

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:42
ANSWERED ON:07.07.2004
CHILDREN INFECTED BY FLOUROSIS
Pateriya Smt. Neeta

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

- (a) whether the Government is aware that thousands of children are suffering from flourosis due to drinking of fluoride contaminated drinking water in some of the States;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether thousands of children residing in Shivni, Jabalpur, Narsingpur etc. districts of Madhya Pradesh are also similarly affected;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the corrective steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS)

(a)to(e): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 42 FOR 7TH JULY, 2004

Based on the UNICEF Report of 1999 on fluorine content of the drinking water in the country, fluorosis is a problem in 19 States which are Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Karnataka, Orissa, Punjab, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Bihar, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Kerala, Assam, Delhi, Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh. It is estimated that 6 million children below the age of 14 years are at risk. 14 districts of Madhya Pradesh including Seoni district are endemic for fluorosis due to fluoride content in drinking water.

The Government of Madhya Pradesh has denied the reports that thousands of children are suffering from fluorosis in various districts such as Seoni, Jabalpur and Narsingpur. Minor prevalence of fluorosis was observed before the year 2001, but no such situation has been reported in last two years. It has further been stated that the sources found to be containing fluoride have been replaced by safe drinking water source.

Fluorosis is combated by provision of safe drinking water. Provision of safe drinking water is a state subject. However, Government of India supplements the efforts of the State Governments/Union Territories by providing funds under the Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP) and Prime Minister's Gramodya Yojana (PMGY) for tackling quality related problems and sustainability issues in respect of rural drinking water supply. Department of Drinking Water Supply is involved in collecting data on fluorosis endemicity in the States. Along with the Department of Drinking Water Supply, UNICEF has supplied ion-meters to different states for estimation of fluoride in drinking water. National Institute of Communicable Diseases is providing training to Public Health Engineers and Medical professionals from various States/Union Territories including Madhya Pradesh to generate awareness about fluorosis and check the spread of fluorosis in the country.