

Fourteenth Loksabha**Session : 4****Date : 10-05-2005****Participants : Suman Shri Ramji Lal, Mollah Shri Hannan, Ramdoss Dr. Anbumani, Jagannath Dr. M., Dome Dr. Ram Chandra, Ramdoss Dr. Anbumani**

Title: Spread of Meningitis in Delhi and other States.

12.41 hrs.**RE: SPREAD OF MENINGITIS IN DELHI AND OTHER STATES**

MR. SPEAKER: I have got a very important issue. I have requested the hon. Minister to be present. Shri Ramji Lal Suman, please raise this issue.

श्री रामजीलाल सुमन (फ़िरोज़ाबाद) : अध्यक्ष महोदय, ... (व्यवधान)

श्री देवेन्द्र प्रसाद यादव (झंझारपुर) : अध्यक्ष महोदय, मेरा एक प्वाइंट ऑफ़ इन्फार्मेशन है। मुझे इस विषय में ज्यादा नहीं कहना है। मैंने मैटर्स ऑफ़ अर्जेंट पब्लिक इम्पोर्टेंस के संबंध में शार्ट ड्यूरेशन डिस्कशन के लिए नोटिस दिया था, उसकी जानकारी... (व्यवधान)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Devendra Prasad Yadav, it is true. I myself drew your attention to the provision of the rule. That does not speak of Rule 193. You have to give a specific motion with regard to that particular authority. That is not a motion. A separate motion has to be given. Rule 193 is not the relevant rule for that. You come to me. I shall explain. We would discuss with you how to do it. You know it very well. You are a very distinguished Member of the Panel of Chairmen.

... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I have said that certainly I would consider it but you should give a proper motion. There is no question of my denying permission to you. The question is that of compliance with the rules.

श्री रामजीलाल सुमन : अध्यक्ष महोदय, एक मई से दिल्ली में मेनिंगोकोक्सेमिया नाम की बीमारी शुरू हुई और लगातार इस बीमारी का प्रकोप बढ़ता जा रहा है। इस मर्ज के लिए जो दवाइयां उपलब्ध थीं, वे गायब हैं। लगभग 750 करोड़ रुपये की दवाइयों का कारोबार था। इनमें से पचास प्रतिशत दवाइयां बाजार से गायब हो गईं और नौबत यहां तक आ गई कि वैक्सीन की कीमत आठ सौ रुपये हो गई। इस सदन में दो-तीन बार सवाल को उठाया गया और कहा गया कि इस बीमारी का निरंतर प्रकोप बढ़ रहा है, इस भयंकर बीमारी की वजह से दिल्ली के सैकड़ों लोग इसकी चपेट में हैं। आज स्थिति यह है कि न सिर्फ दिल्ली बल्कि उत्तर प्रदेश, हरियाणा, राजस्थान और बिहार में भी इस बीमारी का प्रकोप हुआ है। श्री हन्नान मोल्लाह और हमने जब यह सवाल उठाया तो 6 तारीख के मंत्री जी ने बयान दिया कि "There are sufficient stocks of medicines." जबकि सभी समाचार पत्रों में प्रमुखता के साथ छपा है कि 50 फीसदी दवाएं बाजार से गायब हैं और 6 मई को यह भी कहा गया कि "The situation is under control and it is being regularly monitored."

अध्यक्ष महोदय, यह मेरी समझ से बाहर है कि सरकार कहती है कि स्थिति पर नियंत्रण रख लिया गया है और हमारे पास पर्याप्त दवाएं उपलब्ध हैं। लेकिन न तो दवाएं हैं, न स्थिति पर नियंत्रण है और न कोई आपात योजना बनाई गई है। मैं आपके मार्फत कहना चाहता हूं कि गरीब आदमी जो इस रोग का शिकार है वह आठ सौ रुपये का वैक्सीन किस परिस्थिति में लगा सकता है। यह बहुत गंभीर सवाल है। मैं आपके मार्फत सरकार पर आरोप लगाना चाहूंगा कि जितनी गंभीरता के साथ इस बीमारी को लिया

