

Seventeenth Loksabha

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Title: Regarding prices of life-saving drugs.

ADV. DEAN KURIAKOSE (IDUKKI): Prices of essential medicines including painkiller antibiotics, anti-infectives are set to go up from April with the Government allowing an increase of over 10 per cent for the scheduled drugs.

India's drug pricing authority on Friday allowed a price hike of 10.7 per cent for scheduled drugs, which are under price control. This is the highest price hike allowed. Over 800 drugs under the National List of Essential Medicines (NLEM) will see a price rise from April.

The NLEM list includes drugs like paracetamol, antibiotics like azithromycin used to treat bacterial infections, anti-anemia, vitamins and minerals. Some drugs used for treating moderate to severely ill COVID-19 patients and steroids are also included in the list.

These medicines have a profound impact on the lives of people. The Government reasoning around inflation indexing of price does not hold water in a country like ours where crores of people struggle to buy food, let alone lifesaving medicines. I urge upon the Government to reverse this decision and ensure that lifesaving drugs stay affordable to the people of India.