

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

**RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 257
TO BE ANSWERED ON 21.07.2026**

NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS AGAINST EMERGING INFECTIOUS DISEASES

257 SHRI AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH:

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

- (a) whether Government has recently reviewed the country's preparedness to detect and respond to emerging infectious diseases and zoonotic outbreaks;
- (b) whether surveillance laboratories, genomic sequencing facilities and disease reporting systems have been strengthened across States;
- (c) the measures taken to improve coordination between Central and State health authorities during public health emergencies; and
- (d) whether any national framework has been developed for strengthening epidemic preparedness in view of changing disease patterns?

**ANSWER
THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH & FAMILY
WELFARE
(SHRI PRATAPRAO JADHAV)**

(a) The Ministry regularly reviews and strengthens its preparedness for the detection and response to emerging infectious diseases through various national programs and institutions including the Viral Research and Diagnostic Laboratories (VRDL) network, genomic surveillance initiatives, and wastewater surveillance for early detection of pathogens of public health importance. The preparedness is further strengthened through participation in simulation exercises, mock drills, and rapid outbreak response mechanisms.

(b) The Ministry through National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) is implementing Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP) which is mandated with surveillance & response to outbreak prone communicable diseases. The nationwide VRDL Network under the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has been expanded to 163 laboratories, comprising 11 Regional VRDLs, 27 State VRDLs, and 125 Medical College VRDLs, to strengthen diagnostic capacity across the country. In addition, Infectious Disease Research and Diagnostic Laboratories and four Regional Next-Generation Sequencing Hubs have been established to enhance decentralized diagnostics, genomic characterization of pathogens,

standardized data generation and timely reporting to support public health surveillance and outbreak response.

(c)& (d) Coordination between Central and State health authorities during public health emergencies has been strengthened through real-time disease surveillance and reporting under the Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP)/Integrated Health Information Platform (IHIP), regular information sharing, and coordinated outbreak response mechanisms. During outbreaks, the Ministry extends technical support through collaborative outbreak investigations, risk assessment, laboratory confirmation, and deployment of multidisciplinary experts under the National Joint Outbreak Response Team, as required. Coordination mechanisms between Central and State health authorities during public health emergencies have also been tested through simulation exercises and mock drills.

As a part of a comprehensive approach to manage future public health emergencies, Pradhan Mantri - Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission (PM-ABHIM) has been launched with the intent to enhance the capacity of primary, secondary and tertiary health care facilities/systems and institutes for identifying and managing any new and emerging diseases.
