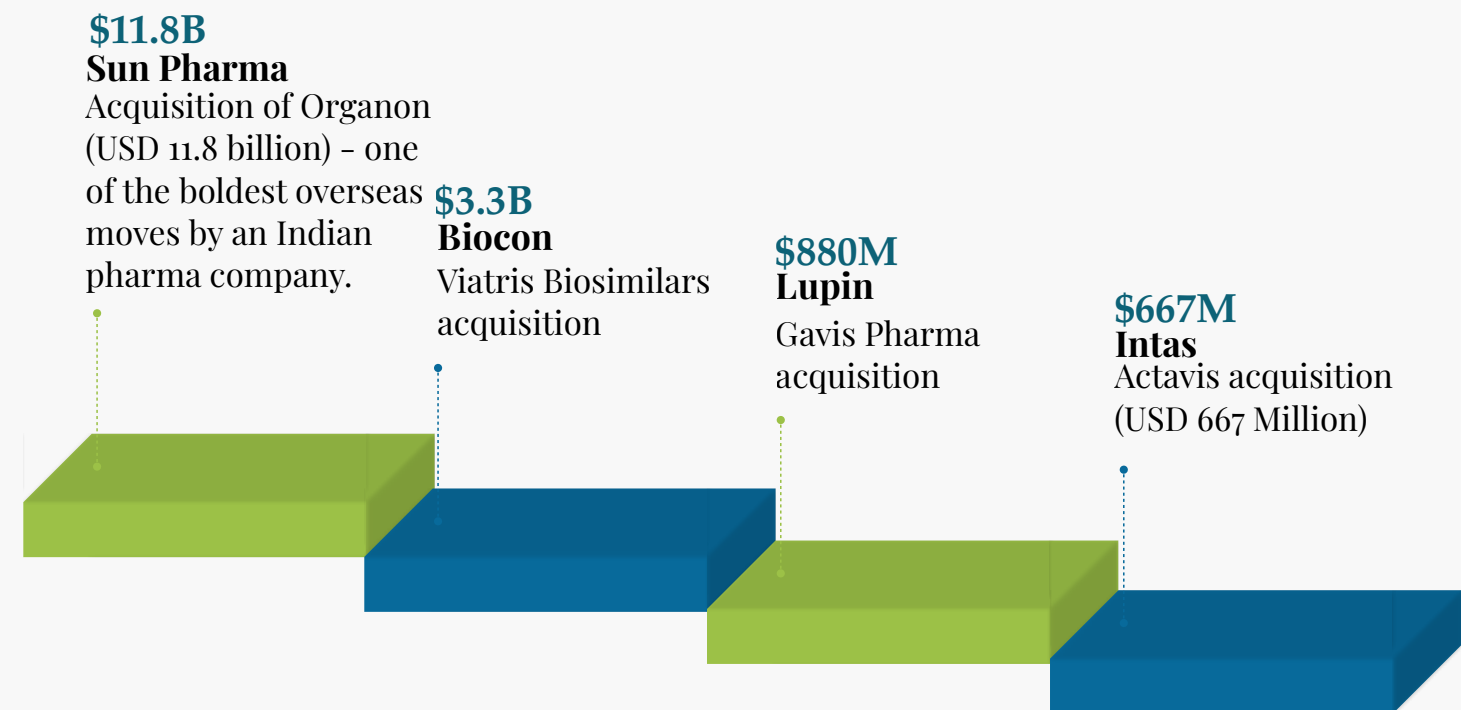


Total pharma exports **\$30.47B** (FY24 - FY25)

