

NATIONAL PHARMACEUTICAL PRICING AUTHORITY

SHUBHRA SINGH, IAS
Chairman

20th February, 2020

Subject: Monitoring availability of APIs and drugs in context of outbreak of COVID-19 in China-reg.

I am writing to you in the context of the emerging impact of the outbreak of Coronavirus (COVID-19) in China and the steps initiated by the Government of India to address the situation. WHO has since declared the situation as Global Health emergency.

2. It is widely known that India is the Pharmacy of the World. However, India is heavily dependent on China for import of key APIs and KSMs and there is an apprehension that in wake of COVID-19 the supplies of Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (APIs) / Key Starting Materials (KSMs) from China might be disrupted, resulting in shortage of medicines in the country.

3. As you are aware, Drugs are an essential commodity under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955. Further, the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) was constituted vide Government Resolution dated 29th August, 1997 as an attached office of the Department of Pharmaceuticals, Ministry of Chemical & Fertilizers, Government of India to function as the National Regulator for pricing of drugs and to ensure availability and accessibility of affordable medicines. The NPPA implements the Drugs (Prices Control) Orders (DPCO) issued by the Government from time to time.

4. The key Drug Industry Associations have assured the Government that there is enough stock of APIs/ formulations in the country. However, as a measure of public health preparedness in respect of APIs/Intermediates/KSMs which are imported from China, it is requested that the State Governments and UTs may closely monitor the production and availability of APIs and their formulations to prevent black marketing and hoarding. It may also be ensured that there is no violation of provisions of DPCO, 2013 with regard to compliance of ceiling prices / permissible increase in prices of scheduled / non-scheduled formulations. In case any contravention is noticed, necessary action should be taken under the provisions of DPCO, 2013 to ensure availability of life saving essential drugs to the consumers at all times under intimation to this office.

To,
The Chief Secretary,
All State Governments & UTs