**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**
**MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE**
**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE**

**RAJYA SABHA**
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 291**
**TO BE ANSWERED ON 22ND JULY, 2025**

# REGULATION OF ONLINE PHARMACY PLATFORMS

**291: SHRI K.R.N. RAJESHKUMAR:**

Will the **Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE** be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the unauthorized sale of controlled substances, substandard medicines, and habit-forming drugs through online pharmacy platforms, and if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether Government has conducted or is planning to conduct a study on the impact of online pharmacy platforms in the country, and if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the initiatives taken by Government to regulate the online pharmacy platforms especially to address the issues of data privacy, patient safety, and the risk of substandard or falsified medicine?

**ANSWER**
**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE**
**(SMT. ANUPRIYA PATEL)**

(a) to (c): The sale and distribution of drugs in the country is regulated under the provisions of Drugs & Cosmetics Act, 1940 and Rules, 1945. The regulatory control over the manufacture, sale and distribution of drugs in the country is exercised through a system of licensing and inspection by the State Licensing Authorities (SLAs) appointed by the respective State Governments.

As per the provisions of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940 and the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985, the sale of narcotic and psychotropic substances, tranquilizers, habit-forming drugs, and Schedule X medicines is strictly regulated. Such drugs are required to be sold only against valid prescriptions by a registered medical practitioner and through duly licensed premises.

Isolated complaints regarding unauthorized sale of controlled substances, substandard medicines, and habit-forming drugs through online pharmacy platforms, are received in Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO).

Accordingly, based on the merit, the matter is referred to the concerned State Licensing Authority for taking action as per the provisions of Drugs & Cosmetics Act, 1940 and Rules, 1945, as the State Licensing Authorities are empowered to take action in case of any violation of the conditions of sale licenses.

In order to have comprehensive regulatory provisions, the draft rules have been published vide G.S.R. 817 (E) dated 28th August 2018 for inviting comments from public/stakeholders for amendment to the Drugs and Cosmetics Rules, 1945 for incorporating provisions relating to regulation of sale and distribution of drugs through e-pharmacy. The draft rules contain provisions for registration of e-pharmacy, periodic inspection of e-pharmacy, procedure for distribution or sale of drugs through e-pharmacy, prohibition of advertisement of drugs through e-pharmacy, complaint redressal mechanism, monitoring of e-pharmacy, data privacy etc.

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