

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2491
ANSWERED ON:07.12.2012
PREVENTION OF FILARIASIS ELEPHANTIASIS
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Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the cases of hookworm infections and lymphatic filariasis also known as elephantiasis cost close to \$ 1 billion per year in the country;
- (b) if so, the details along with the facts in this regard;
- (c) the steps being taken by the Government to combat these diseases including development of low cost drug and vaccine for prevention of these diseases;
- (d) whether the Government is considering to seek cooperation of certain countries including the United States in developing new drugs and vaccines for prevention of these diseases; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI ABU HASEM KHAN CHOUDHURY)

(a) & (b): Regarding Lymphatic Filariasis (LF), a study conducted in two village of Tamil Nadu by vector control research centre, Puduchery and published in year 2000 in Parasitology Today, estimated the cost of US\$ 842 million on treatment and due to reduced working time as per exchange rate of US\$ prevailing at that time.

No such cost data or study is available for Hookworm infestation.

(c): National programme to eliminate LF was launched during 2004 with annual Mass Drug Administration (MDA) in all 250 endemic districts of the country. The Population coverage during Annual MDA has improved from 72% in 2004 to 87% in 2011. As a result the overall microfilaria rate (which indicates quantum of transmission potential) at National level has declined from 1.24% in 2004 to 0.37 in 2011. Out of 250 districts, 186 have achieved microfilaria rate of less than 1% which is an indicator for achieving LF elimination.

Low cost effective drugs Diethylcarbamazine and Albendazole are used in combination as per programme guidelines for prevention of spread of LF.

(d):No(e): Does not arise