

Union Minister of Chemicals & Fertilisers reviews the availability of drugs for covid treatment and other essential drugs

Increased capacity of Remdesvir will augment the domestic availability of injection - Shri Sadananda Gowda

16.5 lakh vials of Remdesivir allocated between May 3 and May 9

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Union Minister of Chemicals & Fertilisers Shri D.V Sadananda Gowda chaired a meeting to review availability of drugs for covid treatment and other essential drugs. The Meeting was attended by Ms. S. Aparna, Secretary (Pharma), Dr. V. G. Somani, DCGI, Smt. Shubhra Singh, Chairperson, NPPA, Dr Mandeep Kumar Bhandari, Joint Secretary (Health and Family Welfare), Shri Navdeep Rinwa, Joint Secretary (Pharma), Smt. Vinod Kotwal, Member Secretary, NPPA and other senior officers.

Shri Gowda during the meeting appreciated the efforts of all seven manufacturers of Remdesivir for increasing the production capacity to 1.03 crore vials per month, up from 38 lakh vials per month a month ago. This increased capacity will augment domestic availability of the injection. He added that allocation of 16.5 lakh vials of Remdesivir has been made to all States for period between May 3 and May 9. Since April 21, a total allocation of 34.5 lakh vials has been made so far. Allocation to States is a dynamic process and efforts will be made to further enhance supply in the coming weeks.

During the meeting availability of other essential drugs was also discussed. Shri Gowda stressed the need to continuously monitor availability of other essential medicines and to check instances of black marketing and hoarding. Dr. Somani, DCGI informed that already a survey is being undertaken to ascertain availability of various medicines in the market. Preliminary findings suggest that at present, there is adequate availability of medicines in the market and Department of Pharma, NPPA and CDSCO will continue to closely monitor their availability. Regarding black marketing and hoarding, he conveyed that State Drug Controllers have been instructed to make teams at State level for field inspections. Strict Action is being taken against hoarding and black-marketing of drugs. A number of preventive and enforcement actions have been taken by DCGI/SDCs to stop hoarding/ black marketing/ overcharging of Covid management drugs like Remdesivir, Tocilizumab, Favipiravir, etc. By 1.5.2021, as many as 78 actions have been taken all over India, in coordination with SDCs, local police, FDA etc. for hoarding, overcharging, black marketing, and arrests were made/ cases were registered. Seizures of drugs, vehicles, empty vials (meant probably for making spurious drugs) and cash were made. In one case in Chandigarh, Remdesivir vials to the tune of 3000 units were recovered.

Shri Gowda lauded pharma companies and officers of Department of Pharma, NPPA, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare and CDSCO for their coordinated efforts and close cooperation in ramping up availability of drugs for covid treatment and other essential drugs within shortest possible time. Such close collaboration

between Government and private sector is need of the hour.

MC/KP/AK

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