## Outbound M&A deals by Indian Pharma Companies

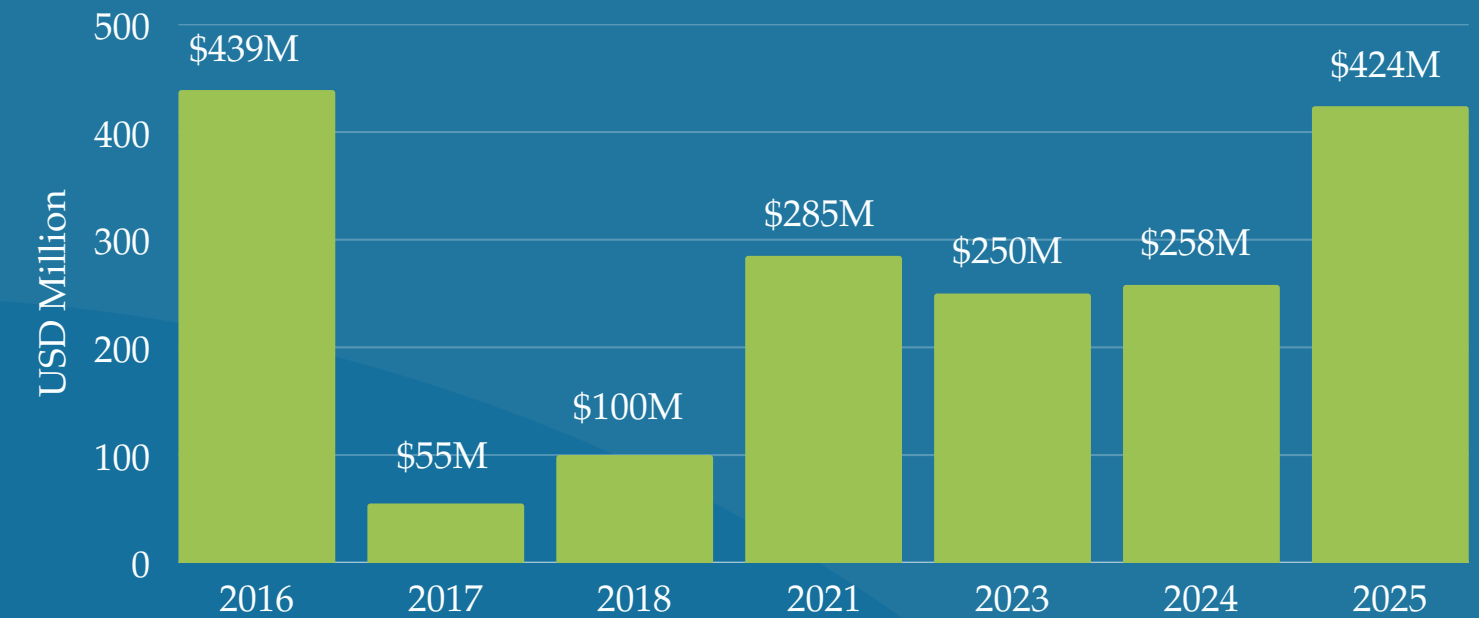


## Few recent M&A deals by Indian Pharma Companies



These M&A deals reinforce this view and demonstrate that Indian companies are willing to think beyond domestic growth and use capital strategically to diversify footprint, therapeutic exposure, and geography.

## Greenfield/Brownfield Investments by Indian Pharma Companies



Continued Greenfield/Brownfield investments in regulated markets signal Indian Pharma companies' long-term commitment to those markets. They indicate that Indian companies are willing to build patiently, invest in compliance, and tailor operations to market-specific needs rather than only buying into existing structures.

*WalkWater believes that these are the clearest signs of Indian pharma's transition from being a supplier to being a global participant in shaping supply chains. The move to the West is not only about access to markets, but also about credibility, localization, and the ability to participate more deeply in global pharma ecosystems.*

A person wearing a blue lab coat and blue nitrile gloves is working in a laboratory. They are holding a small, clear vial with a yellow cap. The vial is being held over a tray containing several other similar vials. The background is a blurred laboratory setting with various pieces of equipment and shelves. The lighting is bright and focused on the person's hands and the vials.

