

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE  
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:305  
ANSWERED ON:13.12.2006  
FAKE MEDICINES  
Chowdhury Shri Adhir Ranjan

**Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:**

- (a) Whether in an attempt to tackle the menace of fake life saving medicines, the WHO with their partners have launched a massive campaign to combat the lethal counterfeit drugs industry as reported in the Times of India dated November 16, 2006;
- (b) If so, the facts of the matter reported therein ;
- (c) Whether the sale of counterfeit medicines on the internet is growing in Asia and India is also a victim ;
- (d) If so, where the Government proposes to take further action on the menace of fake medicines; and
- (e) If so, the details thereof ?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SMT. PANABAKA LAKSHMI)

(a)to(e) : A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 305 FOR 13TH DECEMBER, 2006

Recognising the need for greater international cooperation in combating counterfeit medical products, the World Health Organisation (WHO) has initiated the process leading to the establishment of an organization called IMPACT (International Medical Products Anti-Counterfeiting Taskforce) for combating the spread of counterfeits.

The establishment of the Taskforce (IMPACT) was proposed by WHO and endorsed by 160 participants at an international conference in Rome in February, 2006, representing 57 national drug regulatory authorities, 7 international organizations, 12 international associations of patients, health professionals, pharmaceutical manufacturers and wholesalers. The Rome conference issued a set of principles and recommendations, enshrined in the 'Declaration of Rome', calling for WHO to lead the establishment of IMPACT and set the conceptual framework of IMPACT's work.

The IMPACT is a voluntary grouping of Governments, organizations, institutions, agencies and associations from developing and developed countries, aimed at sharing expertise, identifying problems, seeking solutions, coordinating activities and working towards the common goal of fighting counterfeit medical products. IMPACT aims at ensuring appropriate regional representation, including in particular from developing countries. The first General Meeting of IMPACT was held at Bonn, Germany, during 15th and 16th November, 2006.

In India, sale of medicine through internet is not permitted.

The Government of India and WHO are resolved to work jointly to combat the menace of counterfeit drugs. India has been associated with the IMPACT initiative from its inception. The Convener of IMPACT has recently held discussions with the Drugs Controller (India). The discussions were focused on developing a scheme for improving cooperation between importing and exporting countries to combat counterfeit drugs.

Further, this Ministry has already initiated the process of amending the

Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940, to provide for stricter penalties, in pursuance of the recommendations of the Mashelkar Committee which was set up for comprehensive review of the drug regulatory system in the country including the extent of problem of spurious drugs and remedial measures to deal with this problem effectively. The major amendments proposed relate to enhancement of penalties prescribed under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, provision of special courts for speedy trial of drug related offences, compounding of offences, authorizing the police also to file prosecution for drug related offences and making all drug related offences cognizable and non-bailable. All this is expected to act as a strong deterrent for manufacturers of counterfeit drugs. Government of India has also launched a 5-year World Bank aided Capacity Building Project for Food Safety and Quality Control of Drugs with a total project cost of Rs.354.25 crores. Extensive assistance is being provided to State Governments to augment their drug testing facility by way of equipments, manpower, training and civil works under the Project.

