

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED Q. No 1857
TO BE ANSWERED ON 30th JULY, 2021**

COVID-19 MANAGEMENT AND RELIEF SUPPORT IN RURAL INDIA

1857 SHRI SAPTAGIRI SANKAR ULAKA:

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

- (a) whether the Government has taken cognizance of the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 in rural India, if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Government has implemented, or intends to implement, any schemes or special funds for COVID-19 management and relief support in rural India, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether the Government has implemented any measures to increase awareness of COVID-19 risks and appropriate behavior in rural India, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (d) whether the Government has maintained any data on migrant workers who were tested for COVID-19 before returning to their homes, if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the total number of tests so conducted and positivity rates thereon and if not, the reasons therefor?

**ANSWER
THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND
FAMILY WELFARE
(DR. BHARTI PRAVIN PAWAR)**

(a) to (e): Health is a State Subject. Union Government has been providing required technical and financial assistance to all States/UTs for strengthening of their healthcare system including management of the COVID-19 public health challenge.

In view of ingress of COVID-19 in rural areas besides the ongoing measures to control COVID-19 the following steps are taken:

- Ministry of Health & Family Welfare on 16th April 2021 issued a detailed SOP on COVID-19 Containment & Management in Peri-urban, Rural & Tribal areas. The SOP provides for strengthening primary level healthcare infrastructure at all levels to intensify COVID-19 response in peri-urban, rural & tribal areas, while continuing to provide other essential health services through inter-sectoral approach by involving community-based organizations, Village Health Sanitation and Nutrition Committees (VHSNCs), Pachayati Raj institutions, Urban Local bodies, etc.
- The 'India COVID19 Emergency Response and Health System Preparedness package' of Rs 15,000 Cr was approved in April 2020 wherein States/UTs were provided required technical and financial assistance for strengthening of their healthcare system for management of the COVID-19 Public Health Challenge.
- This was primarily to support the States for the critical activities for surveillance and containment, for ramping up of testing and treatment facilities, for procurement of essential supplies, for engagement of critical HR etc.
- Following receipt of requests from States/UTs, States/UTs are allowed to utilize the uncommitted unspent opening balance under NHM of FY 21-22 from the previous year releases for COVID-19 management.
- In addition, 'India COVID-19 Emergency Response & Health System Preparedness Package: Phase-II' has also been approved by the Cabinet with Rs 23,123 crores (with Rs. 15,000 Cr as Central Component & Rs 8,123 as State component) and is to be implemented from 1st July 2021 to 31st March 2022.
- It includes support to State/UT level for ramping up health infrastructure including those in rural, tribal and peri-urban areas, providing support for procurement of drugs and diagnostics to enhance service delivery at district and sub district levels (including pediatric care) and for maintaining a buffer stock of drugs, support for IT Interventions such as implementation of Hospital Management Information System, expanding access to tele-consultations in all districts, and support for capacity building and training for all aspects of management of COVID-19.

Communication material and toolkits have been developed (pamphlets, poster, audio and AV films) and have been provided to the States for translation into local languages. Community is being briefed about action taken by Ministry through electronic, print media & social media. Technical Officials from Ministry have attended various programmes in Doordarshan/TV Channels to brief community at large. A dedicated Call Centre / Helpline (1075) guides all citizens on COVID-19.

In addition, support from all other line Ministries like Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Ministry of Rural Development, Ministry of Jal Shakti, Ministry of Woman and Child Development is also taken along with all states/UTs to reach out & to amplify COVID related messages

Union Ministry of Health has advised states to extensively utilize RT-PCR and RAT tests for early identification of cases. Accordingly, as reported by the states on ICMR portal, a total number of 46,09,00,978 tests have been conducted and so far, total 3,14,84,605 positive cases have been reported. The present weekly positivity rate for the country is 2.36% as on week ending 28th July 2021.