*Structural Shift 2*

CDMO as a  
strategic business

## Structural Shift 2

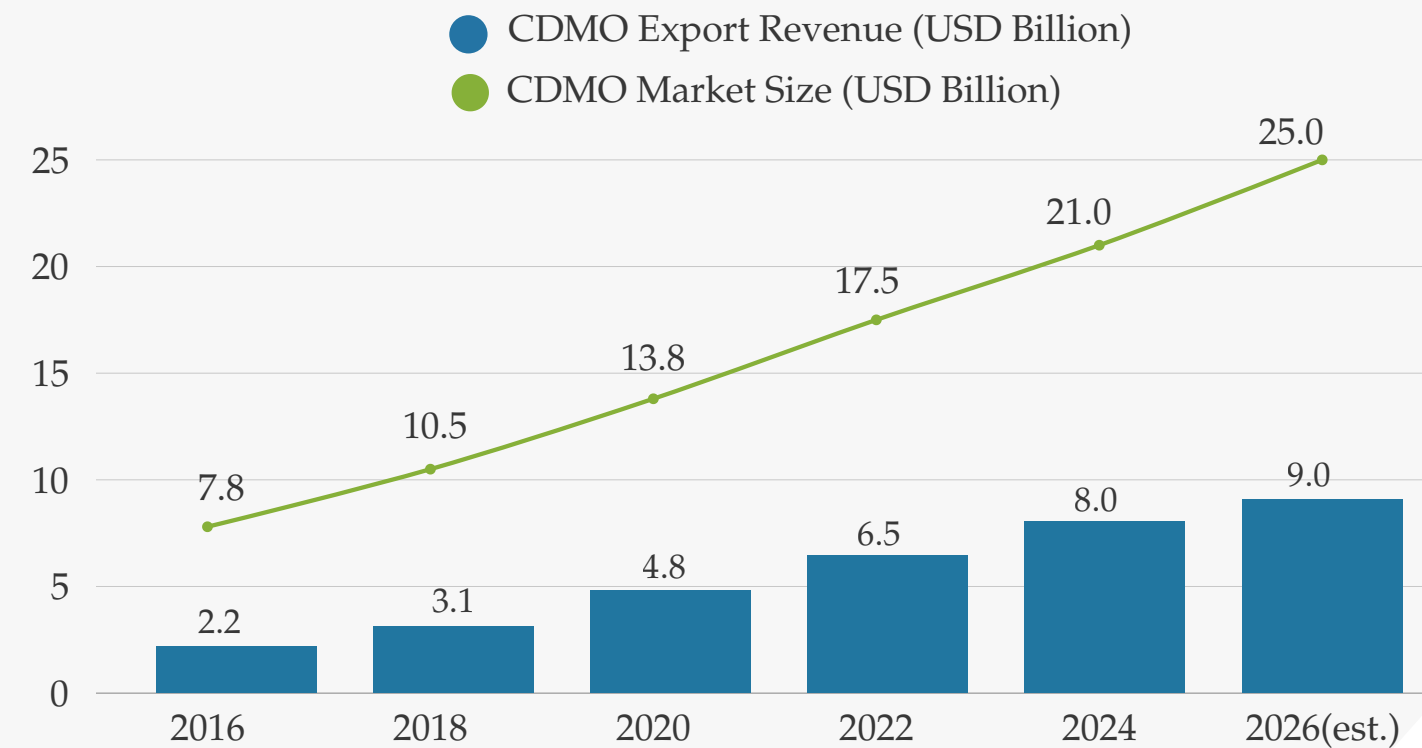
### CDMO as a strategic business

If Indian pharma's global expansion is the visible headline, CDMO is the more strategic underlying engine. Contract development and manufacturing has moved firmly into the centre of the industry conversation because it offers something many other pharma models do not - a better margin profile combined with deeper customer stickiness

*At WalkWater, we believe that CDMO will become one of the most strategically important business models in the sector. The combination of strong technical capability, regulatory discipline, formulation expertise, and manufacturing scale makes India a natural destination for this opportunity.*

## India's CDMO Business Growth

Market Size & Export Revenue (2016-2026)



