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Govt: We have no reports on high medicine prices

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Government says no specific reports on high medicine prices



National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) has not received any specific report that life saving drugs are being sold at high prices due to shortage/insufficient supply of such drugs in the country. In a statement laid in reply to a Starred Question in the Lok Sabha today, the Minister for Chemicals & Fertilisers, Srikant Jena said that NPPA monitors shortages and availability of drugs on the basis of monthly reports received from State Drugs Control Administration and also complaints, if any, received from individuals.

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. He further said that any manufacturer of scheduled formulation intending to discontinue any scheduled formulation from the market is required to issue a public notice and intimate the NPPA in Form -IV of Drug (Price Control) Order (DPCO), 2013. NPPA is empowered to direct the manufacturer to continue with required level of production or import for a period up to one year, in the public interest.

In another written reply Mr Jena said the Government regularly monitors the prices of scheduled and non-scheduled formulations under provisions of Drug Price Control Order (DPCO), 2013 through National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) and actions are taken as per the provisions of DPCO-2013 against errant companies. Further in reply to another question, the Minister said that there are number of cases where pharmaceutical companies have been found to be selling some of their medicines to the consumers at a price higher than the price notified by NPPA/Government. Since inception of NPPA in August 1997, there are 1007 cases where demand notices have been issued till 31.01.2014. The overcharged amount is recovered from the companies along with interest @ 15% per annum on outstanding amount. If the company fails to deposit the amount, the matter is referred to Collector concerned for recovery of the amount on arrears of land revenue under Essential Commodities Act, 1955. Since inception of NPPA (August 1987) demand notices have been issued.