

Increasing number of AIDS cases

*100. SHRI LALIT SURI:

SHRI MAHENDRA MOHAN:

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

(a) whether Government have taken note of UNAIDS Report on Global AIDS Epidemic released in May last which states that estimated AIDS death in India during 2005 were over four lakh, which was highest in the world for the year and also that India led the HIV/AIDS table with 5—7 million people living with the disease;

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken by Government to tackle and improve the situation?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS): (a) to (c) The Government of India has reviewed the recently released Global Report on HIV/AIDS which mentions that 5.7 million persons of all ages were living with HIV/AIDS and about 4 lakhs deaths have been estimated to have occurred in 2005. The review showed that UNAIDS used a number of assumptions to extrapolate the existing figure of 5.2 million in the age group 15—49 collected through our sentinel surveillance system to entire population to arrive at the figure of 5.7 million. Since the assumptions used by the UNAIDS have been adopted for the first time and extrapolated the data of the other countries to India, NACO is examining the validity of such a methodology. An expert committee under the Chairmanship of DG, ICMR which has already been established for reviewing the estimation process of HIV/AIDS mortality, will also examine the assumptions. Till such time that the assumptions are fully validated, Government of India stands by the estimation of 5.2 million among adult population by the end of 2005.

In order to control the spread of HIV/AIDS in the country, NACO is focusing on up-scaling the targeted intervention approach among high risk population groups, mass awareness for behaviour change particularly among youth and women group, expanding care, support and treatment to needy patients particularly the opportunistic infection management and provision of free antiretroviral drugs and mainstreaming the HIV interventions strategies.