

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1554  
ANSWERED ON:03.08.2005  
INDIA AS NUCLEUS OF STEM CELL RESEARCH  
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**Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether Government has examined the possibility of the country becoming a nucleus of stem cell research ; and  
(b) if so, the details thereof?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE ( SMT. PANABAKA LAKSHMI)

(a) & (b): India has emerged as one of the major countries involved in Stem Cell research. According to the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) around 15 institutions and three premier health centres in the country are involved in stem cell research and related activities. Some of these are:

- the Institute of Immunohaematology, Mumbai under the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) undertaking peripheral blood stem cell therapy in aplastic anaemia patients;
- the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi involved in clinical studies on stem cell therapies particularly in cardiovascular diseases;
- the L.V.Prasad Eye Institute, Hyderabad successful in transplanting a stem cell derived cornea to a patient who had lost his cornea;
- the National Brain Research Centre, Gurgaon involved extensively on neural stem cell useful in several congenital and acquired disorder, including Parkinson's disease;
- the National Centre for Cell Sciences, Pune has been working on developing a repository of cell cultures and cell lines, cryo-preservation technology for bone marrow and development of skin for burns and vitiligo patients.

The ICMR has also informed that considering the wider acceptability of umbilical cord blood stem cell, they are also setting up various blood stem cell banks. Reliance Life Sciences established sought Asia's first Umbilical Cord Blood Repository in June, 2000. Recently Asia Cryo-Cell in collaboration with Florida based Cryo-Cell International has set up India's first Umbilical Cord Blood Stem Cell Bank with 24 collection centres across the country near Chennai. The ICMR has also proposed to establish Cord Blood Stem Cell Banks in seven regional centres with coordinating unit at ICMR's Institute of Immunohaematology (IIH), Mumbai.