

- Director, National Vector Borne Disease Control Programme to all Director Health Services (28.1.2014) and State Programme Officers (17.4.2014).
- 4. Regular field visits are being carried out to assess the preparedness and provide technical guidance to the States.
- 5. Training to clinicians on case management and other health care functionaries on programme activities.
- 6. Focused information Education Communication/ Behaviour Change Communication activities are carried out for awareness generation of the community at national and State level.

Diagnostic Facilities:

- 7. For augmenting diagnostic facilities, 439 Sentinel Surveillance Hospitals (SSHs) with laboratory support has been identified and linked with 15 Apex Referral Laboratories (ARLs) with advanced diagnostic facilities for back up support for Dengue across the country.
- 8. Test kits are provided to these institutes through National Institute of Virology, Pure free of cost.
- 9. Introduced ELISA based NS1 test for early detection of cases from 1st day of disease in addition to IgM test which can detect the Dengue case after five days of disease.

Budget:

- 10. Funds are provided to the States for prevention and control of Vector borne diseases including Dengue to implement the public health activities.

Ban on sale of loose cigarettes

278. SHRI MAJEED MEMON: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether an expert panel set up by the Ministry has recommended ban on sale of loose cigarettes as well as raising the age limit for consumption and increasing the fine for smoking in public spaces to 20,000/- from 200/- apart from making this a cognizable offence;

(b) whether Government has accepted the report and recommendations; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI JAGAT PRAKASH NADDA): (a) The expert panel constituted by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has *inter alia*, recommended prohibition on sale of loose or single stick of cigarette increasing the minimum legal age for sale of tobacco products, increasing the fine or penalty amounts for violation of certain provisions of the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products (Prohibition of Advertisement and Regulation of Trade and Commerce, Production, Supply and Distribution) Act, 2003 (COTPA), as well as making such offences cognizable.

(b) and (c) The Ministry has accepted the recommendations of the committee and a draft Note for Cabinet has been circulated for Inter-Ministerial Consultations.

Dengue cases

279. SHRI GULAM RASOOL BALYAWI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the actual number of Dengue cases in the country is many times more than officially reported;

(b) whether it is also a fact that as per report published recently in the American Journal of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene, the actual number is almost 300 times higher than officially reported;

(c) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto; and

(d) the action Government proposes to take in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI JAGAT PRAKASH NADDA): (a) No. National Vector Borne Disease Control Programme reports the laboratory confirmed Dengue cases by ELISA tests through its Sentinel Surveillance Hospitals spread across the country as reported by the States.

(b) and (c) No. The article published recently in the American Journal of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene refers to clinically diagnosed dengue cases. The clinically diagnosed cases may not reflect the true disease burden as the authors agreed to certain important methodological limitations in the article.

The reporting of Dengue cases under National Vector Borne Disease Control Programme includes the laboratory confirmed Dengue cases based on ELISA Tests.

(d) The Government has already taken initiative in this regard. There is a steady increase in number of Sentinel Surveillance Hospitals with ELISA facility from 110 in