

# Pharma task force recommends review of drug price control order

## Wants rationalisation of duty structure; Implementation in 100 days: Ananth Kumar

### OUR BUREAU

New Delhi, June 22

The task force on pharmaceuticals has called for a review of the Drug (Prices Control) Order, 2013, and suggested rationalisation of the inverted duty structure on active pharmaceutical ingredients (API) on a par with pharma goods; whereby excise duty is reduced from the current 10 per cent.

Releasing the report of the task force, which was headed by Pharmaceutical Secretary VK Subbureaj, to facilitate greater private participation in the pharmaceuticals industry, on Monday, Chemicals and Fertilisers Minister Ananth Kumar said the recommendations would be implemented over the next 100 days with reports of action taken to be provided on a regular basis over the same period.

"The pharmaceuticals industry will be globally competitive

in the next one year. That is my assurance," he said.

The task force suggested the creation of a High Level Coordination Committee under the Secretary to periodically review the constraints faced by the industry, and the constitution of a promotional corporate body.

It also called for the setting up of a regulatory cell at institutes such as the National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research (NIPER).

"The Indian pharma industry will not have to run from pillar to post anymore, they can just approach the Coordination Committee," said Kumar.

### Manpower shortage

Further, with just 340 sanctioned posts at the Central Drugs Standard Control Organization and just 846 drug inspectors in the country despite 1349 sanctioned posts in the States, the



Minister for Chemicals and Fertilisers Ananth Kumar

task force advised that one drug inspector per 50 manufacturing units and one inspector per 200 sales/distribution outlets is required.

The report, highlighted various other suggested measures, including funding and infrastructure support, R&D, process support and capacity building.

"Over the last one year, we decided to come out with one pharma vision and policy inspired by the Prime Minister's call of 'Make in India'. Our intention is that the pharma industry doubles in value over the next four years from ₹2 lakh crore today.

"These recommendations can help sort out all problems

### Pharma focus

- Task force proposes High Level Coordination Committee to review industry needs
- This committee will look into the constraints faced by the industry
- Three new Pharmaceutical Education and Research institutes to be established

"through a single window," said Minister Kumar.

He added that three new NIPERs would be established, in Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan, while the Jan Aushadhi scheme would be revised in mission mode to establish 3,000 outlets in every district hospital in every State, going beyond the seven covered as of today.

"Another task force report will be released in a few weeks on how the industry can service various verticals such as diabetes, cardiovascular diseases etc," Kumar added.

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