

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1825

ANSWERED ON:16.08.2013

CASES OF RESPIRATORY SYNDROME CORONAVIRUS

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

- (a) whether the Government has taken note of cases of Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus (MERS-CoV) in several countries;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the steps taken/proposed by the Government to increase the surveillance to prevent the entry of MERS-CoV in the country;
- (d) whether the Government has issued any directions/advisory for the travellers to the middle-east countries including those going for the Haj pilgrimage; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABIAZAD)

(a) to (c) Yes. Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus (MERS-CoV) is an emerging disease that has caused respiratory illness in a number of people in the Middle-East. From September, 2012, when the disease was first detected, to date World Health Organization has reported 94 laboratory confirmed cases with 46 deaths. Most of the cases have been reported from Saudi Arabia. Few cases have also been reported from United Arab Emirates, Jordan, Qatar, Tunisia, France, Italy and United Kingdom.

National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) has informed all State surveillance units of Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP) about this emerging disease and to keep vigil for persons presenting with acute respiratory illness. Surveillance to detect clusters of Severe Acute Respiratory Illness (SARI) is being done through IDSP. Laboratory capacity to test samples has been established at National Institute of Virology, Pune and National Centre for Disease Control, Delhi. Health units at airports and seaports have been sensitized on MERS-CoV and advised for passive surveillance for MERS-CoV on self-reporting travelers.

(d) & (e) Ministry of Health has not issued any directions/advisory for the travelers to middle-east countries. However, Advisory to keep vigil for any illness with the symptoms suggestive of MERS Co V has been sent to International Airports. Advisory has also been issued for those going for the Haj Pilgrimage. Ministry of Health has held meetings with Ministry of External Affairs and the Haj Committee for creating awareness amongst the Hajj Pilgrims.

At present World Health Organization has not advised any screening for the travellers at the International ports/airports.