

surveillance, mapping of containment zones and maintaining strict perimeter control, creating community awareness and involving communities has been continuously followed up through letters, video conferences, field visits and providing necessary plans/procedures. To reduce the risk of transmission among household members, Ministry has advised the States/UTs to ensure the protocol for home isolation to be implemented only for very mild/asymptomatic/pre-symptomatic cases. Plasma therapy has only been advised as an investigational therapy, and not as a routine treatment.

(d) Union Health Secretary has written to all States/UTs to engage private hospitals through mutually agreeable arrangements. Large number of States have accordingly issued instructions to that effect.

(e) There is no such plan.

Disposal of bio-medical waste by quarantine centres during COVID-19

278. SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that the various quarantine hospitals and spaces throughout the country are not following all the rules in disposing of bio-medical waste, thereby increasing the risk of spread of the infection;

(b) if so, the details of the directions/guidelines issued by Government in this regard; and

(c) to what extent those guidelines have been followed by hospitals and quarantine centres?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY): (a) and (b) As informed by Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), there have been few complaints regarding dumping and improper handling of Bio-medical Waste by operators of common facilities and improper segregation by quarantine centers and healthcare facilities treating Corona virus disease of 2019 (COVID-19) patients. In one such case in Tamil Nadu State, Pollution Control Board, Tamil Nadu has imposed Environmental Compensation charges against a Common Bio-medical Waste Treatment and Disposal Facility (CBWTF) for illegal dumping of biomedical waste.

COVID-19 related bio-medical waste can be disposed with existing infrastructure complying with the provisions under Bio-medical Waste Management Rules, 2016. However, realizing Pandemic situation, CPCB has followed up the matter with following guidelines and directions:-

- CPCB has prepared the guidelines for 'Handling, Treatment and Disposal of Biomedical Waste generated during Treatment/Diagnosis/Quarantine of COVID-19 patients'. These guidelines were initially issued on 19/03/2019, thereafter revised four times depending on ground situation and evolving technical guidance. Last revision of guidelines was issued on 14/07/2020.
- In order to monitor COVID-19 related biomedical waste and to compile the data through electronic manifest system, CPCB developed COVID-19 waste tracking software named "COVID 19BWM". Both Android Mobile and Web versions of software application were designed for waste generators, Common Biomedical Waste Treatment and Disposal Facility (CBWTF) Operators, State Pollution Control Boards / Pollution Control Committees and Urban Local Bodies. 1st version of the App has been introduced and a demonstration was given to State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs) / Pollution Control Committees (PCCs) and other stakeholders in May, 2020. SPCBs and CBWTFs were directed to ensure usage of Tracking App.
- CPCB *vide* letter dated 21.07.2020 issued Show Cause Notices to 106 nos. of CBWTFs for not using the COVID 19BWM tracking App.
- Directions under section 5 of Environment (Protection) Act were also issued *vide* letter dated 21.07.2020 to all SPCBs/PCCs to ensure compliance to CPCB guidelines for effective management of biomedical waste.
- CPCB has created separate page on its website for dissemination of awareness on management of COVID 19 related waste, including safe disposal of masks and Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) by general public.

(c) Management of COVID-19 related biomedical waste is being monitored through COVID 19BWM tracking application, wherein a provision was made for periodic status reporting by SPCBs/PCCs.

- Since launch of said application, there has been steady increase in reporting by number of healthcare facilities, quarantine centers, sample collection

centers and testing laboratories and also the Common Biomedical Waste Treatment Facilities. Presently more than 5000 generators of COVID-19 biomedical waste have registered and used the Tracking App.

- As on 08.09.2020, about 150 out of 198 CBWTFs are using the Tracking App. As per the information submitted by State Pollution Control Boards/ Pollution Control Committees as well as daily data received from COVID 19BWM tracking App., the average quantity of COVID-19 related biomedical Waste generation is about 169 Tons per day for the month of August 2020.

Central assistance to States in dealing with COVID-19

279. SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has sent several health and disaster response teams to various States where coronavirus cases have increased;

(b) if so, the details of the teams sent to various States and also the details of assistance provided to State Governments to contain the spread of infection; and

(c) to what extent the State Governments have succeeded in containing the spread of coronavirus infection?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY): (a) and (b) Yes. Ministry of Health has sent several medical teams to various States, and for some States multiple times to collaborate with the State Government on COVID management. The details are given at Statement (*See below*).

(c) In the earlier part of the pandemic many States succeeded in suppressing transmission of COVID. States that had mounted stringent containment strategy of testing, tracing, isolation, house to house surveillance, adequate mapping of containment zones and maintaining strict perimeter control have fared well. Only 10 States (40 districts) are currently contributing to 77% of active cases in the country.