

Distribution of Life-Saving Drugs in Rural Areas

1196. SHRI N. K. SANGHI: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have since drawn up a plan for the distribution of life-saving drugs in the rural areas along with other things of necessities at a reasonable rate;

(b) if so, the broad features of the plan drawn up; and

(c) when this will be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI P. C. SETHI). (a) to (c). Government are considering the question of conversion of some of the existing petroleum retail outlets into multipurpose distribution centres for the supply of essential commodities in areas which are backward and at places which are reasonably within poor environment. The items proposed to be stocked and sold by such multi-purpose distribution centres include Controlled Cloth, Bicycle tyres, scooter tyres, soap, drugs etc. It is proposed to set up about 400 such distribution centres out of which 2, one at Bahalgadh in Sonapat District in Haryana and the other at Jagdishpur in Jaunpur District in Uttar Pradesh have already come into existence and arrangements have already been made to handle various consumer requirements.

2. A scheme of the Ministry of Health and Family Planning aimed at making available at reasonable prices essential house-hold remedies to the rural population, particularly to the people residing in remote areas has been included in the Fifth Five Year Plan. It is proposed to initiate the scheme in 1976-77, subject to the availability of funds.

3. Government is also giving careful consideration to the recommendations of the Committee on Drugs and Pharmaceuticals which submitted its

Report on 2-4-1975, with a view to adopting an integrated approach on the various facets of the drug industry. Government will take a decision on the recommendations of the Committee, shortly.

Short Supply of Cooking Gas.

1197. SHRI SAROJ MUKHERJEE:
SHRI SAKTI KUMAR SARKAR.

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM be pleased to state:

(a) what is the present price of cooking gas and what are the causes of the recent increase in its price;

(b) the causes of short supply of gas throughout the country and the steps taken to remedy this short supply; and

(c) the objective basis on which the supply position of L.P.G. is likely to improve during 1976?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM (SHRI ZIAUR RAHMAN ANSARI) (a) The present retail selling prices of cooking gas in the four metro-politan cities are given below —

City	Quantity of gas	Price/Rs.
Calcutta	15 Kg	33.31
Madras	15 Kg	29.36
Bombay	14 2 Kg	26.75
Delhi	15 Kg.	32.62

The recent increase in the basic ceiling selling price of cooking gas effective 1-12-1975, was due to the increase in the cost of imported crude oil following the decision of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) to increase the FOB cost of their crude oil by about 10 per cent.