जाना चाहिए था, सरकार ने इस बीमारी को उतनी गंभीरता से नहीं लिया। इसका परिणाम यह हो रहा है कि यह बीमारी दिल्ली की चारदीवारियों को तोड़कर अन्य प्रांतों में भी फैल रही है। आज यह सवाल सबसे अहम है कि न तो वैक्सीन उपलब्ध है, न दवाएं उपलब्ध हैं। समाचार पत्रों में निरंतर छप रहा है कि लोगों के उचित उपचार की व्यवस्था नहीं है।

अध्यक्ष महोदय, यह संसद है, यहां हम लोग इसलिए आते हैं कि हम जन-जीवन के जुड़े हुए महत्वपूर्ण सवालों को इस सदन में रखेंगे, सरकार का ध्यान आकर्षित करेंगे तो सरकार का उस समस्या के निदान के लिए सकारात्मक रुख होगा। हम लोग सांसद के रूप में सार्थक नहीं हैं? मुझे बेहद अफसोस के साथ कहना पड़ता है कि इस सदन में बराबर इस समस्या को उठाने के बाद भी सरकार निरंतर इस गंभीर समस्या, गंभीर बीमारी पर किसी भी कीमत पर अपने फ़र्ज़ का निर्वाह नहीं कर रही है।

अध्यक्ष महोदय, हम आपका संरक्षण चाहते हैं और आपके माध्यम से जानना चाहते हैं कि सरकार ने अब तक क्या किया? क्या सरकार ने आपात योजना बनाई? यह बीमारी विकराल रूप धारण कर ही है, इसके लिए सरकार ने क्या किया? जो गरीब लोग हैं, जिनकी माली हालत ठीक नहीं है, क्या उन्हें दवाइयां देने के लिए कोई इंतजाम किया? क्या उनके लिए वैक्सीन का इंतजाम किया? जो कालाबाजारी करने वाले लोग हैं, जिन्होंने 50 फीसदी दवाएं बाजार से गायब कर दीं जिससे गरीब आदमी उन दवाओं से वंचित रह गए, मैं चाहूंगा कि सरकार इस सवाल का जवाब दे। क्या सरकार ने आपात योजना बनाई है?

दूसरे प्रांतों में यह बीमारी न फैले, सरकार ने इसकी रोकथाम के लिये क्या किया है?

श्री हन्नान मोल्लाह (उलूबेरिया) : अध्यक्ष जी, मैं भी इस ईश्यू पर शामिल होता हूं। मैं पहले भी यह सवाल उठाता रहा हूं। यह बीमारी फैलती जा रही है, बढ़ती जा रही है...(व्यवधान)

अध्यक्ष महोदय : Just a Minute. Please take your seat. आप लोग बैठ जायें। आप लोगों को पता है कि मेरी परमिशन के बिना खड़े होने पर बोली गई बात रिकार्ड में नहीं जाती है। The importance of the matter is acknowledged. That is why, yesterday, in spite of an elaborate discussion, because of the urgency, I have requested the hon. Minister to be here to respond immediately. He is here and I am thankful, I am sure you will get appropriate response.

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS): I understand the concern of the hon. Member, other hon. Members of the House and your goodself also, Sir. You have been repeatedly saying to control this issue.

I strongly deny the statement made by the hon. Member that the Government is not doing anything to prevent this outbreak. The Government of India, as well as, the Government of Delhi are very much concerned about this issue. We are trying our best to control this issue and as such this has not been an epidemic. Till today, we have about 214 cases of Meningitis and Meningococemia. Till today, we have about 16 deaths. In the last four days we have just one death and in the last 24 hours we do not have any death as such. This outbreak last occurred in Delhi in 1985-86 where about 800 persons died at that point of time, nearly 20 years ago. This bacteria, gram-negative bacteria, is not a virus. This is a bacteria and this is very easily curable. This bacteria is prevalent in about 20 per cent of general population throughout the year. Throughout the year, this is prevalent. Sometimes, due to climatic conditions there is an outbreak. There are two categories; firstly, if it goes to the brain it is Meningitis and if it goes into the body, it is called Meningococemia. There are simple anti-biotics, cost effective anti-biotics, which are available in plenty in the market. I deny the statement that no medicines are available. Just one dose of Ciprofloxacin anti-biotic for the adults and Rifampicin anti-biotic for the young children and Penicillin injection is enough to save the patients and to treat completely this disease. There is no question of medicines not being available at all. These medicines or anti-biotics Ciprofloxacin, Rifampicin are available in plenty everywhere and all the Government hospitals are giving them free.

