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20 May 2024

West Bengal News

**BCDA Opposes Centre's Proposal to Sell OTC Drugs in Grocery Stores**

**Context:**

- Bengal Chemists and Druggists Association (BCDA) strongly opposed the Central government's proposal to sell over-the-counter (OTC) drugs in general and grocery stores.

**Key points:**

- The Union government suggested amending **Schedule K of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act** to allow OTC drug sales in general and grocery stores without a prescription.

**BCDA's Concerns:**

- **Public Health Risks:** BCDA believes selling approximately 400 OTC drug compositions, including antibiotics and habit-forming drugs, in general stores could lead to misuse due to the lack of pharmacist oversight.
- **Violation of Laws:** They argue that this proposal would violate existing drug and cosmetics laws, pharmacy regulations, and Supreme Court directives.
- **Existing Infrastructure:** BCDA claims that India's current network of 12.40 lakh retail chemists and 13.5 lakh pharmacists is sufficient to handle OTC drug needs.
- **Request to Centre:** BCDA urged the Centre to consult stakeholders before implementing any changes to the OTC drug sales policy.
- **Impact on Society:** Sajal Gangopadhyay, BCDA's General Secretary, emphasized the risks of allowing OTC drug sales without proper regulation, including drug abuse, self-medication, and compromised storage.
- **Current Status:** The government has identified around 400 compositions, including antibiotics and nasal sprays, to be sold over the counter. Presently, about 60 drugs under Schedule K are available without a prescription.

**Nilgai**

**Context:**

- A Nilgai, an endangered species, was seen on the National Highway of Balurghat town.
- Locals gathered to catch a glimpse of the rare creature, initially mistaking it for a deer or a calf.



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## Daily Current Affairs Encyclopedia

### About:

- The Nilgai, the largest Asian antelope, is found widely across the northern Indian subcontinent.
- It is the only member of the *Boselaphus* genus and belongs to the Bovidae family.
- There is noticeable **sexual dimorphism**, with males being larger and having different coloration than females.
- The Nilgai inhabits **India, Nepal, and Pakistan**, with a significant population in the Terai lowlands at the Himalayan foothills.
- It is native to the Indian subcontinent.
- **IUCN status: Least Concern.**

2nd edition of YOI Model United Nations

### Context:

- The 2nd edition of YOI Model United Nations was held by the Youth of India (YOI) Foundation at Delhi Public School, Fulbari, from May 17 to 19.

### Key points:

- Model United Nations is a student simulation of the United Nations, providing a platform for youth to engage in diplomatic conversations and formulate innovative solutions to global issues.
- Dr. S Somanath, Chairman of ISRO, attended the event, marking his first visit to Bengal.
- YOI Foundation, a Siliguri-based NGO accredited by the United Nations and other international organizations, has initiatives in 78 countries and has hosted events with participants from over 35 countries, allowing young people to engage with world leaders.

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