

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:698
ANSWERED ON:24.07.2015
Cases of Middle-East Respiratory Syndrome
Owaisi Shri Asaduddin

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

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, and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether any such cases have been detected in the country, if so, the details thereof along with the action taken by the Government thereon;
- (c) whether the Government has issued any directions/advisory for the travellers to the middle-east countries including those going for the Haj pilgrimage, and if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) the steps taken/proposed by the Government to keep vigil/surveillance on people having MERS symptoms, particularly at airports in the country?

Answer

(a): 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 and other countries. From September, 2012, when the disease was first detected, upto 7 July, 2015, World Health Organization has reported 1368 laboratory confirmed cases with at least 487 deaths from 26 countries. Most of the cases have been reported from Saudi Arabia, Republic of Korea and United Arab Emirates.

(b): No case of MERS-CoV has been reported or detected in India so far.

Contdâ€¦â€¦â€¦!
-2-

(c): Ministry of Health has issued advisory for passengers arriving from or travelling to middle-east countries including those going for Haj pilgrimage. The advisory gives information on preventive health measures such as personal hygiene, frequent washing of hands and to avoid direct contact with those having cough and sneezes. This apart, the travellers are also advised not to visit farms or be in touch with farm animals especially camels and to avoid raw camel milk or taking partly cooked meat of camels. If the passenger develops symptoms during his stay in an affected country, he is advised to use triple layer mask and report to a health facility. Similarly, if symptoms are noticed while travelling back to India, the passengers are advised to report to the airline staff for whom separate guidelines have been issued. Such passenger is made to wear mask and report to the immigration officer or medical unit on arrival. After returning to India, passengers have to look for symptoms for 14 days and if he/she develops symptoms of the disease during this period he/she is advised to report to the nearest health facility.

(d): Passive screening through self-reporting by symptomatic international travellers arriving at various airports is being done in coordination with immigration officials.

Health Alerts have been displayed at or near to Immigration counters in the pre-immigration area.

In addition, 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.