

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1137
ANSWERED ON:07.03.2007
PACKAGED AYURVEDIC PRODUCTS
Reddy Shri K. Jayasurya Prakash;Vijay Krishna Shri

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

- (a) whether the Government had set up a high level Committee to look into reports that a study in the U.S. has found that many packaged ayurvedic products being sold contained high levels of heavy metals such as lead, mercury and arsenic;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Committee has submitted its report to the Government;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the action taken thereon; and
- (e) if not, the time by which the Committee is likely to submit its report ?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE (SMT. PANABAKA LAKSHMI)

(a) & (e) No, Sir. A research article appeared in the Journal of American Medical Association (JAMA) sometime ago indicating presence of heavy metals above the permissible limit in some of the Ayurveda and Unani formulations collected by the researchers from grocery stores from Boston area. The Government has introduced mandatory testing for heavy metals in all purely herbal Ayurveda, Siddha and Unani medicines to be exported, which is effective from 1-1-2006 onwards. This has been done to meet the regulatory requirements of importing countries.

However, there are certain herbo-metallic Ayurveda formulations, which contain heavy metals like Mercury and Lead after a detailed purificatory and detoxification process for their therapeutic value. A research project has been sanctioned to various labs of Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) under the Golden Triangle Partnership Project to study the physiochemical characteristics of 8 most widely used Bhasmas and to carry out their toxicity studies.