

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1681

ANSWERED ON:14.03.2005

SANDHU COMMITTEE

Murmu Shri Rupchand;Panda Shri Prabodh;Saradgi Shri Iqbal Ahmed;Singh Shri Brij Bhushan Sharan

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

- (a) whether the Government has set up the Sandhu Committee to examine the ambit of drugs price control and also set up a Task Force to study the options to make essential drugs available to the common man in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Sandhu Committee has examined the price control mechanisms for patented drugs;
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether Sandhu Committee has given its recommendations;
- (f) if so, the details thereof; and
- (g) the action taken by the Government thereon?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STEEL (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN):

(a) to (g) A Committee under the Chairmanship of Joint Secretary (PI) was constituted to examine the span of price control (including trade margin) in the light of National Common Minimum Programme and the observations of the Supreme Court in SLP No. (C) 3668/2003 and to suggest measures for fulfilling the objective of National Common Minimum Programme to ensure the availability of life saving drugs at reasonable prices. This Committee has submitted its interim report to the Government. The Committee has recommended, inter-alia, intensive monitoring on the prices of all those drugs out of the selected basket (National List of Essential Medicines, 2003) which are not under price control, ceilings on trade margins of drugs, a system of price negotiations for the new patented drugs, special schemes for people below poverty line, introduction of Rajasthan Model of Life Line Fluid Stores (hospital pharmacy stores run by Medicare Societies) for bulk purchase of drugs directly from manufacturer and selling them at reduced prices, compounding of offences under the Essential Commodities Act, establishment of DPCO cells in all States on the model of Karnataka, price negotiations at the time of launching of a new patented drug, efforts to increase public awareness, wide publicity to policies and decisions of the Government and NPPA etc. A Task Force has been constituted under the Chairmanship of the Principal Advisor (PP), Planning Commission to explore various options other than price control for achieving the objective of making available life-saving drugs at reasonable prices.