

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.701
TO BE ANSWERED ON 23RD JULY, 2021**

DELTA PLUS COVID VARIANT

701. SHRI SATYADEV PACHAURI:

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

- (a) whether the Government has received any indication from the medical experts in India or WHO about the arrival of the new viral variant especially “Delta Virus” in India on the heels of second wave of COVID-19 pandemic, if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Delta Virus plus variant can trigger a third wave of Coronavirus, if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has alerted all the concerned agencies to tackle this new variant; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

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

(a) to (d): SARS-CoV-2 being an RNA virus is prone to mutations. Laboratories undertake genetic analysis of circulating virus to detect such changes that develop naturally and continuously and may have significant public health implications. Delta variant was first detected in India on genomic sequencing of samples in October 2020. Delta variant is the dominant lineage for new cases across India presently and remains the most rapidly rising lineage globally. Delta variant of SARS-CoV-2 has been shown to be more transmissible than other variants of concern. However, it cannot be speculated that this variant by itself can give rise to third wave of COVID-19 in the country since the surge in cases is also dependent on available susceptible population including host of pharmaceutical and non-pharmaceutical interventions including vaccination.

Government of India under the INSACOG network of laboratories is also undertaking genomic sequencing of positive samples. Information on genome sequencing for mutant variants of SARS-CoV-2 is regularly shared with the States. The issue of mutant variants is also flagged to the States through regular formal communications to all States/UTs.

MoHFW has alerted all the States/UTs including the states where such cases have been found to keep a watch on any unusual surge in Covid-19 cases from districts in which delta-plus variant were detected as well as from other districts. States/UTs have been advised to keep strict surveillance in the districts reporting new Variants of Concern and take up stringent public health measures.