

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:202
ANSWERED ON:03.12.2009
CANCER MEDICINES
Pratap Narayanrao Shri Sonawane

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

- (a) whether the drugs prescribed for curing cancer are highly priced and unaffordable to the general masses;
- (b) if so, the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether these drugs are not covered under the Drugs Price Control Order;
- (d) if so, the reasons therefor;
- (e) the status of the proposed exemption of cancer curing medicines from all types of taxes in the Draft National Pharmaceutical Policy, 2006;and
- (f) the time by which a final decision will be taken in the matter?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SRIKANT KUMAR JENA)

(a) to (f) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) to (f) OF THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.202 FOR ANSWER ON 3.12.2009 REGARDING CANCER MEDICINES.

(a) to (d) : As per available information, the prices of medicines for treatment of cancer are high particularly in the context of long duration of treatment of cancer patients. Drugs for treatment of Cancer patients are not covered in the list of controlled drugs under Drugs (Price Control) order, 1995 (DPCO, 1995). The prices of cancer drugs are, therefore, fixed by the manufacturers themselves taking into account various factors such as the cost of bulk drugs used in the formulation, cost of excipients, cost of R&D etc.

Under the proposed Pharma Policy at present under the consideration of Group of Ministers (GOM), apart from 74 bulk drugs and their formulations, the drugs/medicines included in the National List of Essential Medicines (NLEM) are proposed to be brought under price control. NLEM 2003 prepared by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare also includes some medicines for treatment of cancer e.g. Bleomycin Injection, Gemcitabine Hydrochloride Injection etc.

As per the Modifications in Drug Policy, 1986, announced in September, 1994, the drugs of popular use in which there is monopoly situation have to be kept under price control and the drugs in which there is sufficient market competition have to be kept out of price control. Presently there are 74 bulk drugs included in the first Schedule of DPCO, 95, on the basis of the criteria given in the Modifications in Drug Policy, 1986. The prices of these 74 bulk drugs, and the formulations containing any of these Scheduled drugs are controlled by the Government/NPPA as per the provisions of DPCO, 1995.

(e) & (f): Taxation matters are dealt by Ministry of Finance. However, in the Draft National Pharmaceuticals Policy, 2006 it has been, inter-alia, proposed that the Government would completely exempt all anti cancer drugs (bulk and formulations) from all types of Central taxes, excise duty, import duty etc, and the benefit would be passed on to the consumers. The final decision on the issue of Pharmaceutical Policy will be possible only after the GOM submits its recommendation in this regard. No time frame has been set for finalizing the National Pharmaceuticals Policy.