

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

**RAJYA SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 89
TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 30TH JULY, 2024**

DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT OF NEW AND EMERGING DISEASES

89 # MS. KAVITA PATIDAR:

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

- (a) whether Government is considering to introduce a new policy to diagnose and treat new and emerging diseases;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the steps being taken by Government in this regard?

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

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

**STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO RAJYA SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 89 * FOR 30TH JULY, 2024**

(a) to (c) Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), an autonomous body under the Department of Health Research (DHR), has informed that over the past few decades, various epidemics and pandemics of new and emerging diseases of zoonotic origin have culminated into public health emergencies of international concern (PHEIC). Examples include Nipah virus outbreaks in India and Bangladesh (2001 onwards), SARS in Hongkong (2002- 03), H5N1 avian Influenza (2005 onwards); H1N1 in 2009, MERS in 2012, Zika in 2014, and SARS- CoV-2 in 2019 which subsequently caused the COVID-19 pandemic. These epidemics originated from a non-human source and crossed over to humans at the animal-human interface, highlighting the importance of a One Health approach that integrates human, animal, and environmental health for tackling new and emerging diseases.

In July 2022, Prime Minister's Science, Technology & Innovation Advisory Council (PM-STIAC) had recommended creation of 'One Health Mission' to coordinate, support, and integrate all existing One Health activities in the country and fill gaps where needed. Accordingly, 'National One Health Mission' (NOHM) as a collaborative effort brings multiple Ministries/Departments together for integrated disease prevention, control and pandemic preparedness system for the country across human, animal, plant and environmental sectors. The key participants include Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate change (MoEFCC), Ministry of AYUSH, Department of Health Research (DHR), Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Department of Pharmaceuticals (DoP), Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying (DAHD), Department of Science and Technology (DST), Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR), Department of Agricultural Research and Education (DARE), National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and office of Principal Scientific Advisor (PSA) to the Government of India.

The key pillars of the NOHM to tackle new and emerging diseases are:

- i. Technology enabled integrated surveillance across human, animal and wildlife.
- ii. National network of Biosafety Level 3 (BSL-3) laboratories (for testing high risk pathogens of new and emerging diseases) for investigation of outbreaks.

iii. Collaborative and integrated R&D for medical countermeasures including vaccines, diagnostics and therapeutics against pathogens with outbreak potential (NIPAH, KFD).

The Governing Mechanism of National One Health Mission includes an Executive Steering Committee chaired by Hon'ble Health and Family Welfare Minister and a Scientific Steering Committee chaired by Principal Scientific Advisor. These committees have representatives of the concerned Ministries and Departments.

After comprehensive assessment of the existing and ongoing programs, to address the gap areas and in order to build synergies between programs across sectors, a 'Programme for strengthening Research & Development towards integrated disease control and pandemic preparedness for the National One Health Mission' with financial outlay of Rs 386.86 Crores has been approved by the Department of Health Research (DHR). The components of this scheme include frameworks for integrated disease surveillance across sectors, targeted R&D for fast-tracking medical counter measures, data integration, capacity building and to foster global linkages for pandemic preparedness.

With the long-term goal to prepare the country against public health emergencies like new and emerging disease outbreaks, Pradhan Mantri - Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission (PM-ABHIM) has been launched to enhance the capacity of primary, secondary and tertiary health care facilities and institutes for identifying and managing any new and emerging diseases. Some of the key activities under this initiative directed towards preparedness against future pandemics include establishment of Critical Care hospital blocks, strengthening of National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), establishment of regional NCDCs, setting up of a network of Bio-Safety Level-3 (BSL-3) laboratories, strengthening of public health units at Points of Entry, establishment of Health Emergency Operation Centres, Bio-security preparedness and strengthening pandemic research for One Health.
