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India has no plans to introduce National Health Bill

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The Government of India has no plans to introduce National Health Bill. However Mr Abu Hasem Khan Choudhury, Minister of State for Health & Family Welfare, government of India said, "In order to provide relief to the common man in the area of healthcare, a countrywide campaign in the name of "Jan Aushadhi Campaign" has been initiated by the Department of Pharmaceuticals, in collaboration with the State Governments, by way of opening up of Jan Aushadhi Generic Stores in the Government Hosptials to supply of generic medicines through Central Pharma Public Sector Undertakings, to make available quality generic medicines at affordable prices to all. So far, 149 Jan Aushadhi Stores have been opened in different States/UTs in the country as on 28.02.2013. "

Further, the minister said, "Under the provisions of the Drugs (Prices & Control) Order, 1995 (DPCO, 1995), the prices of 74 bulk drugs listed in its First Schedule and the formulations containing any of these scheduled drugs are controlled. National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) fixes or revises prices of scheduled drugs/formulations as per the provisions of the DPCO, 1995. In respect of drugs not covered under DPCO, 1995 i.e. non-scheduled drugs, manufacturers fix the prices by themselves without seeking the approval of the Government/NPPA. However, the trend in prices of non-scheduled drugs is monitored and suitable action is taken by NPPA where price increase is more than 10% in a period of one year on moving basis. "

The government has come up with notification on December 7, 2012 related to National Pharmaceutical Pricing Policy -2012 (NPPP-2012) which provides all the manufacturers/importers manufacturing / importing the medicines as specified under National List of Essential Medicines 2011(NLEM-2011) shall be under the purview of price control. The objective of NPPP-2012 is to put in place a regulatory framework for pricing of drugs so as to ensure availability of required medicines "essential medicines" at reasonable prices.

"The Government is also providing support to the States under the NRHM for providing free Generic Drugs in Public health facilities. States have been encouraged to bring out essentials Drugs lists (EDL) facility wise and Standard Treatment Guidelines to promote safe and efficacious drug use,' said Mr Choudhury in written reply to a question in the LokSabha on March 22.