

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:290
ANSWERED ON:03.12.2003
HEALTH MINISTERS CONFERENCE
SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWASI

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

- (a) whether a meeting of South East Asian Countries` Health Ministers Conference was held in New Delhi in the first week of September, 2003;
- (b) if so, the details of the issues discussed during the said conference;
- (c) whether eleven countries of this region have agreed to fight tobacco threat; and
- (d) if so, the broad consensus reached in this regard?

Answer

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

(a) Yes sir, a meeting of Ministers of Health of countries of the South East Asian Region was held in New Delhi on 8-9 September, 2003.

(b) The following issues were discussed during the conference:

- (i) Declaration on Health Development in the South East Asia Region in the 21st Century: Review of Progress,
- (ii) Follow up on Framework Convention on Tobacco Control,
- (iii) Prevention and Control of SARS,
- (iv) Purchasing Quality Essential Medicines,
- (v) Need for a regional Alcohol Action Plan,
- (vi) Traditional Systems of Medicine.

(c) & (d) Yes sir, after detailed deliberations, the conference recommended the following:

- (i) WHO should continue to provide technical support for capacity building in countries in the implementation of Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC). A regional workshop on the process of ratification and implementation of the Convention should be organized.
- (ii) WHO should also continue to support countries in mobilizing resources for national tobacco control.
- (iii) Countries should expedite the process of signing and ratification of FCTC as soon as possible. This may need full coordination with and cooperation of related ministries, parliament and other relevant bodies.
- (iv) Countries should establish a national tobacco control cell as well as a multisectoral national tobacco control committee and national comprehensive tobacco control policies.
- (v) Countries should facilitate and speed up the enactment of antitobacco control laws, confirming to the provision of FCTC.

(vi) Countries should establish sustainable financial mechanism for tobacco control by, inter alia, using the experience of other Member Countries.