

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE**

**RAJYA SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 39
TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 6TH FEBRUARY, 2024**

ACTION TAKEN BY GOVERNMENT ON HEALTH EMERGENCIES

39 SHRI ANEEL PRASAD HEGDE:

Will the Minister of Health and Family Welfare be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is aware of three instruments i.e. Pandemic Treaty, International Health Regulations (IHR) Amendments and Health Emergency Preparedness and Response (HEPR) of World Health Organisation, if so, the details thereof;
- (b) Whether the practice of Ayurveda/Traditional-medicine will consequently be undermined;
- (c) Whether Cabinet has approved the amendments to IHR, Which had 1st December, 2023 as deadline and any proposals were made by Government to these amendments which was proposed and approved in May, 2022 in World Health Assembly;
- (d) Whether Government contemplates holding consultations and is constituting a Parliamentary Standing Committee on these instruments; and
- (e) whether Government intends working with WHO on prevention/mitigation of health emergencies?

**ANSWER
THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
(DR MANSUKH MANDAVIYA)**

- (a) to (e) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

**STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO RAJYA SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 39* FOR 6TH FEBRUARY, 2024**

(a) to (d) In the light of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, WHO's 194 Member States established a process to draft and negotiate a new convention, agreement, or other international instrument on pandemic preparedness and response. This was driven by the need to ensure communities, governments, and all sectors of society – within countries and globally – are better prepared and protected, in order to prevent and respond to future pandemics. This convention is generally referred to as "accord." The approach followed is that of: "whole of government and whole of society."

International Health Regulations (IHR), 2005 is an internationally legally binding instrument adopted by World Health Assembly (WHA) on 23rd May, 2005. 194 countries, including India, are signatories to it. The purpose and scope of IHR, 2005 is "to prevent, protect against, control and provide a public health response to the international spread of the disease in ways that are commensurate with and restricted to public health risks, and which avoid unnecessary interference with international traffic and trade." In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, the WHA constituted a Working Group on International Health Regulations (WGIHR) in May, 2022 to recommend amendments.

The WHO Health Emergency Preparedness Response (HEPR), is a process under WHO, that works with countries and partners to help build the capacities required to rapidly detect, respond to and recover from any emergency health threat.

Negotiations and discussions towards the Pandemic Accord and amendments to IHR takes place on the basis of topics allocated to member states as small groups. The decisions on the WHO Member State driven processes shall be taken as per consensus.

(e) WHO is a member state driven organization. The country office of WHO has the mandate to provide support to the Member state and aligns itself with the priorities of the Member State. Towards achieving this goal, WHO's country office is mandated to work on the national action plan for health security to be implemented through a five-year strategic framework (2022-2026), that supports prevention and mitigation of health emergencies.
