

Hepatitis 'B' vaccine in the Extended Immunisation Programme (EIP);

(b) whether drug companies are lobbying with Government to include Hepatitis 'B' vaccine in the EIP;

(c) the reasons being advocated by the drug companies through such lobbying;

(d) whether Government are aware that massive profits will be made by such companies;

(e) how Government propose to negotiate a reasonable price for this vaccine;

(f) whether any thought has been given to the idea of negotiating a price before including in the EIP, and

(g) if not, steps proposed in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI DALIT EZHILMALAI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (g) Although several recommendations for inclusion of Hepatitis 'B' Vaccine in the Universal Immunisation Programme have been received by the Government, it has not been found possible to do so due to resource constraints and the need to improve the quality and coverage of the ongoing immunisation activities. Earlier, Hepatitis 'B' vaccine was not being manufactured indigenously. Recently Indian companies have also started production. Possibly, there is a perception in some quarters that as this vaccine is being produced indigenously, Government intends to include Hepatitis 'B' vaccine among the other Universal Immunisation Programme activities. As the Government has not yet taken this decision, the question of negotiating the price with individual companies does not arise.

Hepatitis 'B' under extended Immunisation Programme

4189. SHRI YERRA
NARAYANASWAMY:
SHRI C.
RAMACHANDRAIAH:

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

(a) whether Government are considering the inclusion of Hepatitis 'B' vaccine in the Extended Immunisation Programme and the existing Treatments and vaccines under this programme;

(b) if so, how many children are covered under the EIP programme alongwith the cost of the EIP;

(c) what will be the additional cost of EIP if Hepatitis 'B' vaccine is included;

(d) whether Government studied various aspects of the Hepatitis 'B' vaccine and its impact; and

(e) if so, the thinking of the Government on this issue?:

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI DALIT EZHILMALAI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Approximately Rs. 500 crores annually.

(d) Hepatitis B Vaccine is effective for protection against Hepatitis B infection. If given in early infancy, it will protect children from getting infected and reduce carrier rates. Persons who are already infected with Hepatitis B virus cannot however be treated by vaccination.

(e) Although the proposal for inclusion of Hepatitis B under the Universal Immunisation Programme was examined, it has not been found possible to do so, due to resource constraints and the need to sustain and improve the implementation of the ongoing Universal Immunisation Programmes.