

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2290
TO BE ANSWERED ON 10TH DECEMBER, 2021**

RESEARCH BY ICMR ON PANDEMIC DISEASES

2290. SHRI T.R. BAALU:

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

- (a) the details of research carried out and funds utilized so far by the Indian Council of Medical Research(ICMR) on pandemic diseases such as COVID-19;
- (b) the number of medicinal formulations developed and patents obtained as on date; and
- (c) the details of financial and socio-economic benefits derived by ICMR and the country from such research?

ANSWER

THE HON'BLE MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE

DR. BHARATI PRAVIN PAWAR

(a) to (c): The major research activities carried out by Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) include development and standardization of testing kits, Nationwide serosurvey to determine the seroprevalence of SARS-CoV-2, isolation of SARS-CoV-2 virus, COVID-19 Vaccine trials and was involved in WHO solidarity trials to see the efficacy of repurpose drug for their efficacy and use for COVID-19. ICMR also conducted Plasma Therapy trials (PLACID). Based on this research, an advisory and guidelines were issued by the Government for appropriate use of repurpose drugs in COVID-19. Funds amounting to Rs. 1504.29 crore have been utilized by ICMR for related research.

The details of medicinal formulation developed and patents obtained are as follows:

- i. ICMR Institutes have six patents related to various diagnostic kits of COVID-19
- ii. ICMR has also filed a joint patent for monoclonal antibodies for COVID-19 along with Department of Biotechnology –International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (DBT-ICGEB), Delhi.
- iii. ICMR and Bharat Biotech International Ltd. (BBIL) have made an agreement for development of Covaxin.

The details of financial and socio-economic benefits are as follows:

- i. The indigenous COVID-19 vaccine, Covaxin, developed by ICMR and BBIL has helped in vaccination of crores of individuals. This exemplary public private partnership has helped in showcasing the strength of Indian science to the entire world. ICMR has been receiving royalty from BBIL in phases.
- ii. The PLACID trial conducted by ICMR demonstrated the futility of indiscriminate use of convalescent plasma in treatment of COVID-19. This has helped in substantial reduction of the cost of treatment.

- iii. The initiative taken by ICMR/DHR to promote production and validation of indigenous diagnostic kits for COVID-19 has helped in drastically reducing the cost of testing. RTPCR testing has now become very affordable for all citizens of India.
- iv. Strengthening and hand-holding of indigenous manufacturers for production of VTM, swabs, RNA extraction kits, RTPCR and RAT kits has helped in strengthening the capacity of MSMEs in India.
- v. Evidence based advisories issued by ICMR from time to time have helped in rationalizing treatment costs for COVID-19 in India.
