GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS & FERTILIZERS
DEPARTMENT OF PHARMACEUTICALS

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 690
TO BE ANSWERED ON 18th September, 2020

Shortage of salts and medicines due to Coronavirus

690 Shri Mallikarjun Kharge:

Will the Minister of **Chemicals and Fertilizers** be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that most of the salt compositions of around 65 per cent used to manufacture drugs and medicines in the country are imported from China;
(b) whether due to the outbreak of Coronavirus, the imports have been stopped and the manufacturers of medicines in the country have stocks that will last for a few months; and
(c) if so, the steps being taken by Government to meet or reduce the shortage of various salts so as to check the price rise and shortage of various basic medicines, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS & FERTILIZERS
(SHRI D. V. SADANANDA GOWDA)

(a) : The Indian Pharmaceutical industry is 3rd largest in the world in terms of volume and 14th largest in terms of value. India exported medicines worth US $ 14389 mn in Financial Year 2018-19. India also exported Bulk Drug/Drug Intermediates worth US $ 3911mn in Financial Year 2018-19. However, the country also imports various Bulk Drugs/Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (APIs) for producing medicines. Two-thirds of the total imports of Bulk Drugs/ Drug Intermediates is from China. As per available data from the various Port Offices of the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO), the details of the percentage of raw materials imported from China are as under:

Year	Percentage (in terms of value)
2017	68.62%
2018	66.53%
2019	72.40%

(b) : As per the available information from various port offices of the CDSCO, import of drugs has not been stopped due to outbreak of Corona virus. The CDSCO has not received any report of shortage of stocks at present with the manufacturers.

(c) : Central Government has issued notification vide S.O. 2450(E) dated 27.07.2020 which is valid for 6 months providing that if a Registration Certificate holder makes

an application for a fresh import registration certificate before the expiry of the existing certificate, the existing registration certificate shall be valid until orders are passed on the application and shall be deemed to be valid for all purposes. With a view to attain self-reliance and reduce import dependence in APIs/ Bulk drugs, the Government has rolled out two schemes viz. (i) “Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme for promotion of domestic manufacturing of critical Key Starting Materials (KSMs)/ Drug Intermediates (DIs) and Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (APIs) In India” and (ii) “Promotion of Bulk Drug Parks”. The scheme guidelines were issued on 27th July, 2020.

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