

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:219
ANSWERED ON:06.12.2006
RISE IN SILICOSIS CASES
Singh Baba Shri K.C.

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

- (a) Whether Silicosis is increasing at an alarming rate in the country ;
- (b) If so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor ;
- (c) Whether the Government has conducted any survey to ascertain the number of people affected by this disease during the last three years; and
- (d) If so, the outcome thereof, State-wise ?

Answer

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

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

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.219 FOR 6TH DECEMBER, 2006

Silicosis is a notifiable disease under the Factories Act. Indian Council of Medical Research's (ICMR) Institute of Desert Medicine Research Centre, Jodhpur (DMRC), carried out a cross sectional survey in Jodhpur during 1992-95 which indicated the prevalence of silicosis to be 9.9% in Sandstone Quarry workers. The main reason of silicosis was due to dry mechanical drilling in sandstone quarries which generate clouds of silica rich dust. Another survey done in Karauli during 2002-03 showed the prevalence of silicosis to be 37.3%.

ICMR's National Institute of Occupational Health (NIOH), Ahmedabad, has recently conducted a study in 2005 among slate pencil workers of Mandsaur, Madhya Pradesh. Among the occupationally exposed group, the prevalence of silicosis was 21%; among para-occupationally exposed, it was 12.6% and among non-occupationally exposed, nearly 2% had silicosis. In a study conducted in 2000 amongst agate grinding workers in Khambhat, Gujarat, the prevalence of silicosis was found to be 38.11% in past grinders, 29.2% in present grinders, 11.0% in household members and 6.8% in neighbours.

No longitudinal studies have been done by ICMR to assess increase in the incidence of silicosis over time.

Desert Medicine Research Centre, Jodhpur, has devised a method of Wet drilling and crushing in order to reduce the respirable dust levels and the technique & results have been conveyed to Director General, Mine's Safety. National Institute of Occupational Health, Ahmedabad, has also developed technologies for dust control which show reduction of 75%-85% of air borne dust which are now being put to use in quartz grinding units of Gujarat. NIOH (National Institute of Occupational Health) scientists at Ahmedabad are making efforts to improve the technology for complete control of the silica dust.