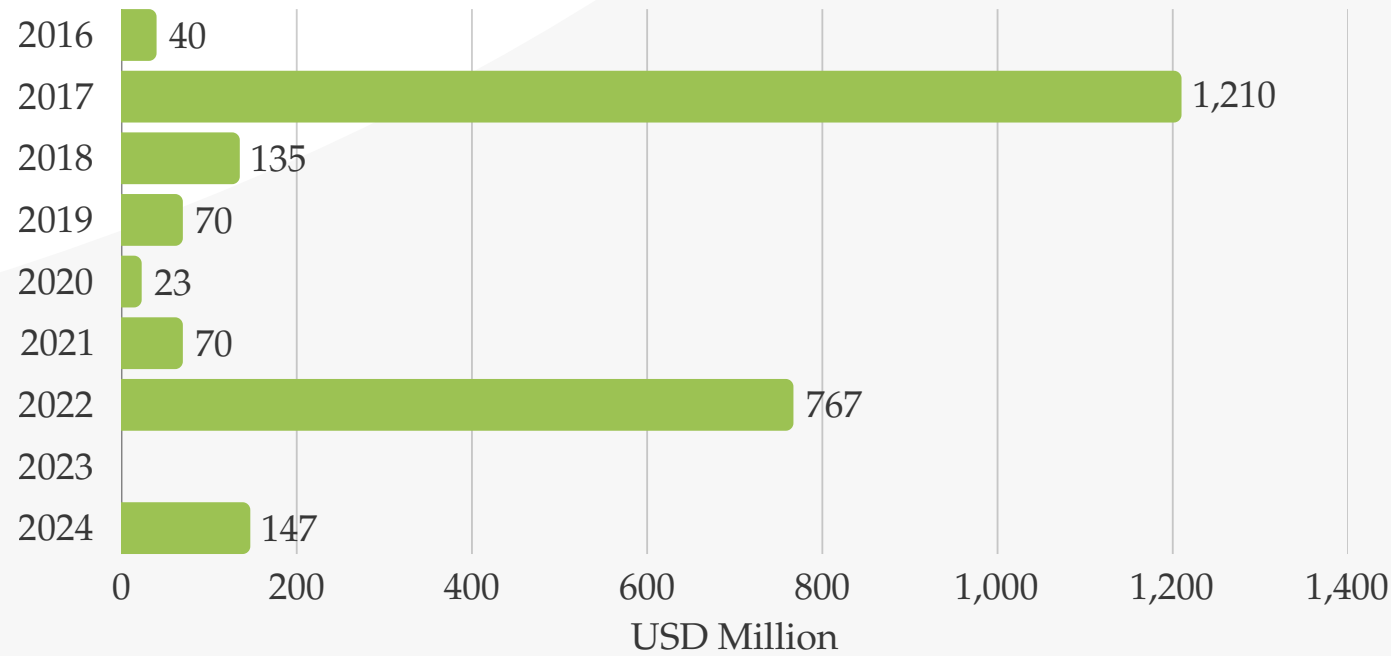
## The CDMO Drivers

Global innovators are increasingly looking to de-risk supply chains, diversify manufacturing bases, and partner with players who can deliver quality at scale. Indian CDMOs sit at the intersection of those needs. They are not just manufacturing products, they are solving supply chain, development, and commercialization challenges for global clients.

# Funding the future of the CDMO story

The current funding activity in this space also tells its own story. Capital is continuing to flow into sterile injectables, late-stage assets, formulation platforms, and API-linked development businesses. The scale of interest suggests that investors increasingly see CDMO as a long-duration theme rather than a tactical one.

## India Pharma CDMO/CRDMO/CRAMS - Total disclosed investments by year



*WalkWater believes the strategic logic here goes beyond capital and margins. The best CDMO businesses in India are becoming embedded into global value chains in a way that is structurally difficult to dislodge. That makes the model attractive not only because of margin expansion, but because of predictability and relevance in a more uncertain world*

**Private Equity Momentum**

- PE-backed CDMO Growth
- Biologics & Speciality APIs

**Strategic Pharma Partnerships**

- Global Pharma JVs
- Biologics & Sterile Deals

**CDMO Capex Boom**

- \$2B+ Annual Investments
- Greenfield Expansions



*Structural Shift 3*

The unlocking of India's  
API Manufacturing story

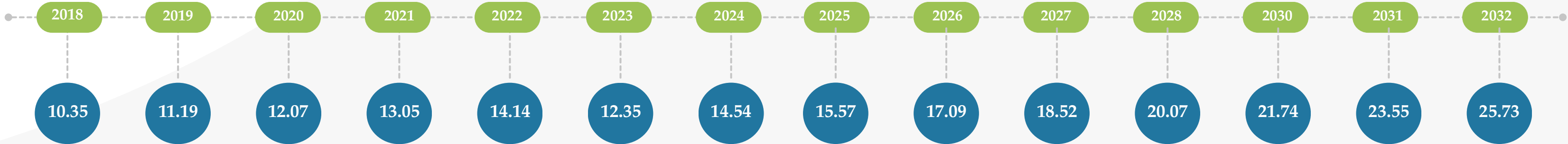
### Structural Shift 3

## The unlocking of India's API Manufacturing story

Even as CDMO attracts more attention, API manufacturing remains one of India's deepest and most enduring strengths. Manufacturing of APIs has long been central to India's pharmaceutical identity, and it continues to matter because it anchors cost competitiveness, supply resilience, and manufacturing depth.

### India Active Pharmaceutical Ingredient Market Size

Steady and consistent growth trajectory with a CAGR of **8.50%**



Market size (USD Billion) -->

Source: Industry Reports & Market Analysis

#### Market Overview

The India API market is expected to witness strong growth during 2018-2032

Market size in 2025	Market size in 2032
<b>\$15.57B</b>	<b>\$25.73B</b>

#### Key Growth Drivers



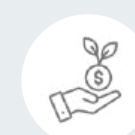
**Rising Global Demand** for affordable generics & cost-effective APIs



**Strong Manufacturing** base and backward integration capabilities in India



**Regulatory Compliance** and quality standards strengthen global competitiveness



**Sustained Investments** in capacity expansion & process innovation

## What is changing now is the nature of ownership and investment.

We are seeing greater PE participation, more platform-style investment behaviour, and a stronger recognition that APIs are not just commodity inputs but strategic assets in the wider pharma ecosystem. This matters because India's API strength can become a foundation for broader integration across formulations, CDMO, and even specialized therapeutic segments.

