

(b) and (c) Ministry of Health & Family Welfare issued National List of Essential Medicines (NLEM), 2015 by adding and deleting some of the medicines from NLEM, 2011. There were 348 medicines listed in NLEM 2011. A total of 107 medicines (Coronary stents was added at later stage in July, 2016) have been added, and 70 medicines have been deleted to prepare NLEM 2015 which now contains a total of 377 (Coronary stents was added at later stage in July, 2016) medicines. The NLEM, 2015 is available on website of Ministry of Health & Family Welfare at www.mohfw.gov.in.

Ministry of Health & Family Welfare *vide* order no. 11035/923/2017-DRS dated 03.07.2018, has constituted Standing National Committee on Medicine (SNCM) under the chairmanship of Secretary, DHR & DG, ICMR to review and revise the National list of Essential Medicines (NLEM) by way of addition and deletion in the existing NLEM, 2015 in the context of contemporary knowledge of use of therapeutic products in health & hygiene of general public.

Sanitary napkin scheme

682. SHRI VINAY DINU TENDULKAR: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has recently launched a scheme for making available sanitary napkins for ensuring menstrual hygiene of women;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the sanitary napkin is environment friendly;
- (d) the number of sanitary napkins sold in India so far under this new scheme, whether the price of the said sanitary napkin is cheaper as compared to similar sanitary napkins available in the market;
- (e) if so, the details thereof;
- (f) whether country-wide awareness programme has been launched by the Department of Pharmaceuticals; and
- (g) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI D.V. SADANANDA GOWDA): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. The Government under the Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP) made available 'Janaushadhi Suvidha Oxo-Biodegradable

Sanitary Napkin' at all its kendras (stores) with effect from 4th June, 2018, Initially these sanitary pads were made available to public at ₹ 2.50/- per piece. Subsequently, with effect from 27.08.2019, the price of these sanitary pads was reduced and presently they are being sold at Rs 1.00/- per piece so as to make them more affordable.

(c) The 'Janaushadhi Suvidha' Sanitary Napkins are environmental friendly, as these pads are made with Oxo-biodegradable material complying with ASTM D-6954 (biodegradability test) standards.

(d) and (e) As on 18.11.2019, more than 2.25 crore pads of 'Janaushadhi Suvidha' Sanitary Napkins have been sold under the scheme across the country. The price of these napkins at Rs 1/- per pad are much cheaper than the market price of similar sanitary napkins being sold at ₹ 3/- to ₹ 8/- per pad.

(f) and (g) Bureau of Pharma PSUs of India (BPPI), the implementing agency of PMBJP is spreading awareness campaign about the salient features of Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana including Janaushadhi Suvidha Oxo-Biodegradable Sanitary Napkin through various types of advertisements such as Print Media, Radio advertisement, TV advertisement, Cinema advertisements and Outdoor publicity like Hoardings, Bus Queue Shelter branding, Bus branding, auto Rikshawas wrapping. In addition to this, BPPI also educating the public about the usages of Jan Aushadhi generic medicines through social media platforms like facebook, twitter, Instagram, Youtube, etc. regularly on daily basis.

Divestment of Bengal Chemicals and Pharmaceuticals

683. SHRI RITABRATA BANERJEE: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government has decided to divest the Bengal Chemicals and Pharmaceuticals Ltd.; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI D.V. SADANANDA GOWDA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Based on recommendation of a Committee of Ministers, the Union Cabinet in its meeting held on 28.12.2016 has decided for strategic sale of Bengal Chemicals and