There are two parts. One is the treatment part and the other is the prevention part. Prevention part is for vaccines. At this point of time, vaccination is not necessary for all the population in the affected areas. We vaccinate only those persons who are involved with the patient, who is known to have got this disease, surrounding relatives or other patients. Among all the 214 cases till date in Delhi, we have gone there personally to about 137 households in Delhi till today. We surveyed and vaccinated them. We have given them Ciprofloxacin. Just one tablet of Ciprofloxacin of 500 milligrams a day is enough for them to save themselves from having this disease. Since this is a bacterial disease, this can be easily treated and can easily be controlled.

The Government is taking all steps. Everyday we are having a meeting. The Director-General of Health Services is conducting meetings and even on Sundays he is there to have these meetings. We are having regular meetings with the officials from Delhi, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh also. We are coordinating with the State Governments and we are going through the print and visual media for creating a lot of awareness. With drums and loudspeakers, people are going around and telling that if someone has a fever or a headache, he should go to the nearest doctor and get these anti-biotics. Vaccination is necessary when there is an unhygienic crowded place like hostels or some jails and like that. Vaccination is necessary in unhygienic areas. This infection is transmitted through droplet infection, through the air. We are propagating just basic hygienic methods. We have issued these so-called notices. We have circulated posters and pamphlets all round on how to prevent these diseases. We are very concerned about even one death. We will have to prevent these deaths and we are coordinating it very closely. There is no need to panic.

Even today, I am saying the same thing. In the statement also, I said, "There is no need to panic." Today also, there is no need to panic. This disease is waning at this point of time. Due to summer season and high temperatures also, the spread of the disease is now coming down. Even though we are getting more cases of meningitis, yet we are taking care of that not even a single death should occur. The Government is very much concerned about it.

As far as the question of vaccine is concerned, I would like to say that there is sufficient vaccine available. The National Institute of Communicable Diseases (NICD) has got about 18,000 vaccines. We have given 10,000 vaccines to the Government of NCT of Delhi. There is a Pharmaceutical company called Bio-Med. It has about 1,60,000 vaccines available. There is one another company called Aventis. It has about one million vaccines available in France. At a short notice, they could be flown in. We are closely monitoring. I am sure, Sir, and I would like to assure the House that there is no need to panic. The Government is very seriously looking into this. Everyday, we are closely monitoring it. The Lt. Governor of Delhi, the Chief Minister of Delhi, the Health Minister of Delhi and we are all coordinating along with the Governments of Haryana and Uttar Pradesh.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

श्री रामजीलाल सुमन : अध्यक्ष महोदय, सरकार कहती है कि स्थिति नियंत्रण में है। लेकिन मरीजों की संख्या लगातार बढ़ती जा रही है। आखिर इन बैठकों का परिणाम क्या निकला है। सरकार ने पहले भी कहा है कि स्थिति नियंत्रण में है।

अध्यक्ष महोदय : आप क्या बात कर रहे हैं।

श्री रामजीलाल सुमन : आठ सौ रुपये का वैक्सीन मिल रहा है। गरीब आदमी आठ सौ रुपये का वैक्सीन कहां से लायेगा। अगर स्थिति नियंत्रण में है तो मरीजों की संख्या क्यों बढ़ रही है?... (व्यवधान)

जो बैठकें हो रही हैं उनका परिणाम क्या निकल रहा है। गरीब आदमी आठ सौ रुपये का वैक्सीन कहां से लायेगा, मंत्री जी बतायें?

अध्यक्ष महोदय : यह क्या हो रहा है? He has explained everything.

... (*Interruptions*)

DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS: No medicines are costly. These are very less expensive antibiotics, which are already available in all the hospitals. Ciprofloxacin is not a costly antibiotic. In fact, we are giving free supply to all the patients involved. This is easily treatable. This is not a viral disease; this is a bacterial disease, and it is easily treatable.

