

Illegal and unethical online sale of medicines

DR. T. N. SEEMA (Kerala): Sir, nowadays, there is no need for doctors, prescriptions and pharmacists. One could buy any medicine with a click of the mouse. It is the *e-commerce* sites that are selling medicines. There are many sites such as Netmeds, Meditrack, etc. Online sales of prescribed medicines in India are, by and large, unregulated and open for abuses. In fact, illegal and unregulated online sales of prescribed medicines in India are flourishing like a plague. The fast-growing and uncontrollable number of online pharmacies, mostly based abroad, has posed a serious challenge to State drug control authorities.

They are simply not in a position to regulate the affairs of these online pharmacies that are openly violating the laws of the country. While buying drugs without prescriptions is in itself a dangerous trend, online pharmacies present a greater risk.

Apart from quality, efficacy and standards, monitoring the sale of medicines is also crucial because many drugs can be misused if not traded through prescription. Besides, there are certain medicines which are allowed with restrictions and if taken without proper prescription and supervision, it can lead to serious consequences.

Schedule X drugs include narcotics and psychotropic substances and these too are available online.

Sir, a few months back, the Maharashtra Food and Drug Administration filed an FIR against Snapdeal for selling pharmaceutical products online. Snapdeal was allegedly selling both prescription as well as OTC pharmaceutical products including emergency contraceptive pills through its *e-commerce* platform.

The Drugs and Cosmetics Act does not allow sales of Schedule H drugs without a doctor's prescription. In fact, even over-the counter (OTC) pharmaceutical products can be sold only by licensed retailers.

In the absence of guidelines, regulatory agencies are finding it difficult to track and monitor such sale.

Sir, I would urge the Government to bring strict guidelines and monitoring mechanism to regulate online pharmacies. Thank you.

SHRI K. N. BALAGOPAL (Kerala): Sir, I associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN (Uttar Pradesh): Sir, I too associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

SHRI JAVED ALI KHAN (Uttar Pradesh): Sir, I too associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

SHRIMATI JHARNA DAS BAIDYA (Tripura): Sir, I too associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

SHRI RITABRATA BANERJEE (West Bengal) : Sir, I too associate myself with the issue raised by the hon. Member.

श्री आलोक तिवारी (उत्तर प्रदेश): महोदय, मैं माननीय सदस्या के वक्तव्य से स्वयं को सम्बद्ध करता हूँ।

श्री राम नाथ ठाकुर (बिहार): महोदय, मैं माननीय सदस्या के वक्तव्य से स्वयं को सम्बद्ध करता हूँ।

श्री रवि प्रकाश वर्मा (उत्तर प्रदेश): महोदय, मैं माननीय सदस्या के वक्तव्य से स्वयं को सम्बद्ध करता हूँ।

श्रीमती कनक लता सिंह (उत्तर प्रदेश): महोदय, मैं माननीय सदस्या के वक्तव्य से स्वयं को सम्बद्ध करती हूँ।

श्री हरिवंश (बिहार): महोदय, मैं माननीय सदस्या के वक्तव्य से स्वयं को सम्बद्ध करता हूँ।

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much. Yes, all associated names may be added. Shrimati Vijila Sathyananth.

Need to allow Jallikattu (bull fighting) sports in Madurai, Tamil Nadu

SHRIMATI VIJILA SATHYANANTH (Tamil Nadu): Thank you so much, Sir, for giving me this opportunity. This is a very important issue regarding Jallikattu, a valorous sport reflecting Tamil Nadu's tradition and culture. It is also popularly known as Eruthazhuvuthal or Manju Virattu, it is a bull taming sport played in Tamil Nadu as a part of Pongal celebrations. Bulls are fed nutritious diet so that they become strong and sturdy. Jallikattu includes Manju Virattu, Oormaadu, Vadamaadu Erudhu Vidum Vizha. Bull fighting was common among the ancient tribes who lived in the 'Mullai' geographical division of the ancient Tamil country. The term "Jallikattu" originated from the words "Jalli" and "Kattu", referring to silver or gold coins tied to the bull's horns. A seal from the Indus Valley Civilization depicting the sport is preserved in the National Museum, New Delhi. A single painting discovered in a cave about 35 km west of Madurai shows a lone man trying to control a bull and the painting, is estimated to be about 1,500 years old. Many cases had been filed in courts in connection with Jallikattu. In May, 2006, a case was filed seeking a ban on the holding of Jallikattu in Alanganallur in Madurai District. While the case was pending, another case was filed in the Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court