

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:726
ANSWERED ON:08.08.2013
MOU ON TB DRUGS
Pakkirappa Shri S.

Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR's) Open Source Drug Discovery (OSDD) has signed any Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC) recently to find more effective regimens for TB and Malaria;
- (b) if so, the details thereof including the salient features of the MoU;
- (c) the extent to which the TB and Malaria patients in the country would be benefited;
- (d) the time by when the new drugs would be available in the market for TB and Malaria patients?

Answer

MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF EARTH SCIENCES (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY)

(a),(b)&(c) Yes Madam. The MoU signed between CSIR and the Royal Society of Chemistry is meant to build a community of researchers in India on cheminformatics, which will support drug discovery efforts of OSDD for TB, Malaria and other neglected diseases that predominantly affect India. Cheminformatics is an emerging discipline that supports drug discovery. The MoU contemplates scientific partnership through activities such as building an online repository of real and virtual molecules, jointly developing free, cutting edge level software tools, etc. OSDD is focused on drug discovery with TB as the first target disease, and has taken up Malaria as an additional target for the 12th plan. Research collaboration in Cheminformatics is expected to help OSDD's drug discovery efforts on TB and Malaria.

(d) Drug discovery is a long and risk prone endeavour with gestation period of 12-15 years. Therefore it is difficult to fix timelines of delivery particularly considering the fact that many established pharmaceutical companies have failed in their effort to find new drugs for TB for the past 40 years. Since TB and Malaria are diseases that are of serious national concern, CSIR through the OSDD programme is making a concerted effort to discover new drugs for the benefit of TB and Malaria patients particularly on patients with drug resistant infections. These drugs will be made available at affordable costs. OSDD has shown promising results in its short span of 5 years of existence.