

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

**RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1867
TO BE ANSWERED ON 04.08.2026**

**INEFFECTIVENESS OF ANTIBIOTICS AND THE BLUE-STRIP LABELING
POLICY**

1867# SMT. PHULO DEVI NETAM:

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

- (a) whether Government is aware that one in three bacterial infections in the country, has become resistant to common antibiotics;
- (b) whether Government has issued any stringent guidelines to States under the recently released 'National Action Plan on AMR 2.0' to prevent the illegal sale of antibiotics without a prescription; and
- (c) whether Government has proposed mandatory blue strip labelling on all antimicrobial medicines under the draft notification issued in January, 2026, to facilitate their easy identification at pharmacy counters and prevent its misuse?

**ANSWER
THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH & FAMILY
WELFARE
(SHRI PRATAPRAO JADHAV)**

(a) to (c): The Government is aware of the growing challenge of Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) in the country. To address this public health concern, the Government has undertaken a number of strategic and coordinated measures across sectors, the details are at **Annexure**.

Under the National Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance (NAP-AMR) 2.0 surveillance system has been strengthened for antimicrobial resistance and antimicrobial consumption across human, animal, food, and environment sectors. The plan promotes implementation of antimicrobial stewardship programmes in healthcare settings, aligns with surveillance networks, and prioritises behaviour change communication and public awareness campaigns targeting all stakeholders including healthcare professionals, veterinarians, farmers and the community to promote rational and judicious use of antimicrobials.

The Government of India, through Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO) regulates safety, efficacy and quality of the drugs under the provisions of Drugs & Cosmetics Act, 1940 & its rules. The sale and distribution of drugs is regulated by State Licensing Authorities under Drugs Rules 1945.

Yes, a draft notification was issued on 21.01.2026 for amendment to the Drugs Rules, 1945 containing provisions for blue strip labelling of antimicrobial medicines to facilitate their easy identification and promote their judicious use.

Details of Steps Taken by Government to Contain AMR:

- The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has issued Standard Treatment Guidelines (STGs) for rational use of medicines, including antibiotics. These guidelines are available in the public domain on the NCDC website (Link: <https://ncdc.mohfw.gov.in/uploads/pdf/amr17.pdf>.)
- Guidelines on Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) have been issued to prevent and control healthcare-associated infections and reduce unnecessary use of antibiotics in healthcare settings. The guidelines documents are available at: <https://ncdc.mohfw.gov.in/uploads/pdf/amr19.pdf> and https://qps.nhsrindia.org/sites/default/files/2025-08/HAI%20Book_0.pdf
- To promote judicious use of antibiotics and create awareness about AMR, the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) has developed IEC materials including audio-visual content, social media messages and outdoor media campaigns. These materials are available in the public domain and have been shared with States/UTs for wider dissemination. The details may be seen at the link: <https://ncdc.mohfw.gov.in/includes/About/CentresAndDivision/amr.php>.
- CDSCO regulates the safety, efficacy and quality of drugs under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940 and Rules made thereunder. Antibiotics are included under Schedule H and Schedule H1 and are required to be sold by retail only on the prescription of a Registered Medical Practitioner.
- States/UTs have been advised to promote prescription of generic medicines and conduct regular prescription audits in public health facilities. Prescription audit is also one of the requirements under National Quality Assurance Standards (NQAS) certification.
- CDSCO have issued various notices, advisories and communications to State Drug Regulators and stakeholders for strict compliance with regulatory provisions and to raise awareness regarding misuse of antibiotics.
- The Drugs & Cosmetics Rules, 1945 has been amended incorporating a new Schedule H1, containing various antibiotics, anti-TB and habit-forming drugs.
- Mandatory maintenance of separate sale registers for Schedule H1 drugs, including prescriber and patient details, to be preserved for three years for inspection.
- Amendment of Rule 97 requiring medicines meant for treatment of food-producing animals to display the withdrawal period on labels.

- Advisories issued by the Department of Animal Husbandry and DCG(I) to States/UTs for judicious use of antibiotics in animals and discontinuation of antibiotics and hormones in animal feed.
- Prohibition of Colistin and its formulations for manufacture, sale and distribution for food-producing animals, poultry, aquaculture and animal feed supplements.
- Prohibition of Chloramphenicol and Nitrofurans and their formulations for import, manufacture, sale and distribution for use in any food-producing animal rearing system.
