

(d) the action taken against them; and

(e) the preventive measures taken by the Government to check the contamination in I.V. fluids?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE : (SHRI DALIT EZHILMALAI) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Report has concluded that purchases I.V. Fluids was made at higher rates. The Committee has wanted further CBI investigations into the delay in taking action against those found guilty and recommended transfer of officials responsible for the same. It has further suggested remedial measures to prevent such recurrence in future.

(c) and (d) 4 persons have been found guilty of these purchases. CBI has been requested to enquire into the matter. Departmental inquiry is already underway against one person.

(e) The following preventive measures are taken in Central Govt. Hospital to check the contamination of I.V. fluids;

1. Purchase of I.V. Fluids are made from approved manufacturers by Govt. Medical Store Deptt. for supply to Govt. Institutions and also against the tender enquired approved by the respective Joint Purchase Committee.
2. All batches of I.V. fluids are tested for quality control before issue to the user Institution.
3. Storages are done in dry cool place free from humidity and moisture to prevent fungal growth.
4. Each bottle is examined against light with white and black back-ground before issue.
5. Before using the I.V. Fluids on patients, each and every bottle of I.V. fluids is rechecked against light by the user and not bottle is used for patients if it contains any particulate matter/fungus.

In the event of any particulate matter or any fungal growth being noticed, the whole batch is suspended/withdrawn for use and the matter is reported to appropriate authority.

However, in view of the suggestions made by the Committee, the matter is being examined as so what additional preventive measures can be taken related to the system of procurement of such fluids.

Smuggling in North-Eastern States

258. SHRI BHIM DAHAL : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is increase in activities of smuggling in North-Eastern States including Sikkim;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by the Union Government to contain such activities?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI) : (a) to (c) Information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the House.

Drugs Prices Control Order

259. SHRI RAMACHANDRA MALLICK : Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state :

(a) whether sharp rise in the price of a commonly used pharmaceutical drugs has been noticed following the introduction of the Drug (Prices Control) Order, 1995;

(b) whether any survey has been conducted by any agency in this regard;

(c) if so, the extent of price rise indicated by such agency;

(d) the steps taken or proposed to be taken by the Government to check the price rise;

(e) whether under Drug (Prices Control) Order, 1995 the Union Government is authorised to fix the prices of drugs (wholesale and retail);

(f) whether the Union Government are going to delegate the power of fixing the prices of drugs to the States; and

(g) the time by which the decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (DR. A. K. PATEL) : (a) The prices as measured by the Wholesale Price Index (base 1981-82=100), has increased by 11.43 per cent in respect of drugs and medicines in 1997-98 over 1995-96 as compared to 11.49 per cent increase for all commodities during the same period. Hence the price rise in medicine is in consonance with other commodities.