

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

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 1184
TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 27th July, 2021

Covid-19 Pandemic

1184. SHRI PARVESH SAHIB SINGH VERMA:

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

- (a) whether the Government is preparing in advance for future wave of Covid-19 pandemic;
- (b) the steps taken by the Government to enhance production and maintain sufficient supply of critical drugs and medicines with regard to treatment of COVID19; and
- (c) whether the Government has taken any steps to check and prevent black-marketing and duplication of life saving drugs and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS & FERTILIZERS

(SHRI MANSUKH MANDAVIYA)

(a): Yes, Sir. Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has prepared the guidelines for Buffer Stock Management of COVID-19 on importance of maintenance of sufficient buffer stocks of essential drugs used in management of COVID-19 cases and their sequelae. Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has identified a suggestive list of drugs to be a part of the buffer stock to be maintained by the State/UT Governments as well as the Central Government. Further, inter-alia, the Guidelines also provide that the States/UTs may suitably customize the list in accordance with their local needs and requirements for treatment/management of COVID-19 and its sequelae such as COVID-19 Associated Mucormycosis (CAM) and Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C).

(b) Government has taken various steps to enhance production and maintain sufficient supply of critical drugs. The measures included expeditious approvals to increase the number of manufacturing sites of Remdesivir and Amphotericin-B. There was regular engagement with the manufacturers of COVID-19 drugs to monitor their production. The export of Remdesivir and Amphotericin-B was also prohibited to maintain adequate domestic supply. The Ministry of External Affairs also assisted the manufacturers for import of raw materials and COVID-19 drugs. To ensure equitable distribution of drugs across the country, allocation of Remdesivir, Tocilizumab and Amphotericin-B was done to States/UTs based on rational and transparent allocation criteria. Daily monitoring of supply of allocated drugs by National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) was done for ensuring timely supply of drugs through coordination with nodal officers of States and liaison officers of manufacturers. Monitoring of availability of the drugs was also done regularly by the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) and the NPPA.

(c) Amidst reports of black-marketing / hoarding / overcharging of COVID-19 management drugs, CDSCO has requested Licensing authorities of all States/UTs through several advisories to instruct their enforcement staff to keep strict vigil especially at sensitive places and to take stringent action against the offenders by conducting special drive of monitoring and investigation. As per information available from various State Licensing Authorities, in cases of black-marketing / hoarding/overcharging of COVID-19 management drugs, various enforcement actions like drug seizure, arrests of accused persons / registration of FIRs etc. have been carried out by the State Licensing Authorities.

The NPPA vide letter dated 08.04.2021 addressed to all State Drug Controllers, had directed to closely monitor the production and availability of COVID-19 drugs to prevent black marketing and hoarding.

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