*WalkWater believes that the API story will be unlocked aggressively in the coming decade. This unlock is important because it provides the industrial backbone for everything else. A stronger API base supports import substitution, improves resilience, and helps companies think more holistically about value creation. In an environment where cost, security, and continuity all matter, API manufacturing will remain one of the sector's most reliable strategic levers.*



The image shows a modern office interior with a large, curved glass wall. On the wall, a world map is displayed in a digital, grid-like format. The map is illuminated with a blue light, and the grid lines are also visible. In the foreground, the silhouettes of four people are visible, standing and looking towards the wall. The overall atmosphere is professional and high-tech, with a strong blue color palette. The text is overlaid on a dark, semi-transparent rectangular area in the lower-left corner.

*Structural Shift 4*

MNC pharma  
looking east

## Structural Shift 4

### MNC pharma looking east

Multinational pharma companies are now looking East with greater seriousness. Today, global pharmaceutical firms are looking at India as a place where capability can be built, innovation can be supported, and specialized work can be executed more efficiently. This shift is structural, not temporary.

### GCCs as a new capability engine

The rise of Global Capability Centres in pharma and healthcare is a clear sign of this shift. GCCs are no longer just support centres. They are becoming genuine contributors to global operations with cutting edge work being done in the areas of AI, analytics, medical affairs, finance, IT, procurement, R&D and innovation.

