

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
TRIBAL AFFAIRS  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:988

ANSWERED ON:27.07.2015

Sickle Cell Hemoglobin in Tribal Students

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**Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether Sickle Cell Hemoglobin in tribal students has been a major concern for the authorities in the country;
- (b) if so, the extent to which it has affected tribals in various States;
- (c) whether the Government has organized any workshop for identification of Sickle Cell Hemoglobin in tribal students to carry out Turbidity Test in the country;
- (d) if so, the details thereof, State-wise; and
- (e) the States in which such workshops have so far been undertaken and the details of progress made in this regard?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS  
(SHRI MANSUKHBHAI DHANJIBHAI VASAVA)

(a) to (e): Sickle cell anemia is an inherited blood disorder. In the disorder, hemoglobin molecules in the red blood cells, which carry oxygen throughout the body, get change and form a sickle shape. These abnormally-shaped blood cells are the source of the anemia and pain. The sickle-shaped red blood cells are sticky and have trouble passing through small blood vessels in the body. The cells get stuck, clump together, and block the flow of blood. Blocking off the blood causes pain. This is called a sickle cell crisis. The sickle-shaped red blood cells die quickly enough resulting in inadequate red blood cells to carry oxygen throughout the body, which in turn causes fatigue, paleness, shortness of breath, delayed growth, blindness, stroke, acute chest syndrome etc.

The sickle cell gene is passed from generation to generation in a pattern of inheritance. Sickle Cell is prevalent in areas where incidence of Malaria is or was high. With only 8.6% of the population share, tribals account for 30% of Malaria morbidity. There is a little worthwhile treatment for the disease as of now but with proper medical care and management of disease severity and complications may be curtailed to improve the quality of life and life span. Thus it has been decided by the Government to screen the tribal students across the country to find the incidences of Sickle Cell Anemia among them.

The Ministry is organizing regional training workshops in collaboration with Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) to facilitate State/ UTs to train adequate manpower to undertake the screening exercise in a time bound manner. The training workshops exhibit live demonstration of the Turbidity test to Medical Practitioners, Health workers, Tribal Welfare officials and other Policy makers.

Workshop trainings have so far been conducted in the States of Odisha, Gujarat, West Bengal, Jharkhand, Assam, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. The State Government authorities have been sensitized to pay due attention to the problem.

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