

Price control mechanism

# Govt may cap prices of some cancer, AIDS, malaria drugs

## The development will be a huge relief for patients, but the industry believes it could be hurt if the move goes through

• PRANAV MUKUL  
New Delhi

Drugs used in the treatment of 8-10 diseases, including cancer, AIDS, malaria, asthma and tuberculosis, could become cheaper if the government goes ahead with its plan to bring under control prices of non-essential drugs that are used in the treatment of these diseases, a senior official with National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority said.

Some 8-10 diseases have been listed such as cancer, AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome), malaria, tuberculosis, asthma, etc., the drugs of which are not under the national list of essential medicines," the official told Cogencis.

Although under the Drugs Prices Order) 2013, the NPAA was directed to cap the prices of 348 drugs according to a national list of essential medicines provided to the regulator by the health ministry, the order gives NPAA the power to fix



the prices of non-essential drugs as well.

Cipla Ltd is the biggest seller of HIV-AIDS medicines in the country, while Sun Pharmaceutical Industries Ltd and Natco Pharma Ltd are the major drug companies selling cancer medicines in India.

The NPAA official also said the government is soon likely to take a policy decision on the ceiling price of the said drugs. First of such government meetings were held around two weeks ago, the official added.

...the government..in

public interest, fixes the ceiling price or retail price of any drug for such period, as it may deem fit and where the ceiling price or retail price of the drug is already fixed and notified, the government may allow an increase or decrease in the ceiling price or the retail price...irrespective of annual wholesale price index for that year," the order says.

"We are examining the possible actions to bring down the prices in public interest in case of drugs whose prices vary to a great extent and the treatment is

### Cutting drug prices will deter firms from manufacturing: Biocon's Shaw

Biocon Chairman and Managing Director K. R. Mazumdar said today...

...the government's intervention to bring down prices of essential drugs by 25-40 per cent could deter manufacturing of such medicines by companies...

Minister Arun Kumar had said that he would talk to pharmaceutical companies and try to bring down prices of essential drugs by 25-40%...

very costly," a senior official told PTI.

The prices of some of the medicines targeting diseases like cancer vary up to 600 per cent, the official added.

The development will be a huge relief for patients, but the industry believes it could be hurt if the move goes through. "It's good for the patients, but the govern-

ment should be balanced and should consider that the companies are here to survive, to make profits," said Daara B. Patel, secretary-general, Indian Drugs Manufacturer Association.

Shares of Cipla Ltd closed down 2% at 372.45 rupees on the National Stock Exchange, while those of Sun Pharma ended up 0.43% at 566.62 rupees. Cogencis

Pranav

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