

Need to adhere to robust pharmaceutical regulatory framework to ensure transparency in pharmaceuticals distribution and procurement process-laid

SHRI KIRTI AZAD (BARDHAMAN-DURGAPUR): The Drugs Consultative Committee has recently made the Good Distribution Practices (GDP) guidelines for pharmaceuticals non-mandatory, despite recommending their mandatory implementation in its 54th meeting in 2018. These guidelines are essential for maintaining the quality and integrity of pharmaceutical products throughout the distribution process, covering processes but not limited to procurement, purchasing, and storage. By making these guidelines non-mandatory, we lose the ability to penalize non-compliance, thereby weakening our pharmaceutical regulatory framework. This decision is particularly alarming given the findings of the National Drug Survey (2014-16), which reported that Not of Standard Quality (NSQ) drugs are three times more prevalent in Government procurement than in retail. The West Bengal Government's strict adherence to its State Inventory Control Guidelines has successfully kept out-of-pocket expenditure low while ensuring transparency in procurement process—a model the nation should emulate. The ongoing issue of spurious and substandard drugs highlights the urgent need for robust regulatory measures to protect public health. I urge the CDCSO and Ministry of Health and Family welfare to implement Good Distribution Practices guidelines for pharmaceuticals with legal sanctity to strengthen the pharmaceutical supply chain and safeguard the well-being of our citizens.