

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

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 116
TO BE ANSWERED ON 2nd February, 2021

Reduction of Drug Prices

116. ADV. DEAN KURIAKOSE:

Will the Minister of **CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS** be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) has formulated any plan for reducing the prices of drugs to fight against epidemics like Covid19;
- (b) if so, the details of drugs whose price has been reduced during the last one year;
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor;
- (d) whether the Government is aware of the fact that during this pandemic period, the private hospitals have been prescribing expensive medicines with the sole view of making profits through the channeling of commission payouts by the pharmaceuticals and if so the details thereof; and
- (e) whether the Government has received any such complaints from the States and if so the details thereof?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (c): The National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) under the Department of Pharmaceuticals fixes the ceiling prices of scheduled medicines which are specified in the National List of Essential Medicines (NLEM) and are included in Schedule-I of the Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 2013 (DPCO, 2013). The ceiling price fixed by the NPPA is applicable on all the branded and generic versions of such formulations alike. The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) under Ministry of Health & Family Welfare has issued revised Clinical treatment protocol for COVID-19 on 13.06.2020 and included Hydroxychloroquine, Paracetamol, Methylprednisolone, Enoxaparin, Dexamethasone medicines under treatment protocol which are part of Schedule-I of the DPCO, 2013. The ceiling price of these medicines have been fixed/revised by NPPA vide S.O. No. 1213(E) dated 25.03.2020. The details of price notifications are available on the website of the NPPA i.e. www.nppaindia@nic.in.

Further, NPPA invoking the extra ordinary powers in public interest, fixed the price of Liquid Medical Oxygen (LMO) and the Oxygen Inhalation (Medicinal gas) to ease the situation of Medical Oxygen availability throughout the country, especially in distant and far-flung areas. In addition, NPPA revisited the ceiling price of Heparin injection so as to ensure its continued availability during the pandemic.

The Government has notified Masks (2ply, 3ply & N95) and Hand Sanitizers as 'Essential Commodities' under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 vide Notification dated 13.03.2020. Further, the Government vide Notification dated 21.03.2020 and 24.03.2020 had fixed ceiling prices for Masks (2ply & 3ply) and Hand Sanitizers. Further, based on the

Advisory issued by the NPPA, the Retail Prices of N95 Masks were reduced significantly up to 67% by the manufacturers/importers of the N95 Masks.

(d) & (e): No such complaints have been received from State / UT Governments. However, necessary action on complaints received from individuals has been taken by NPPA.