#### Key Takeaways



**Large Talent Pool**  
Access to skilled talent driving innovation and efficiency



**Strategic Location**  
GCCs concentrated in key metro & emerging cities

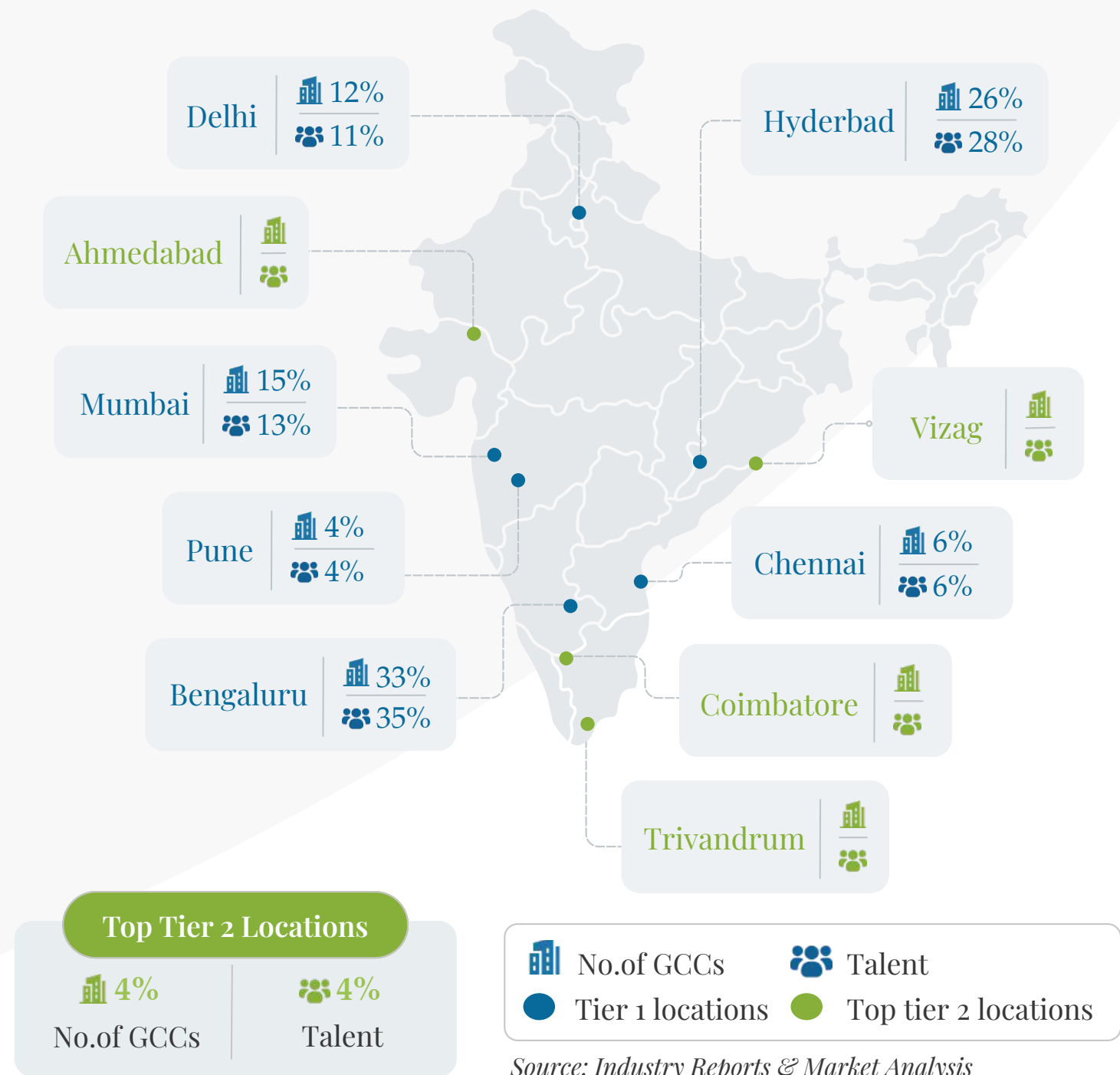


**Strong Growth Outlook**  
Increasing investments strengthen India's position as a global hub

## Pharma, Life Sciences – GCCs Flourish

India continues to be a preferred destination for Global Capability Centers in Pharma & Life Sciences, with strong presence across key cities.

India is home to a diverse ecosystem of GCCs in Pharma & Life Sciences, driven by talent, innovation and operational excellence.





## Companies are building GCCs for the long term.

India based GCCs are establishing more embedded operating relationships with the large corporation as part of their global architecture.

GCCs have changed the nature of India's role in the global pharma ecosystem. Instead of only manufacturing products or selling into the market, India is also becoming a place where strategic work gets done. That has implications for talent, organizational design, and long-term competitiveness.

The concentration of pharma GCCs in cities such as Bengaluru and Hyderabad shows how the ecosystem is deepening. These centres benefit from the availability of talent, the presence of industry peers, and the ability to scale specialized functions efficiently. For multinational companies, this offers not just savings, but capability depth.



*Structural Shift 5*

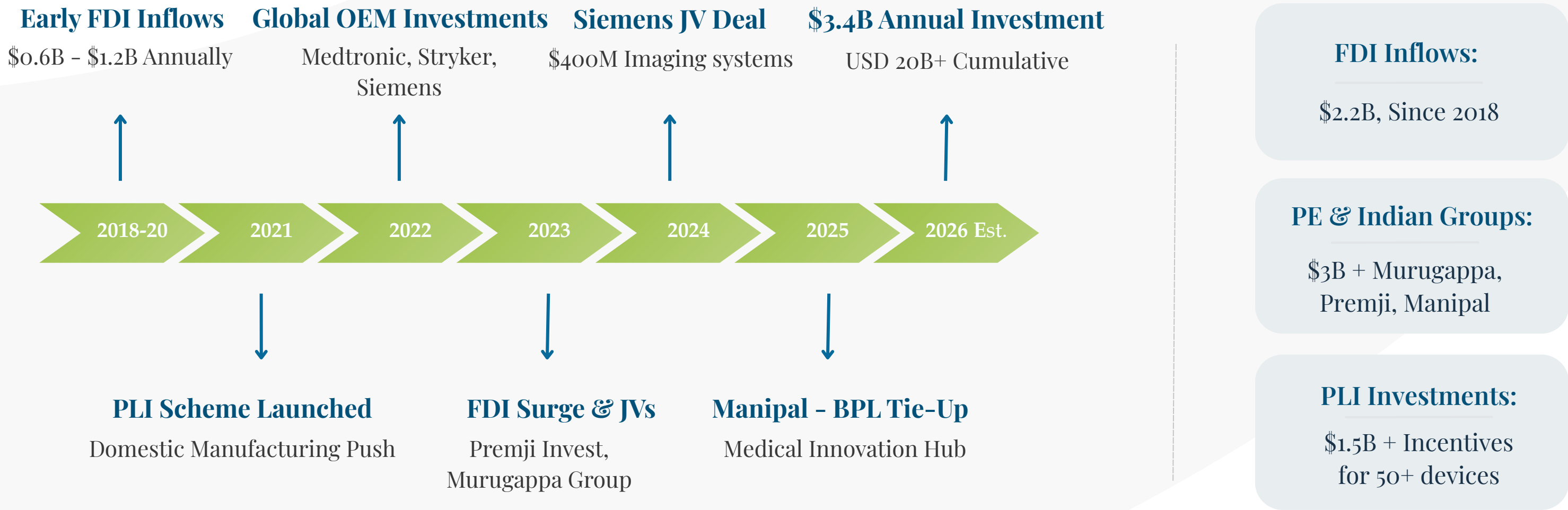
Medtech device  
manufacturing: a quieter  
but important shift

# Structural Shift 5

## Medtech device manufacturing - a quieter but important shift

Medtech device manufacturing is emerging as a quieter but potentially very important part of the story. By 2030, India's medical devices manufacturing sector is projected to reach USD 35 -40 billion, with cumulative FDI + PE investments exceeding USD 10 billion.

