

(f) if not, the reasons for the delay and the agency accountable for this escalation in revival cost?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (DR. A.K. PATEL): (a) to (f) Hindustan Fertilizer Corporation Ltd. (HFC) and Fertilizer Corporation of India Ltd. (FCI) were referred to the Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR) in April, 1992.

In April, 1995 Government approved, in principle, the revival of Barauni, Durgapur and Namrup units of HFC; and Sindri, Ramagundam and Talcher units of FCI at an estimated fresh investment of Rs. 2201.13 crore (Rs. 464.93 crore for HFC and Rs. 1736.20 crore for FCI). However, these revival schemes could not be implemented for want of funding arrangements. The revival packages were then reformulated from the stand point of financial institutions after a fresh technical appraisal by an independent consultant.

In the hearing of the cases of HFC and FCI on 22.10.97, the BIFR directed the Operating Agency viz., Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation of India Ltd., to submit a comprehensive status report including a draft rehabilitation scheme within one month's time.

The Government has approved the revamp of the Namrup units of HFC on 1.10.97 at an estimated fresh investment of Rs. 350 crore. The company has taken necessary steps for implementation of the revamp project. The proposals in respect of the remaining units of HFC and FCI will be finalised on considerations of unitwise viability and tie up of the funding arrangements. Thereafter, Government will submit the rehabilitation schemes for HFC and FCI to the BIFR.

Pricing of vital drugs

3368. SHRI PARAG CHALIHA: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that many vital drugs have escaped the price mechanism in the absence of any regulatory authority;

(b) whether it is also a fact that apart from antimalarial and anti-harmonal; drugs prices going very high, the prices of even common drugs have soared high as a result thereof; and

(c) the steps taken for setting up Pricing Authority?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (DR. A.K. PATEL): (a) to (c) No, Sir. National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) has been set up vide Government Resolution No. F. 33/797-PI.I dated 29th August, 1997. A transparent criteria for Government regulating span of price control over drugs has been laid down in the 'Modifications in Drug Policy 1986' as announced in September, 1994. The prices, as measured by the Whole-sale Price Index (base 1981-82=100), has increased by 18.86 per cent in respect of drugs and medicines in 1997-98 over 1994-95 as compared to 20.06 per cent increase for all commodities during the same period.

Mechanism to monitor the quality of Drugs

3369. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the Indian drug market continues to be flooded with low quality drugs posing serious health problems to the users; and

(b) if so, what is the existing mechanism to monitor the quality of drugs produced by the manufacturers and to check marketing of low quality of drugs in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (DR. A.K. PATEL): (a) and (b) As per the reports available ' from the State/UT Governments, it shows that there has been no glowing increase in the incidence of production, distribution or sale of not-of-standards quality/spurious drugs posing serious health problems to the user.

A statement showing no. of samples tested and no found spurious by Drugs Control Organisation in various parts of the country during the year 1984—96 is given in statement (*see below*).

All medicines manufactured and sold in the country are required to comply with the quality parameters stated in the Books of Standards (Pharmacopoeias), as prescribed in Second Schedule of the Drugs & Cosmetics Act, 1940 and Rules thereunder. Failure to do so would attract necessary punitive action like withdrawal of the batch sold, withdrawal of permission granted to manufacture the specific item, suspension, cancellation of manufacturing licences or prosecution of the manufacturer as per the provisions of Drugs & Cosmetics Act, 1940 & Rules thereunder.

Whenever specific complaints of poor quality of drugs are brought to the notices of the Government, necessary investigations are carried out by the Licensing Authorities of States/UTs and necessary punitive action taken against defaulters.

Statement

Samples Tested and Found spurious by various States/UTs Drugs Control Organisation during the period 1984—96

Year	No. of samples tested	No: found as spurious	% to Total
1984-85	18504	48	0.259
1985-86	19035	32	0.168
	26387	72	0.272

Year	No. of samples as tested	No. found as spurious	% to Total
1987-88	26545	31	0.116
1988-89	27696	56	0.202
1989-90	26787	35	0.130
1990-91	31474	125	0.397
1991-92	34337	96	0.279
1992-93	22236	30	0.14
1993-94	31924	82	0.26
1994-95	29769	81	0.27
1995-96	30981	72	0.23

Hike in the prices of life saving drugs

3370. SHRI GHUFRAN AZAM: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have recently enhanced the prices of important life saving drugs;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons and justification for such an hike;

(c) whether the poor people have been effected at large due to hike in prices of drugs; and

(d) if so, what further steps Government propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (DR. A.K. PATEL): (a) to (d) Life saving nature of the drugs depends upon a particular situation and circumstances. The DPCO, 95 does not make distinctions between life saving drugs and other drugs. Recently the NPPA has enhanced the price of a bulk drug, namely, the Pheniramine Maleate. The marginal change in the price of a bulk drug is warranted because of changes in the cost of inputs, changes in consumption norms and technology, etc.

The diseases that primarily afflict poor are mostly covered under the National Programme for Health Care of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare where essential drugs are supplied free by the Government through State