

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

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. †3790
TO BE ANSWERED ON 25th March, 2022

Prices of Life-Saving Drugs

†3790. **SHRI ASHOK MAHADEORAO NETE:**
SHRI SADASHIV KISAN LOKHANDE:
SHRI SHRINIWAS PATIL:

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

- (a) whether life-saving and some other drugs are being sold at very high prices due to their scarcity in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof along with the percentage of increase in the prices of each medicine and the steps taken to ensure their prices under affordable limits;
- (c) whether the Government has fixed any norms for maintaining minimum stock of life-saving drugs in the country and if so, the details and the estimated stock thereof;
- (d) whether the Government has constituted or proposes to constitute any high powered committee to review the price control system of medicines and if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the steps taken to strengthen research and development so as to find out the possibility of the production of medicines at low cost?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS & FERTILIZERS
(SHRI BHAGWANTH KHUBA)**

(a) and (b): The essential medicines included in the National List of Essential Medicines (NLEM) published by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare are included in Schedule-I of the Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 2013 (DPCO, 2013) and their ceiling price are fixed by the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) under the Department of Pharmaceuticals (DoP). No manufacturer can sell these medicines at a price more than the ceiling prices fixed by the NPPA. No reports have been received recently by NPPA regarding selling of drugs at high prices due to scarcity in the country.

(c): Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW) has prepared 'Guidelines for Buffer Stock Management of COVID-19' and forwarded the same to all States/ UTs on 13th July, 2021. Further, financial resources were also made available to the States under 'Emergency COVID Response Package-II' for the purpose. States/ UTs were given flexibility to suitably customise their buffer stock requirements in accordance with their needs. MoHFW and DoP monitored the buffer stock available with States/ UTs.

(d): As per its mandate, the NPPA, a body of experts, controls/ regulates the prices of medicines in accordance with provisions of DPCOs.

(e): R&D and innovation in pharma sector is done by number of institutions and organizations under various scientific ministries/ departments. The Department of Pharmaceuticals has set up seven National Institutes of Pharmaceutical Education & Research (NIPERs) as institutes of national importance, which besides imparting postgraduate and doctorate education, conduct high end research in various pharma specializations. NIPERs, after detailed inter departmental consultations, have formulated a programme on Drug Discovery for Affordable Healthcare in mission mode. Further, the department has set up an Inter- Departmental Committee (IDC) to ensure economy, efficiency, effectiveness and transparency and to coordinate research in a collaborative, synchronized and synergized way for optimum utilization of funds.