### Investment Timeline in India's Medical Devices Manufacturing Sector (2018-2026)



Growth will be concentrated in diagnostics, imaging, implants, surgical consumables, and digital health devices.

## The entry of large Indian Groups

Large Indian business groups are increasingly entering the medical devices space, and this deserves more attention than it has traditionally received.

The interest from Premji Invest, Manipal group, and Murugappa group into this space are not just speculative forays. These are clear investments to build manufacturing platforms in a category that could become increasingly relevant over time. Medical devices sit at the intersection of manufacturing, healthcare, and technology, which makes them attractive to large Indian groups that want to deploy existing strengths into a new growth lane.



## The obvious question is: why now?

*WalkWater believes that the answer lies in a combination of structural and strategic drivers.*

- *First, there is a large and growing domestic healthcare market.*
- *Second, medical devices are still heavily import dependent, which creates a significant opportunity for local substitution.*
- *Third, government support through PLI-style incentives (USD 1.5 billion) has made the economics more attractive.*
- *Established conglomerates already have the manufacturing discipline, capital strength, and operational scale needed to enter this adjacent space.*

A male scientist with a beard, wearing a white lab coat, safety glasses, and a hairnet, is focused on his work in a laboratory. He is wearing white gloves and appears to be handling equipment. The background is filled with rows of vials and laboratory equipment, creating a professional and scientific atmosphere.

*Structural Shift 6*

Consolidation of  
Healthcare Services  
Providers

## Structural Shift 6

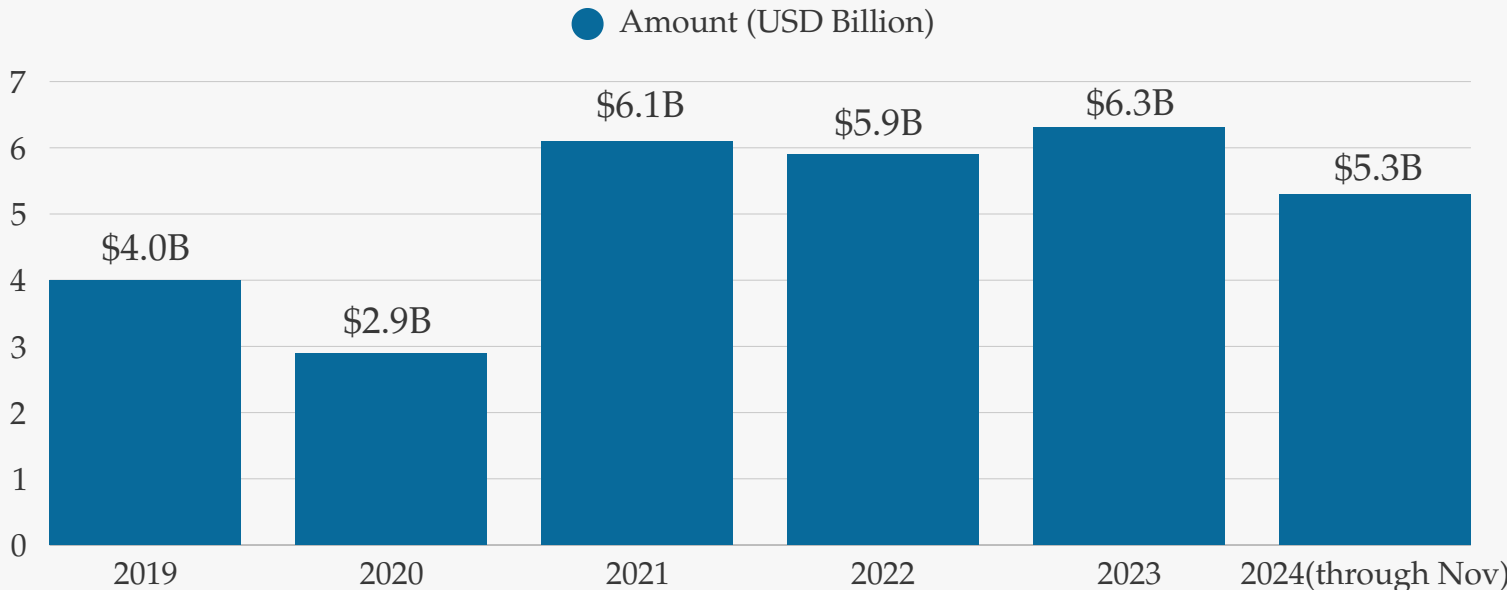
### Consolidation of Healthcare service providers

Healthcare services are another area where the industry is clearly entering a more mature phase.

