

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

**LOK SABHA  
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1872  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 29<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER, 2019**

**LYMPHATIC FILARIASIS**

**1872. SHRIMATI MEENAKASHI LEKHI:**

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

- (a) whether Lymphatic Filariasis (LF) commonly known as Elephantiasis is one of the oldest and most debilitating neglected disease, if so, the details thereof;
- (b) the steps taken by the Government to eliminate LF which is a public health problem along with funds allocated for the purpose during the current year;
- (c) the details of vaccination programme being implemented in this regard; and
- (d) the measures taken to enhance awareness among the affected communities about the LF and its treatment?

**ANSWER  
THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND  
FAMILY WELFARE  
(SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY)**

(a): Yes, it is one of the oldest and most debilitating neglected tropical diseases. In India, it is endemic in 16 States & 5 Union Territories. About 640 million people in these endemic States & Union Territories are at risk of developing Lymphatic Filariasis. Lymphatic Filariasis (LF), commonly known as elephantiasis is a disfiguring, disabling disease, usually acquired in childhood. In the early stages, there are no symptoms. Although there are no overt symptoms, the lymphatic system is damaged. This stage can last for several years. Infected persons continue to transmit disease. In patients it runs a chronic course and mainly manifested in the form of swelling in leg (Lymphoedema) and Hydrocele (scrotal swelling). Since 2004, Line List of Lymphoedema and Hydrocele cases are being updated annually in the endemic States/UT's. As per reports of October, 2019 received from States/UTs there are 9,21,357 Lymphoedema and 3,96,801 Hydrocele cases.

(b): To eliminate Lymphatic Filariasis (LF), Government of India has taken following steps:

- Annual Mass Drug Administration (MDA) for prevention of new infections in LF endemic districts.
- National Filaria Control Programme (NFCP) units are functional in LF endemic states which detect and treat filarial cases and carry out vector control activities.

- Financial and technical support is provided to LF endemic states.
- Accelerated plan for Elimination of Lymphatic Filariasis launched by Hon'ble HFM on 13.06.2018 in 10th meeting of Global Alliance to Eliminate Lymphatic Filariasis (GAELF) at New Delhi.
- Impact of triple drug therapy (Ivermectin, DEC and Albendazole) suggests that 2-3 rounds of MDA are sufficient to achieve the microfilaria rate <1% in all endemic districts. The innovative new triple drug therapy (IDA) has been successfully introduced in 4 districts, Arwal (Bihar), Simdega (Jharkhand), Nagpur (Maharashtra) and Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh) during 2018-19. During 2019-20, 15 new districts have been identified for triple drug therapy (IDA). Expansion of IDA in priority endemic districts is in process.

Under NVBDCP the funds are allocated and released under National Health Mission (NHM) to the states in an integrated manner for prevention and control of six vector borne diseases including Lymphatic Filariasis. However, during 2019-20, Rs.791 lakh has been allocated to LF endemic states.

(c): Under Lymphatic Filariasis no vaccination is given.

(d): Government of India allocates funds to endemic states for carrying out IEC/BCC activities. Following measures to create public awareness regarding Lymphatic Filariasis elimination have been taken by states:

- Á Distributed IEC materials to the community and display poster/banner at the public place.
- Á Carried out Miking, Munadi (Drum Beating)
- Á Radio ads and TV spots were also run continuously during MDA in different languages
- Á News Paper advertisements were carried out by different states in addition to GoI advertisements in National and regional dailies during MDA
- Á Use of social media such as WhatsApp for quick dissemination within endemic states and National Directorate
- Á Inter Personal Communications (IPC) and Group discussions with the community.
- Á Rallies involving school children are carried out.

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