

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2252
TO BE ANSWERED ON 31ST JULY, 2026**

NATIONAL LIST OF ESSENTIAL MEDICINES

2252. SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH:

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

- (a) whether the Government has initiated the process for revision of the National List of Essential Medicines (NLEMs), if so, the present status thereof along with the timeline fixed for publication of the revised list;
- (b) the scientific criteria and guidelines adopted by the Standing National Committee on Medicines (SNCMs) for inclusion and exclusion of medicines in the revised NLEM;
- (c) whether representations have been received from State Governments, medical experts and other stakeholders in this regard, if so, the details thereof;
- (d) the details of medicines, fixed-dose combinations and pharmaceutical products presently banned, prohibited or withdrawn from manufacture, sale or distribution in the country, indicating their generic names, therapeutic use and reasons for the ban;
- (e) whether the Government maintains a list of the brand names and manufacturers of such banned medicines, if so, the details thereof along with the action taken by the Government against manufacturers, importers and distributors for violation of prohibition orders; and
- (f) the steps taken or proposed to be taken by the Government to ensure timely revision of the NLEM and to prevent the manufacture, distribution and sale of banned medicines in the country?

ANSWER

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY
WELFARE**

(SMT. ANUPRIYA PATEL)

(a) to (c): The National List of Essential Medicines (NLEM) is prepared and revised taking into consideration the country's disease burden, public health priorities, safety, efficacy, cost-effectiveness, contemporary knowledge of use of therapeutic products in health & hygiene of general public, various documents of medicines, availability of medicines including World Health Organization (WHO) Model List through an established expert consultative mechanism.

Revision of the NLEM, including addition, deletion or modification of medicines, is undertaken from time to time based on the recommendations of the Standing National Committee on Medicines (SNCM), a Government-appointed expert committee.

During such revision, medicines across all therapeutic categories, are considered based on the prescribed criteria and available scientific evidence. These include drug approval status, banned drugs status in the country, safety & efficacy profile of drug and Fixed Dose Combination (FDCs), resistance patterns against antimicrobials, disease burden, medicines enlisted in National health programs, affordability, accessibility, cost-effectiveness, better alternatives, therapeutic advances, safety concerns and representations received from various stakeholders which are discussed in respective expert group meetings.

(d) to (f): There are provisions under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940, under which Central Government may regulate, restrict or prohibit manufacture, of any drug including FDCs in public interest if, the use of drugs is likely to involve any risk to human beings or animals or there is no therapeutic justification for the ingredients contained in FDCs. List of banned drugs including FDCs are available on the website of CDSCO i.e. www.cdSCO.gov.in

Manufacture, sale and distribution of prohibited/banned drugs is a punishable offence under Section 18 of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940 and the State Licensing Authorities are empowered to take action in this regard. As and when any such complaints/issues is received, the matter is taken up with the concerned State Licensing Authority for necessary action including the cancellation of the manufacturing licenses.
