

Binoy Viswam

Member of Parliament
(Rajya Sabha)



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To,

**Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya,
Minister of Health & Family Welfare,
Government of India**

Respected Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya ji,

I write this letter to you drawing your attention to a matter that significantly impacts the health and financial well-being of our citizens. Many sections of society have raised concern about the promotion of generic medicines over branded medicines, particularly about the directives issued by the National Medical Commission's board of ethics. The directives ask doctors to prescribe generic medicine, but they seem to be in contravention to our existing drug policies. It has been pointed out that if government is genuinely inclined towards promoting generic medicines, the first step should be to limit or ban branded medicines. Without such a decisive action, chemists will be at discretion of selling any brand, undermining the very purpose of this directive.

I must emphasize that India, with its robust pharmaceutical industry, has been a leader in producing quality generic medicines. Our public sector units, like the Indian Drugs and Pharmaceuticals Ltd. (IDPL), have consistently reduced the cost of treatment domestically and internationally. Unfortunately, these units now appear to be non-functional or considerably less active. Additionally, the difference in price between the Maximum Retail Price (MRP) and the purchasing price of branded generics is alarmingly high. This not only burns a hole in the pocket of our citizens but also raises concerns about the profit margins and pricing strategies of pharmaceutical companies. I've also learned that a report concerning the rationalization of trade margins in drugs was submitted in December 2015, but no substantive action seems to have been taken on the same.

Given the condition, I urge you to delve deep into this matter. Our primary responsibility is the well-being of our citizens. To that end, it is essential to reevaluate our policies regarding generic medicines, strengthen our public sector pharmaceutical units, and reassess the pricing of branded generics. I hope these issues will find your consideration.

Yours sincerely,

(Binoy Viswam)

**Leader of CPI Parliamentary Party
& Secretary, National Council**

Member, Committee on Public Undertakings

Member, Standing Committee on Labour, Textiles and Skill Development

Member, Consultative Committee on Environment, Forest and Climate Change