

**ARV drugs for HIV/AIDS patients**

2057. SHRI AMAR SHANKAR SABLE: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether all HIV/AIDS patients can get Antiretroviral (ARV) drugs and treatments;

(b) whether there are reports of HIV/AIDS patients being denied access to such medications;

(c) whether Government is undertaking any measures to ensure that all HIV positive patients get such medications, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether the Ministry has taken cognizance of and is implementing the World Health Organisation's (WHO) 'treat-all' recommendations; and

(e) whether there is any action plan or under contemplation to achieve universal Antiretroviral treatment in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) Yes, all People Living with HIV (PLHIV) accessing public ART Centres, and eligible for ART as per the national guidelines, provided free ART.

(b) No, there are no reports of HIV/AIDS patients being denied access to treatment. However, there have been occasions when patients have been given drugs for 15 days at a time, instead of the norm of 30 days.

(c) Under the National AIDS Control Programme, (NACP) Phase-IV, National AIDS Control Organization is committed to provide universal access to comprehensive and equitable care, support and treatment services to all People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLHIV). At present there are 524 ART Centres and 1,094 Link ART Centres in the country providing free Antiretroviral treatment, treatment for opportunistic infections, and counseling services to 9.25 lakh PLHIV.

(d) Yes, the Ministry is aware of World Health Organization's 'treat all' recommendations. These guidelines will be discussed in the Technical Resource Group (TRG) on ART and with other stakeholders before a considered decision is arrived at.

Currently all PLHIV with WHO clinical stage III and IV, all positive pregnant women, all HIV/TB co-infected patients, all patients with HIV and Hepatitis with severe liver disease and all children less than 5 years are covered under 'test and treat' *i.e* they are initiated on ART treatment irrespective of CD4 count. Those PLHIV

who have WHO clinical stage I and II are initiated on ART, if CD4 is less than 350 according to the national guidelines for ART treatment.

(e) Under National AIDS Control Programme, (NACP) Phase-IV, there is currently no plan to achieve universal Antiretroviral treatment in the country.

**Loss of eye sights during eye camps**

2058. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether large number of people have lost their eye sight during the eye camp organised by the different State Governments/NGOs in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof for past three years, State-wise; and

(c) the action taken by Government in this regard along with the measures adopted by Government to prevent re-occurrence of such incident?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI JAGAT PRAKASH NADDA): (a) to (c) As per the extant procedure, prior to eye surgery, the eyes are screened either in the eye camps or OPD. However, eye surgeries are done in the hospitals. Further, it is true that there have been sporadic reports of loss of eye sight by the patients which were operated upon by eye surgeons engaged by different State Governments and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in the country. The details of major eye mishaps as reported by the concerned State Governments during 2013, 2014, 2015 and till date as well as action taken by the concerned State Government in these cases are given in the Statement (*See below*).

In view of these eye mishaps and the fact that the 'Health' is a State subject, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare took following measures to prevent re-occurrence of such incidents in future:-

- (i) National Programme for Control of Blindness (NPCB) has circulated "Preoperative, intra-operative and post-operative guidelines" for strict compliance by the eye surgeons and all eye care units including NGO eye hospitals in the country to improve quality of eye surgery and avoid eye mishaps.
- (ii) Referring to the provision of guidelines issued under the NPCB, an advisory was issued to all States/UTs regarding precaution to be followed on Ophthalmic Surgeries to avoid cases of loss of vision. This advisory States, *inter-alia*, that eye operations are to be done only in fixed operation theatres exclusive for eye surgeries. Camps are permitted only