

# SUPREME COURT HEARS PLEA TO MONITOR DRUG PRICING

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"The 650 mg dosage is irrational," senior advocate Sanjay Parikh, representing the Federation of Medical & Sales Representatives Association of India, submitted. File | Photo Credit: The Hindu

The Supreme Court on Thursday took serious note of a plea to bring transparency in drug pricing and monitoring mechanism while pointing to a recent accusation against the manufacturer of Dolo-650 tablet of indulging in "unethical practices".

An NGO that has filed the petition said the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) had accused the pharma group manufacturing the well-known drug of distributing freebies to the tune of 1,000 crore to doctors and medical professionals in order to promote its product.

"The 650 mg dosage is irrational," senior advocate Sanjay Parikh, representing the Federation of Medical & Sales Representatives Association of India, submitted.

Justice D.Y. Chandrachud, who led the Bench hearing the case reacted, saying "what you are saying is not music to my ears. This is exactly what I had when I had COVID".

Mr. Parikh said the market price of Dolo up to 500 mg was under regulation. Any dosage beyond 500 mg is outside regulation.

The petition urged the court to direct the government to give the Uniform Code of Pharmaceutical Marketing Practices (Code) statutory basis. Unethical practices should reap consequences. Pharma companies should be made accountable, the federation said.

The court gave the government 10 days to reply to the petition. The federation would then have a week to file its rejoinder. The court posted the case for September 29.

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