

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

**LOK SABHA  
UNSTARRED Q. No 3070  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 6<sup>th</sup> AUGUST 2021**

**AUDIT OF COVID-19 DEATHS**

**3070 SHRI RAM MOHAN NAIDU KINJARAPU:**

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

- a) whether the Government proposes to conduct an audit of the data involving total deaths, covid deaths, active COVID-19 cases and recoveries since the beginning of the COVID-19 similar to the audit proposed by the State of Tamil Nadu, if so, the details thereof;
- b) whether private labs are permitted to do genome sequencing of Coronavirus, if so, the details thereof and number of private labs that can do genome sequencing along with their capacity thereon; and
- c) if not, the reasons for preventing the private labs from doing Genome Sequencing of Coronavirus?

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

**(a) to (c):** Health is a state subject. Detailed guidelines for reporting of deaths have been issued by Union Health Ministry to all States/UTs. Accordingly, all States/UTs report cases and deaths to Union Health Ministry on a regular basis.

ICMR on 10<sup>th</sup> May 2020 issued 'Guidance for appropriate recording of COVID-19 related deaths in India'

(Available at: [https://www.icmr.gov.in/pdf/covid/techdoc/Guidance\\_appropriate\\_recording\\_of\\_related\\_deaths\\_India.pdf](https://www.icmr.gov.in/pdf/covid/techdoc/Guidance_appropriate_recording_of_related_deaths_India.pdf) ). This was widely disseminated among States/UTs.

MoHFW vide letter dated 9<sup>th</sup> October 2020 has conveyed to States/UTs, WHO and ICMR guidelines on correct recording of COVID-19 related deaths in accordance with globally accepted ICD-10 classification and also urged states to undertake periodic death audits with the aim to improve quality of healthcare services by suitable corrective measures. States/UTs were also provided with a proforma for undertaking death audits in this regard.

The COVID-19 management toolkit for District Collectors shared by Ministry of Health & Family Welfare on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2021 with states, also highlighted the need for deaths audits and follow up action as one of the key monitoring parameters.

167 Central teams deployed to 33 states/UTs have also reiterated need for correct recording of deaths and undertake periodic death audits.

The data of deaths are obtained from States/UTs. It has been noted that some of states based on reconciliation of mortality data also revise the reported COVID-19 deaths sometimes. All states have also been advised that while reconciling the data, the details of deaths shall be indicated date wise & district wise to get a correct picture of the pandemic.

To monitor the variants of SARS-CoV-2 virus, initially genomic sequencing was conducted through National Institute of Virology, Pune.

Subsequently, Government of India established Indian SARS-CoV-2 Genomic Consortium (INSACOG) in December 2020 as a consortium of 10 laboratories of Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Dept. of Biotechnology, Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR). The network of INSACOG laboratories has since been increased to 28.

Inclusion of private lab in INSACOG is under consideration. Few labs have submitted their willingness to be part of INSACOG. Their inclusion will be decided based on capacity assessment with respect to their human resources and infrastructure.

Analysis of the genomic data is a continuous and ongoing process. Periodic updates are shared with experts and states and are also regularly made available in the public domain through the media bulletin of INSACOG.

States are regularly advised to send samples for genome sequencing and provide clinical data of positive persons to enable greater epidemiological insights to identify link between surge in cases at various places to the variants.

While monitoring the prevalence of variants through the network of labs, as per advice from experts it is noted that the public health measures to manage the Pandemic in the field and the treatment protocol remain the same and the five-fold strategy of test-track-treat-vaccinate and COVID appropriate behavior is to be followed at the field level.