

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1771
ANSWERED ON:16.07.2009
AVAILABILITY OF LIFE SAVING DRUGS
Owaisi Shri Asaduddin

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

- (a) whether Government has examined the recommendations of the Task Force set up in April, 2005 to ensure the availability of life saving drugs at reasonable cost;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the action taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

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

(a) to (c) A Task Force headed by Dr. Pronab Sen, Principal Advisor (PP), Planning Commission, was set up on 29-11-2004 to explore various options other than price control for achieving the objective of making available life saving drugs at reasonable prices. This Committee submitted its report to the Government on 20th September, 2005 and made several wide ranging recommendations such as on modalities of bulk drug pricing, pricing of formulations only, ceiling prices for all formulations, rationalization of excise duty, promotion of generic drugs, providing accessibility of medicines to BPL families etc. Action on some of the recommendations of the Task Force such as Strengthening of Drug Regulatory Mechanism, Revival of Public Sector Enterprises, creation of a separate Plan Fund for small scale units for achieving Scheduled-M compliance, Provision of Health Insurance etc. has already been initiated by the Government.

Based on the recommendations of this Task force and subsequent discussions with inputs from National Pharmaceuticals Pricing Authority (NPPA) and other stakeholders the Draft National Pharmaceuticals Policy was framed by this Department. Certain recommendations of the Task Force have been included in the Draft National Pharmaceuticals Policy-2006 submitted to the Union Cabinet for consideration and approval. The Cabinet considered the Policy in its meeting held on 11-1-2007. It was decided that the matter may, in the first instance, be considered by a Group of Ministers (GOM). GOM has since been constituted and has held four meetings so far. The last meeting of the GOM was held on 30.4.2008. The GOM has not yet made its recommendations to the Cabinet.