

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1396

ANSWERED ON:27.11.2009

VACCINE FOR SWINE FLU

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

- (a) whether World Health Organisation (WHO) in its Report has warned of the shortage of vaccine in the wake of a winter surge in the cases of Swine Flu in developing countries, including India;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the corrective steps taken or being taken by the Government to make the vaccine available immediately to the effected people;
- (d) whether the Government proposes to produce indigenously developed vaccine for Swine Flu to meet any shortage; and
- (e) if so, the progress made in this regard?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIGHULAM NABI AZAD)

a) & (b) World Health Organization has observed that the pandemic flu vaccine may not be available in time for the winter surge. The observation is based on the fact that the pandemic vaccine manufacturing capacity is limited.

(c) to (e): Government of India constituted a Committee under Secretary (Health Research) to address this issue. Regular meetings were held with potential Indian manufacturers and with those external sources from which vaccine can be imported.

Ministry of Health and Family Welfare is working on a two step strategy. Development of pandemic vaccine by indigenous manufacturers is being encouraged. Three companies (Serum Institute, Pune; Panacea Biotech; Gurgaon and Bharat Biotech, Hyderabad) are working towards this and it is expected that clinical trials would start in January 2010. If all goes well, indigenous vaccine would be available by June 2010.

To cover the interim period, Government of India is importing four million doses of Pandemic vaccine to vaccinate the high risk group. This vaccine would be available by December 2009.