

Prices of N-95 Masks are getting reduced by the Importers/ Manufacturers/Suppliers of N-95 Masks after an Advisory issued by NPPA

Press Note

Posted On: 25 MAY 2020 5:28PM by PIB Delhi

The Government has notified N-95 Masks as an essential commodity under Essential Commodities Act, 1955 by the Government vide Notification dated 13th March 2020. Thus, hoarding, black-marketing of the essential commodity is punishable offence under the Act. To keep check on the hoarding, black-marketing of the essential commodity, NPPA in exercise of the powers conferred under National Disaster Management Act, 2005 had directed all States/ UT Governments to ensure sufficient availability of surgical and protective Masks, Hand Sanitizers and Gloves at prices not exceeding the Maximum Retail Price printed on the pack size vide Orders dated 13th March 2020.

Grievances have been received regarding hoarding, black-marketing and differential higher pricing of N-95 Masks in the country. In this context, NPPA has directed State Drug Controllers/Food & Drug Administrations of all State/ UT Governments to take appropriate actions. As reported, raids have been conducted by few SDCs/ FDAs and appropriate action is being taken against the hoarders and black-marketers of the essential commodity. A PIL has also been filed before Hon'ble High Court of Bombay on the plea of bringing price cap on the N-95 Masks by the Government.

The Government is striving to ensure uninterrupted supply of N-95 Masks in adequate quantity in the country. For this, the Government is procuring largest chunk of the N-95 Masks directly from the manufacturers/ importers/ suppliers at bulk rates. To address the issue of higher prices of the N-95 Masks, NPPA intervened to bring down the prices. In this regard, in order to ensure availability of N-95 Masks at affordable prices in the country, NPPA issued an Advisory on 21st May 2020 to all the manufacturers/ importers/ suppliers of the N-95 Masks to maintain parity in prices for non-government procurements and to make available the same at reasonable prices. Further, NPPA submitted before Hon'ble High Court of Bombay on the plea of bringing price cap on the N-95 Masks that looking to the mismatch in the demand-supply of N-95 Masks in the country, NPPA advised manufacturers/ importers/ suppliers to bring down the prices voluntarily.

Meanwhile NPPA denies the news item appeared in the Times of India today alleging that NPPA approvingly cited a price that is more than three times the government procurement rate for the masks. The Government procurement rate quoted in the news clipping is fallacious, deceptive and misleading.

After issuing such an Advisory, major manufacturers/ importers of N-95 Masks have reduced their prices significantly up to 47% leading to availability of N-95 Masks in the country at affordable prices. As reported by the other manufacturers/ importers of N-95 Masks, it is expected that other manufacturers/ importers will follow the advice of the Government and roll down the prices in the larger public interest.

New Delhi 25 may 2020

RCJ/RKM

(Release ID: 1626743)