

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3584  
ANSWERED ON:21.03.2001  
MYSTERIOUS DISEASE IN SILIGURI AND WEST BENGAL  
AMBATI BRAHMANAIAH;M.V.V.S MURTHI;SHIVAJI MANE;SUSHILA SAROJ

**Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether the Government are aware that patients in Siliguri and North Bengal Medical Colleges/Hospitals are dying due to some mysterious disease;
- (b) if so, whether any help sought by State Government; and
- (c) the steps taken to control the disease?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA)

(a) to (c) A statement is laid on the table of the Lok Sabha.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3584 FOR 21.3.2001.

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The patients with symptoms of high fever, vomiting, delirium were first reported on 5th Feb. 2001. On receipt of this information State Health officials accompanied by experts from medical colleges of Kolkata and Institute of Tropical Medicine, Kolkata visited Siliguri to investigate the incidence. Between 16th to 21st February 62 persons suffered from low grade fever, sore throat, respiratory distress and pulmonary oedema. On the request of Govt. of West Bengal, 11 experts viz. 3 from National Institute of Communicable Diseases, New Delhi, 6 from National Institute of Virology (NIV), Indian Council of Medical Research, Pune and 2 from All India Institute of Medical Sciences were sent to Siliguri to assist the State health authorities in diagnosis and treatment of the disease. In this connection, WHO also sent 2 experts to Siliguri. Till 2nd March a total of 66 cases reported out of which 45 expired. Based on the clinical features the specialists has extended necessary advise for containment and treatment of the disease. On the request of Govt. of West Bengal required medicines were sent by the Central Govt. Medical Stores Depot, Kolkata. Biological samples of the patients suffering from the above symptoms were collected by the teams and the laboratory investigations showed that the virus belong to measles family. Samples have also been sent to Centre for Disease Control, Atlanta, USA for parallel identification.