

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:88

ANSWERED ON:28.11.2014

SURVEILLANCE OF EBOLA

Gavit Dr. Heena Vijaykumar; Mohammed Shri Faizal P.P.

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

- (a) Whether the World Health Organisation (WHO) has warned against the spread of Ebola virus and if so, the details thereof along with the action taken by the Government to prevent its outbreak in the country;
- (b) The present state of preparedness and existing facilities at seaports and airports for screening and surveillance of inbound passengers for monitoring of suspected cases of Ebola in the country;
- (c) The number of passengers screened so far and identified to be at medium risk, high risk and low risk;
- (d) Whether the Government proposes to open new laboratories in order to collect and store samples from suspected patients and if so, the details thereof along with the locations where these are likely to be set up in the country; and
- (e) The outcome of the recent meeting with the States and Union Territories having international airports and seaports on Ebola crisis and the decisions taken thereon along with the financial/technical assistance extended to them to deal with the crisis?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI JAGAT PRAKASH NADDA)

(a) to (e): A statement is laid on the Table of the House

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 88 FOR 28th NOVEMBER, 2014

(a) to (e) World Health Organization declared the Ebola Virus Disease Outbreak in West Africa to be a Public Health Emergency of International Concern on 8th August, 2014 in accordance with the International Health Regulations 2005.

Though World Health Organization maintains that the risk of spread to countries outside the African continent is low, Government has taken a number of steps to prevent entry of Ebola into the country and to contain it promptly, if a case is reported in India. Some of these are as follows:

(i) Screening of passengers coming from affected West African countries at international airports and major ports is being done. Special Health Units are functioning at these airports and are manned by trained medical and paramedical staff. Every passenger who is coming through flights that connect to affected countries is required to fill up a Health Card on board. He / She is required to visit the health counter which is equipped with thermal scanners/ infra-red thermometers for recording of body temperature. In the event of a passenger travelling from the affected country being identified as having any fever, he is isolated and released only after appropriate checks. As on 21.11.2014, 34290 passengers have been screened. Out of these screened, 34212 were identified as having low risk, 8 with medium risk and 70 with high risk (having Ebola like symptoms).

(ii) Consequent to Health Minister's meeting on 18.11.2014, Department of Civil Aviation has directed all airlines to ensure that passengers travelling to India from Sierra Leone, Guinea, Liberia, and Mali or those who have visited these countries in the last one month are booked/rerouted for only seven airports viz. Bengaluru, Chennai, Cochin, Delhi, Hyderabad, Mumbai and Kolkata in India where enhanced screening, quarantine and isolation facilities have been established.

(iii) Ministry of Shipping has put in place similar surveillance mechanism in respect of all vessels and crew including cruise liners arriving from affected countries, at major ports.

(iv) Based on directions of the Health Minister during a meeting on 18.11.2014, an advisory has been issued on 21.11.2014 by Ministry of External Affairs to the Indian Embassies in Abidjan, Dakar, Abuja, Accra, and Niamey providing that:

(a) all passengers travelling from Ebola affected Countries or who have undergone treatment for Ebola Virus Disease have to produce a certificate from the Ministry of Health of the Country concerned that there is no evidence of virus in his/her body fluids.

(b) passengers who do not possess the certificate as mentioned at (a) are advised not to travel to India for a period of 90 days from the day he/she is discharged from the treatment facility.

(v) The Integrated Disease Surveillance Project is tracking such passengers arriving from affected countries who have a history of contact with a suspected or confirmed Ebola Case.

(vi) Currently, National Institute of Virology, Pune and National Centre for Disease Control, Delhi are the two laboratories involved in testing of samples for diagnosis of Ebola. Four more laboratories with proper biosafety facilities have been made ready.

(vii) Isolation facilities to manage cases of Ebola Virus Disease have been identified with help of each of the State Governments.

(viii) Personal Protective Equipment have been provided to States/ Union Territories and Airports/Ports. These are required for handling of any ebola affected person.

(ix) Guidelines on setting up of isolation facilities, screening of travellers and disinfection procedures etc. have been provided to the States/Airports and Ports.

(x) Central teams are being sent from time to time to inspect airports for ensuring proper surveillance. Ministry of Shipping is taking necessary steps in respect of major sea ports in this regard.

(xi) Master Trainers and Rapid Response Teams of the States have been trained and States have been asked to conduct training of District Rapid Response Teams.