GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS
DEPARTMENT OF PHARMACEUTICALS

RAJYA SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. **93**
TO BE ANSWERED ON THE **28TH JULY 2026**

Rising prices of essential medicines

93 Shri Imran Pratapgarhi:

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

(a) the steps taken by Government to control the prices of life-saving and essential medicines;
(b) the details of medicines whose prices have increased during the last one year, along with the reasons therefor;
(c) the measures taken to ensure the availability of affordable generic medicines through the Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP) Kendras across the country; and
(d) whether any shortage of essential medicines has been reported during the last one year, if so, the details thereof and the corrective measures taken by Government?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS
(SHRI JAGAT PRAKASH NADDA)

(a) to (d): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement referred to in reply to the Rajya Sabha Starred Question No. 93 (3rd Position) for answer on 28.07.2026, raised by Shri Imran Pratapgarhi, regarding "Rising prices of essential medicines"

(a): Prices of drugs are regulated as per the provisions of the Drugs (Prices Control) Order 2013 (DPCO, 2013). The National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) under the Department of Pharmaceuticals regulates the prices of medicines as per extant provisions of DPCO, 2013. NPPA fixes the ceiling prices of formulations specified in Schedule-I to DPCO, 2013 which is based on the National List of Essential Medicines (NLEM) published by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) from time-to-time. As on 23.07.2026, Ceiling prices of 935 formulations are effective. The average price reduction due to refixation of prices under NLEM, 2022 is about 17%. NPPA also fixes retail prices of new drugs as defined in para 2(1)(u) of DPCO, 2013, i.e., formulations launched by existing manufacturers of a medicine listed in NLEM by combining it with another drug, or by changing the strength or dosage or both of such medicine. The retail prices of new drugs are applicable to the applicant manufacturer and marketer and they cannot sell the new drug above the price notified by NPPA. Retail prices of 3,845 new drugs have been fixed by the NPPA till 23.07.2026. Further, in case of non-scheduled formulations, manufacturers are required to not increase the maximum retail price (MRP) of a formulation by more than ten percent of the MRP of that formulation during the preceding 12 months.

In addition, NPPA has fixed the prices of drugs under Para 19 to ensure the availability of drugs at affordable prices in public interest in the following cases:

(i) MRP of 106 non-scheduled anti-diabetic and cardiovascular drugs were capped in 2014.
(ii) Ceiling prices of coronary stents were fixed and notified on 13th February, 2017 for the first time.
(iii) Ceiling price of knee implants, which is one of the components under 'Orthopaedic Implants', was notified on 16th August, 2017.
(iv) A cap on Trade Margin of 42 selected non-scheduled anti-cancer medicines was put under 'Trade Margin Rationalization' approach, which brought down prices of 526 brands of anti-cancer medicines.
(v) During COVID-19, the price of Oxygen Concentrators, Pulse Oximeter, Blood Pressure Monitoring Machine, Nebulizer, Digital Thermometer and Glucometer were regulated under "Trade Margin Rationalisation" approach in June/July 2021.

Details of prices fixed or revised by NPPA are available on NPPA's website (www.nppa.gov.in). NPPA monitors the prices of both scheduled and non-scheduled formulations on an ongoing basis and takes action in accordance with the provisions of DPCO, 2013 against companies that are found overcharging consumers.

(b) to (d): The ceiling prices of scheduled medicines are revised annually on the basis of Wholesale Price Index (WPI) (all commodities) for preceding calendar year on or before 1st April of every year, which is notified by the Government on the 1st day of April every year. Based on the WPI, an increase in ceiling price of 0.64956% per cent was allowed for scheduled drugs which is the maximum permissible increase that may be availed by the manufacturers.

In case of non-scheduled formulations, manufacturers may avail an increase of up to 10 per cent in the maximum retail price of a formulation over the MRP of that formulation during the preceding 12 months.

NPPA monitors the availability of drugs, identifies shortages, if any, and takes remedial steps to ensure availability of drugs to the consumers. As and when the reports of shortages of particular drug(s) in any part of the country are received through various sources, NPPA coordinates with the State Government authorities and companies manufacturing the specific medicines to ensure that the shortages are addressed. During the last one year, NPPA, allowed a one-time increase in the ceiling prices of four medicines namely, Carboplatin Injection 10 mg/ml, Cisplatin Injection 1 mg/ml, Anti-Tetanus Immunoglobulin 250 IU and Anti-Tetanus Immunoglobulin 500IU by 50% based on the feedback received from public health authorities and companies regarding their severe shortages.

In order to address any supply gaps and ensure smooth supply and availability of generic medicines at Jan Aushadhi Kendras (JAKs) under Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP), the following measures are in place:

(i) Since September 2024, stocking by JAKs of 200 commonly used medicines, consisting of the 100 top-selling medicines in the scheme product basket and 100 fast-selling medicines in the market, has been incentivised, under which JAK owners are eligible for monthly incentive based on the stocks that they maintain for these medicines.

(ii) An end-to-end information-technology-enabled supply chain system is in place to connect a robust supply chain system consisting of five warehouses and a growing network of distributors across the country, currently numbering 42.

(iii) In addition, with a view to ensure availability of commonly used products, 400 fast-moving products are monitored regularly by Pharmaceuticals and Medical Devices Bureau of India, the scheme implementing agency, and demand for the same is estimated on a continuous basis. Further, steps have been taken to digitise the estimation method to augment the procurement process.

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