

Govt plans to open Jan Aushadhi stores at 1,000 railway stations

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PLANS ARE AFOOT to open Jan Aushadhi stores at around 1,000 major railway stations across India as part of drive to make quality medicines available at low cost to the public, the government said on Friday.

Plans are also on to open such outlets at bus stands in different states with an aim to take the network to small towns and villages. Chemicals and fertilisers minister Ananth Kumar said ef-

forts are being made to ensure prescription of generic medicines by doctors for the benefit of patients. "I am going to speak to railways minister Suresh Prabhu in the coming days to open Jan Aushadhi stores (JAS) in 1,000 main railway stations in the country," Kumar said.

He further said in order to make affordable medicines to poor people in smaller towns and villages, his ministry is looking at setting up JAS at bus stops. "I am going to write to the state chief ministers and later speak to them

Plans are also in the works to open such outlets at bus stands in different states with an aim to take the network to small towns and villages

to open JAS wherever there is a bus stand," the minister added.

He said under the BJP-led government, the number of JAS has been increased to over 1,320 from 88 set up during the previous UPA regime. "By the end of this year, we

will have at least 3,000 JAS across India. The turnover of JAS will also touch ₹60 crore, up from ₹3 crore," Kumar said.

In order to ensure that good quality medicines are available at JAS, the minister said only those companies which comply with WHO-certified good manufacturing practices will be eligible for supplies. "Out of 10,000 pharmaceutical companies in India, only 1,400 are WHO GMP-certified and only they will be able to participate in tender process," Kumar added.