#### Private Equity driving consolidation

Healthcare services require operational depth, brand trust, quality clinical outcomes, and the ability to spread capital over a larger base. That is why Private equity is playing a larger role increasingly leading to consolidation of Industry players, and the sector is beginning to reflect the economics of scale, standardization, and network expansion. The sector has been attracting around \$5-6 billion annually post-COVID versus pre-pandemic levels of \$3-4 billion.

#### PE investments amount and number of exits



At the same time, the healthcare services sector carries long-term relevance because demand for quality healthcare services tends to rise with income, urbanization, and awareness.

*WalkWater believes that the consolidation story is not just about financial engineering, it is about building the next generation of healthcare platforms in India, that will focus not just on profits but as a service that will deliver patient outcomes that impact the quality of lives in India.*

## WalkWater's view on the road ahead

For us, the key takeaway is that the Pharma and Healthcare sector is not waiting for one dominant future.

The coming years will likely be shaped by a few clear forces. Indian pharma will continue to expand westward through a mix of acquisitions and greenfield investments. CDMO will remain one of the strongest margin-led business models. APIs will continue to provide strategic depth. MNCs will deepen their India footprint through both market and capability build. Medtech will attract more manufacturing-led interest from large groups. Healthcare services will continue to consolidate under PE influence.

We believe this is why the story matters. It is not just a trend piece. It is a reflection of a sector that is redefining how Indian companies think about scale, value, and global relevance. India's pharma and healthcare sectors are therefore not only growing; they are maturing. And in that maturity lies the next phase of long-term value creation.



## About WalkWater Talent Advisors

WalkWater Talent Advisors is a 15 year old boutique executive search firm with operations based out of 5 offices in Mumbai, Pune, Bangalore, Gurgaon and Cupertino (USA). As a firm, we specialise in 5 industry sectors including Consumer, Industrial, BFSI, Pharma and Technology.

Today, WalkWater is one the fastest growing executive search firms in India, and we bring to our clients the global experience of working with more than 450+ clients across sectors, with whom we have closed 1100+ searches and also completed 55+ talent advisory assignments.

*For more information, please visit [www.walkwatertalent.com](http://www.walkwatertalent.com)*

## The Pharma & Lifesciences Practice of WalkWater

The Pharma & Lifesciences practice at WalkWater Talent Advisors focuses on partnering with organizations across pharmaceuticals, biotech, medical devices, diagnostics, and healthcare start-ups to build high-impact leadership teams.

The team specializes in leadership hiring across functions like R&D, manufacturing, quality, Supply chain, regulatory affairs, and commercial operations. We have also advised our clients on critical talent advisory areas such as succession planning, competition benchmarking, talent landscape studies across key functions.

Over the years, WalkWater has built a strong network across India and international markets. Our approach combines domain expertise with a consultative mindset, helping clients not just fill roles, but strengthen long-term organizational capability and leadership depth.



## About the Authors



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Rahul brings 25+ years of industry experience, with 20+ years spent in the Executive Search industry. As a Co-Founder of WalkWater, he personally leads Senior Searches across three sectors including Consumer, Pharma and Industrial.

He has worked with a variety of clients across Indian conglomerates, MNCs, PE / VC firms and Promoter companies. He is an Instrumentation Engineer from Bangalore University and has completed his MBA from XIM, Bhubaneswar.



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Prakash brings 25+ years of work experience of which 6 years has been in Marketing and Sales in the Pharma industry and the last 19 years in the Executive Search industry with focus on leadership and niche hiring for the Pharma, Healthcare & Lifesciences segments.

He started his career with Pfizer in sales & later moved to the Executive Search industry with stints in market leading companies like ABC Consultants and Korn Ferry. At WalkWater, Prakash is the sector specialist for the Pharma, Healthcare and Life science industries and has advised several MNCs and large Indian Pharma companies on critical searches and talent advisory engagements.

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