

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:140
ANSWERED ON:14.07.2004
HEALTH HAZARD IN KERALA
Sujatha Smt. C.S.

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

- (a) whether the Government is aware of serious health problems including deformity in children prevailing in some villages of Kerala;
- (b) if so, the details and the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether the Government has received any proposal for the assistance and compensation to the victims;
- (d) if so, whether the Government has sent any team to investigate the health hazard;
- (e) if so, the details thereof;
- (f) whether the Dubey Committee report based on IIBT and the National Institute of Occupational Health Study have revealed the existence of endosulfan residues in human blood as the main reason for the health hazard;
- (g) if so, the details thereof; and
- (h) the remedial measures taken/proposed to be taken to protect the affected victims?

Answer

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

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

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 140 FOR 14TH JULY, 2004

National Institute of Occupational Health (NIOH), and Institute under Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) conducted an epidemiological study in the Padre village of Kasargod district in Kerala on the directives of National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) who suo - moto took up the issue on the basis of news items about ill health in some villages in Kerala due to aerial spray of pesticide "Endosulfan" for over twenty years. The study concluded in its report of July, 2002, a possible link between the higher prevalence of various ailments including Neuro behavioral disorders, congenital mal-formation in female subjects and abnormalities related to male re-productive system in the Padre village in comparison to the reference village of Miyapavadu of Meenja Panchayat. However, the "Dubey Committee" set up by Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperation after taking into consideration the reports of Kerala Agricultural University, National Institute of Occupational Health, Dr. Achyuthan and Fredric Institute of Plant Protection & Toxicology (FIPPAT), an Independent Research Institute, has concluded in report of March, 2003, that there is no link established between use of Endosulfan in Plantation Corporation of Kerala (PCK) plantations and health problems reported in padre village. The committee inter-alia recommended to conduct comprehensive, well designed and detailed health and epidemiological study in entire cashew plantation area of Kerala to ascertain the incidence of diseases in Padre vis-À-vis Kerala State averages and also in the event of incidence of unusual health problem to determine probable factors responsible for alleged health problems. It also recommended that use of Endosulfan be continued as per provisions of Insecticides Act, 1968, but aerial spraying of Endosulfan may not be allowed in any situation including in PCK plantations to ensure full safety.

Government of Kerala has informed that the results of survey conducted by the State Government in Endosulfan spraying area and in adjacent non spraying area show that most of the health problems like Congenital Anomalies, Mental Retardation, Infertility etc. are high in spraying areas than non spraying areas. Also, a committee of experts, constituted under the Chairmanship of Dr. P.K. Sivaraman, Addl. Director of Health Services of Government of Kerala conducted detailed study of various reports of previous committees and conducted field visits. The committee, in its report submitted in August, 2003 stated that it could not find out any other reason other than Endosulfan spraying to explain the reported health hazards. The State Government temporarily banned aerial spraying of Endosulfan and declared pesticide holiday for five years. The Hon'ble High Court of Kerala in its order dated 12.8.2002 in O.P. No. 16300/01 has stayed the use of Endosulfan in the State. The State Government is also providing free treatment to those suffering from the reported problems and providing free medicine to the poor patients.