

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:4

ANSWERED ON:23.11.2005

FRESH POLIO CASES

Chowdhury Shri Adhir Ranjan;Nikhil Kumar Shri

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

- (a) whether the Union Government's commitment to WHO that it would eradicate polio by the end of 2005 is not likely to be fulfilled in view of fresh polio cases reported from some States;
- (b) if so, the facts thereof;
- (c) the number of polio cases reported in each State including Bihar and U.P. during the last six months till date, State- wise;
- (d) whether the Union Government in consultation with the State Governments proposes to formulate a fresh strategy to deal with such polio cases;
- (e) if so, the details thereof;
- (f) whether any proposal has been under consideration of the Union Government to reschedule the polio eradication programme; and
- (g) if so, the details thereof? ...

Answer

THE MINISTR OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS)

(a) to (g): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 4 FOR 23RD NOVEMBER, 2005.

The Government of India is committed to eradicate Polio from the country at the earliest. Significant progress has been made in this direction. The Government of India has undertaken various initiatives between 2003 and 2005 to achieve this goal. As a result of which, only 48 Polio cases have been reported in the country so far during 2005 as against 134 cases reported during 2004, 225 in 2003 and 1600 in 2002. Moreover, polio cases have been detected only from 27 districts in the country during 2005 as compared to 43 districts during 2004, 87 districts during 2003 and 159 districts during 2002. All the recent cases detected in the country since March, 2005, have been reported from UP and Bihar only. Thus, poliovirus transmission is now restricted to certain pockets of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. The State-wise number of polio cases detected during 2005 is annexed.

The Government was hopeful of achieving zero transmission of poliovirus by the end of 2005. While there has been an overall progress in reducing the number of polio cases drastically, it has not been possible to reach zero polio status because polio cases have been detected in some localized areas of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar recently. In view of these, it may take some more time beyond end of 2005 to reach the zero polio status. The Government of India is taking all possible measures, in consultation with the State Governments, as also World Health Organisation and other partners, to accelerate the process to achieve zero transmission as early as possible. The position is being monitored at the apex political and bureaucratic level both at the national level as well as the state level. The major initiatives undertaken by the government during 2005 to achieve zero transmission are:

- (i) introduction of Monovalent OPV1 vaccine in the high risk areas
- (ii) vaccinating children in transit
- (iii) intensification of social mobilization activities in underserved areas, and
- (iv) deployment of rapid response team members from polio free states of the country to Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. With these initiatives and coupled with implementation of 2 national immunization rounds and 6 sub-national immunization rounds in 2006, it may be possible to achieve zero transmission before the end of 2006.

The strategy for polio eradication is decided mainly on the recommendations of India Expert Advisory Group (consisting of national and international experts) which considers, under the aegis of WHO, the epidemiological situation in the country from time to time and makes recommendations on formulation of strategies and changes therein as also additional measures to be taken. The recommendations of IEAG are generally implemented by the Government.

