

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS
DEPARTMENT OF PHARMACEUTICALS**

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1782
TO BE ANSWERED ON 5TH AUGUST, 2025

Ensuring availability of essential medicines

1782 Shri Akhilesh Prasad Singh:

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

- (a) what measures have been implemented to secure uninterrupted supply chains for lifesaving and essential drugs in Government hospitals and rural health facilities;
- (b) whether there are any proposals under consideration to revise existing price ceilings for critical medicines, including those on the National List of Essential Medicines (NLEM); and
- (c) the status of expansion of Jan Aushadhi Kendras across rural blocks in Bihar and the manner in which medicine availability is being ensured at the primary healthcare level?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS

(SMT. ANUPRIYA PATEL)

(a): The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has informed that to ensure availability of essential drugs and reduce out-of-pocket expenditure of patients visiting the public health facilities, including government hospitals and public health facilities in rural areas, Government has rolled out the Free Drugs Service Initiative under the National Health Mission. Under this, financial support is provided to States and Union territories for provision of free essential medicines in public health facilities based on the requirements posed by them in their Programme Implementation Plans within their overall resource envelope for the said Mission. Support under the said initiative is available for procurement of drugs and strengthening or setting up of robust systems of procurement, quality assurance, supply chain management and warehousing, prescription audit and grievance redressal, and for the dissemination of standard treatment guidelines and establishment of the information-technology enabled platform named Drugs and Vaccine Distribution Management System (DVDMS), which is used for monitoring the actual status of procurement and availability of essential medicines. To facilitate monitoring of supply chain management activity at the national level, a central dashboard has been developed. Some States have also implemented the roll-out of the DVDMS portal till Sub Health Centres for monitoring the status of procurement and availability of essential medicines. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has recommended facility-wise Essential Medicines List to be made available at public healthcare facilities, including government hospitals and public health facilities in rural areas. The recommended Essential Medicines List for Sub Health Centres, Primary Health Centres, Community Health Centres, Sub-District Hospitals and

District Hospitals consist of 106, 172, 300, 318 and 381 drugs respectively, with flexibility to States to add more medicines.

Further, to ensure uninterrupted supply chain of essential drugs in government hospitals and rural health facilities, the Medical Stores Organisation (MSO) / Government Medical Store Depots (GMSDs) has active rate contracts for 697 drug formulations. MSO has 1,152 registered indenters across India, including government hospitals and public health facilities in rural areas, who may place demands for supply of drugs to MSO/GMSDs through MSO-DVDMS application software four times in a financial year.

(b): Ceiling prices for formulations listed in the National List of Essential Medicines (NLEM) notified by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare are fixed by the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) under the Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 2013 (“DPCO, 2013”). DPCO, 2013 provides for revision of such ceiling prices as per the annual Wholesale Price Index (all commodities) for the preceding calendar year on or before the 1st April of each year, and for revision as and when NLEM is revised by the said Ministry or after five years from the date of price fixation, whichever is earlier.

(c): Under the Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP) scheme, a total of 16,912 Jan Aushadhi Kendras (JAKs) have been opened till 30.6.2025 across the country, out of which 900 have been opened in the State of Bihar. To increase access in rural areas, the scheme has partnered with the Ministry of Cooperation for the opening of JAKs by Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS) and other cooperative societies. Till 30.6.2025, a total of 762 JAKs have been opened through PACS and other cooperative societies across the country, of which 19 have been opened in the State of Bihar. For smooth supply and product availability at JAKs, an end-to-end IT-enabled supply chain system has been established, comprising a central warehouse, four regional warehouses and 39 distributors appointed across the country. Further, 400 fast-moving Janaushadhi products are monitored regularly to ensure their availability. In addition, a minimum stocking mandate has been implemented for 200 Janaushadhi products consisting of the 100 top-selling Janaushadhi products in the scheme product basket and 100 fast-selling Janaushadhi products in the market. Under the stocking mandate, JAK owners become eligible for claiming incentive based on stocks of the said 200 products maintained by them.

Details regarding the manner in which availability of medicines at the primary healthcare level, at Primary Health Centres and Sub Health Centres, is being ensured through the Free Drugs Service Initiative under the National Health Mission are given in the reply to part (a).