श्री रामजीलाल सुमन : हम मंत्री जी के उत्तर से संतुष्ट नहीं है, इसलिए हम सदन से वाक आउट कर रहे हैं।

12.52hrs.

(Shri Ramji Lal Suman and some other hon. Members then
left the House)

MR. SPEAKER: I cannot convert it into a debate.

... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: No, sorry.

... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Just a minute please. Because of the importance of the matter, I have allowed the Minister. He has made a full statement. He has said everything. We should also not participate in a manner, which may create a panic in this country.

... (*Interruptions*)

DR. M. JAGANNATH (NAGAR KURNOOL): Sir, I would like to say one thing.

MR. SPEAKER: On what?

DR. M. JAGANNATH : I would like to make a submission.

MR. SPEAKER: You are a doctor. That is why I am allowing you.

DR. M. JAGANNATH : Sir, whatever the hon. Minister has said is all right. There are two types of meningities – bacterial meningities and viral meningities. ... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: These are technical matters.

DR. M. JAGANNATH : Sir, as far as the bacterial meningities is concerned, whatever the hon. Minister has said is absolutely correct. It could be treated by antibiotics. As far as the viral

meningitis is concerned, it will not be amenable to regular antibiotics infection. It can only be restricted by having hygiene and containing the droplets. I would like to ask the hon. Health Minister one thing. Every year, it is becoming a serious problem. Unless some preventive measures are taken in slums, this viral meningitis infection could not be stopped. We know very well in which season viral meningitis will occur.... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: This is not an epidemic. Let us not make it an epidemic by words.

DR. M. JAGANNATH : That is my effort also. When the season will be coming, when the virus will flare up, preventive measures should be taken so that it would be stopped.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. I will allow only Doctor Members. These are all exceptions. It should not be treated as precedent.

Dr. Ram Chandra Dome.

DR. RAM CHANDRA DOME (BIRBHUM): Thank you Sir. This is a suggestion. The disease is curable by antibiotics. It is a matter of concern for us as to why these 16 deaths have occurred, when antibiotics are available. This is the main point of concern.

MR. SPEAKER: Why 16 persons have died?

DR. RAM CHANDRA DOME It is in the Capital of India. That is the main concern. Something is lacking in the timely identification of the patients and their hospitalisation or giving proper antibiotic care.

MR. SPEAKER: Nobody should fall ill in this country!

DR. RAM CHANDRA DOME : There must be some ... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: You respond about vaccination in the slum areas. Then, why these 16 people died?

DR. RAM CHANDRA DOME : It should be looked into whether proper steps are being taken.

MR. SPEAKER: They are all very friendly and good suggestions.

DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS: Sir, these 16 deaths which occurred could have been prevented if they had gone to the hospitals earlier. Since the outbreak of this disease meningococemia, the Government is creating an awareness among the public that if somebody has some headache or fever or develops some rashes or has stiff neck, he should immediately go to the doctor. These 16 deaths occurred because they did not go to the doctor to get themselves treated quickly. This disease meningitis will become meningococemia within 24 hours. That is the nature of this disease. After the outbreak of this disease, we have gone in for a massive awareness campaign to prevent it.

Now, we are going in for a new programme called, Integrated Disease Surveillance Project. It is a World Bank-aided project, estimated to cost around Rs. 400 crore and this will take about three years to be implemented throughout the country. After this project is implemented, the Government of India as well as local State Governments will be notified within five to six hours of occurrence of

any deaths due to any disease and so we can immediately take steps to prevent the occurrence of such deaths.

Since a lot of hygienic issues are involved in this, good public hygiene is required in the country.

MR. SPEAKER: Let us hope that there would be no more deaths due to this disease.

DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS: Yes, Sir. We are doing our best in this regard.

12.56 hrs.

SPECIAL MENTIONS

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (BANKURA): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to make a submission regarding the answer given by the Minister of Finance in response to Call Attention Discussion on the disinvestment of Centaur Hotel at Juhu Beach, Mumbai.

MR. SPEAKER: Let me see. I will go on upto 1.15 p.m. Please wait for about 20 minutes.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : So I will have to wait for another 20 minutes.

MR. SPEAKER: You are the leader of your party. You have to show the way to others.