

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:749  
ANSWERED ON:15.07.2014  
SHORTAGE OF ESSENTIAL DRUGS  
Biju Shri Parayamparanbil Kuttappan

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

- (a) whether the essential/scheduled drugs are being sold at exorbitant rates due to shortage/insufficient supply of such drugs in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto;
- (c) whether there is any mechanism in place to monitor the stock/availability of essential/scheduled drugs from time to time;
- (d) if so, the details thereof along with the estimated stock/production of these drugs in the country; and
- (e) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government for ensuring supply /production of essential/scheduled drugs in adequate quantity to the consumers?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS & FERTILIZERS (SHRI NIHAL CHAND)

(a) to (e): All the medicines specified in the National List of Essential Medicines 2011 (NLEM) have been included in Schedule I of Drugs (Prices control) Order, 2013 (DPCO, 2013) and are under price control. There are 680 NLEM medicines and out of these, National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) has fixed / notified the ceiling prices in respect of 440 medicines upto 30th June, 2014 under provisions of the said order.

NPPA regularly monitors shortages & availability of drugs on the basis of monthly reports received from State Drugs Control Administration and also complaints, if any, received from NGOs, individuals etc. On receipt of such reports, NPPA immediately takes up the matter with the concerned manufacturer and advice them to rush the stock in the affected area. NPPA has not received any specific report that due to shortage / insufficient supply, life-saving drugs are being sold at exorbitant rates.

DPCO, 2013 vide its para 21(1) provides for monitoring the availability of essential medicines included in its First Schedule. The manufacturer of scheduled formulations and the Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients contained in the scheduled formulations are required to furnish the details relating to production and sale in the specified Proforma i.e. Form-III of the said order on Quarterly basis. The drug-wise estimated stock / production is not available. But, under para 21 of DPCO,2013 no manufacturer of scheduled drug can discontinue production without prior approval.