

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:756

ANSWERED ON:01.03.2013

HEALTH HAZARDS OF MOBILE TOWERS PHONES

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

- (a) whether as per the recent study report, Bio-initiative-2012, exposure to radiation from mobile towers and phones is causing serious health hazards including cancer;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the existing guidelines and public safety limits regarding safeguards from mobile tower and cell phone radiation are adequate, in the country;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) if not, the corrective measures proposed by the Government in this regard?

Answer

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

(a) & (b): Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has informed that Bio-initiative 2012 report has summarized about 1800 new studies under twenty four technical chapters. Overall, these new studies reported abnormal gene transcription; genotoxicity and single and double strand DNA damage; stress proteins because of the fractal RF-antenna like nature of DNA; chromatin condensation and loss of DNA repair capacity in human stem cells; reduction in free radical scavengers – particularly melatonin; neurotoxicity in humans and animals; carcinogenicity in humans; serious impacts on human and animal sperm morphology and function; effects on the fetus, neonate and offspring; effects on brain and cranial bone development in the offspring of animals that are exposed to cell phone radiation during pregnancy; and findings in autism spectrum disorders consistent with EMF/RFR exposure.

(c) to (e): The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has informed that Base Transmitting Station (BTS), norms for exposure limit for the Radio Frequency Field (Base Station Emissions) has been reduced to 1/10th of the limits prescribed by International Commission on Non Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) with effect from 01.09.2012.

Further, Strict monitoring and enforcement of revised radiation norms has been initiated. In 83 cases, where the Base Station Emissions were found to be more than the prescribed norms, corrective actions have been taken immediately.

In respect of Mobile Handsets, the following directions have been issued by Department of Telecommunications (DoT) regarding Specific Absorption Rate (SAR) values:

(i) SAR level for mobile handsets is limited to 1.6 Watt/Kg, average over a mass of 1 gram of human tissue.

(ii) All the new design of mobile handsets shall comply with the SAR value of 1.6 Watt/Kg averaged over a mass of 1 gram tissue with effect from 1st September, 2012. However, the mobile handsets with existing designs, which are compliant with 2.0 Watt/Kg averaged over a mass of 10 gram tissue, may continue to co-exist upto 31st August 2013.

(iii) From 1st September 2013, only the mobile handsets with revised SAR value of 1.6 Watt/Kg are permitted to be manufactured or imported in India for domestic market.

With the above measures, India now has one of the most stringent EMF exposure norms in the world. DoT has further informed Department of Science & Technology (DST) has constituted a committee on 01.10.2012, to examine the harmful effects from Cell towers on the population living in the vicinity and for developing the frame of reference for calling out request for proposals for scientific assessment of health hazards and adverse impact on ecology.

Apart from above, a Complaint Handling System for Electro Magnetic Field (EMF) Radiation from Mobile Towers has been launched by DoT on 4th October 2012 in Mumbai.