

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:87

ANSWERED ON:09.03.2005

PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAUMA AMONG TSUNAMI VICTIMS

Adhalrao Patil Shri Shivaji;Rao Shri Sambasiva Rayapati

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

- (a) whether the World Health Organisation (WHO) warned that the problem of psychological trauma among the Tsunami affected might be more serious than what was so far believed;
- (b) if so, whether the WHO has said that virtually every one who has been affected by the natural disaster appeared to be suffering from psychological trauma and needed support;
- (c) whether the havoc wrought by Tsunami has forced the WHO to take a fresh look into the health management guidelines for South and South East Asian Region;
- (d) if so, whether the WHO has issued fresh guidelines in regard to post calamity management;
- (e) if so, the details thereof;
- (f) whether experts from various nations including India participated in the formation of guidelines for emergency health preparedness;
- (g) if so, the details thereof; and
- (h) the effective measures taken/being taken by the Government to implement the guidelines?

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. 87 FOR 9TH MARCH, 2005

As per the World Health Organization (WHO), estimates of Psychiatric disorders [Post traumatic stress disorder, depression, anxiety disorder, suicidal ideation etc] after a disaster ranges from 5-10% among the affected population. WHO is of the view that everyone is affected after a disaster such as Tsunami but a substantial percentage [50%] of the affected population recover by themselves or with some social support. Forty percent needs psychosocial first-aid which can be given by a Community level worker and the balance 10% possibly require services from mental health professionals.

Thus WHO has strongly advocated a community based approach and have prepared manuals on Psychosocial Care for Tsunami-Affected Population for Community Level Workers and their Trainers. They have also prepared guidelines for Relief Workers for caring for their own well-being. These manuals/ guidelines were prepared in the month of January, 2005, with contributions from Indian and International experts.

However, immediately after Tsunami, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare identified National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences [NIMHANS], Bangalore, for coordinating the Psychosocial relief and rehabilitation work along with other premier institutions in the country. NIMHANS drew up an extensive action plan covering the entire Tsunami affected areas in the two States of Tamil Nadu and Kerala and U.T of Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Pondicherry. Apart from providing psychosocial care, capacity building efforts initiated include identification of seven training hubs, training of community leaders, student volunteers and self-help groups about psychosocial care. NIMHANS is now planning long term requirements with regard to psychosocial care.

The community based approach advocated by WHO has already been implemented by NIMHANS. However, the manuals and guidelines prepared by WHO would be considered by NIMHANS to further strengthen the Community based long term Psychosocial care.