

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3650
ANSWERED ON:30.07.2009
HIKE IN PRICES OF MEDICINES
Nirupam Shri Sanjay Brijkishorilal

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

- (a) whether some pharmaceutical companies are allegedly engaged in hiking prices of some medicines by mixing components in existing formulae of such medicines which are not enlisted under the Drugs and Pharmaceutical Act;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the names of companies engaged in such unfair trade practices including the names of the medicines being adulterated;
- (d) whether the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority has find out these irregularities and taken any steps to plug the loopholes in this existing regulatory mechanism; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

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

(a) to (e): National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) has noticed that certain companies shifted manufacturing of certain drugs to food and nutrition supplements under the license issued under the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act (PFA) of 1954. For example, Evion 400mg was manufactured by M/s Merck as a drug containing vitamin E 400mg. The ceiling price of this drug, which is under price control, was notified by NPPA as Rs. 11 per strip of 10 capsules excluding Excise Duty/Local Taxes. Without changing the brand name, i.e. Evion 400, the product with a composition of vitamin E 400 I.U., wheat germ oil 100mg, omega 3 fatty acid 300mg is now being manufactured as a food and nutrition supplement under the PFA Act by Softech Pharma and marketed by Merck Ltd. at a price of Rs. 60/- per strip of 10 capsules. Similar practice has been adopted for some other vitamin products like `Revital` (M/s Ranbaxy), `Recharge plus` (M/s Trikio), `Soft Z gold` (M/s Indochem) etc. NPPA has taken up the matter with M/o Health & Family Welfare for appropriate action in the matter as the composition of drugs under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act as well as adulteration of drugs is under the Drug Controller General of India under the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare.