

(ii) A DNA vaccine (ZyCov-D) has been developed by Cadila Healthcare Ltd. Pre-clinical toxicity studies were conducted in small animals: mice, rats, rabbits and guinea pigs. The vaccine has been found to be safe and immunogenic. Cadila has partnered with ICMR for conduct of parallel pre-clinical studies in rhesus macaques. Status of clinical trials is as follows:

- Phase I clinical trials have been completed. The trial has revealed excellent safety of the candidate vaccine. Immunogenicity testing is in progress.
- Phase II clinical trials are ongoing.

(iii) Serum Institute of India (SII) and ICMR have partnered for clinical development of two global vaccine candidates:

- ChAdOx1-S, which is a non-replicating viral vector vaccine developed by University of Oxford/AstraZeneca. This vaccine is undergoing phase III clinical trials in Brazil. Phase II/III bridging studies have been initiated by ICMR at 14 clinical trial sites. ICMR-National Institute for Research in Tuberculosis (NIRT), Chennai is the lead institution.

ICMR and SII have also partnered for clinical development of a glycoprotein subunit nanoparticle adjuvanted vaccine developed by Novavax from USA. The trial will be initiated in second half of October after the vaccine is manufactured by SII. The trial is led by ICMR-National AIDS Research Institute (NARI), Pune.

As per details provided by Department of Biotechnology (DBT)/Department of Science and Technology (DST), more than 30 vaccine candidates have been supported which are in different stages of development.

National Milk Safety Standards

1039. SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether in view of the problem of milk adulteration, Government had decided to come out with new National Milk Safety Standards in the country;
- (b) if so, the details of the new safety standards that Government has unveiled; and
- (c) the steps that Government has taken to ensure that adulterated milk is not available in various parts of the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY): (a) and (b) Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has established internationally benchmarked standards and practices for milk and milk products largely harmonized with the Codex Alimentarius. The identity standards for milk and milk products specified in Food Safety and Standards (Food Product Standards and Food Additives) Regulations, 2011, as amended from time to time, includes description, composition, quality factors, hygiene requirements, permitted food additives, specific labelling requirements and microbiological standards that provide a scientific basis for ensuring safety, quality and integrity of milk and milk products.

The compositional and quality parameters specified in the identity standards facilitate detection of a wide spectrum of adulteration and fraudulent practices (e.g. dilution, abstraction of fat and addition of neutralizers in liquid milk; substitution with cheap ingredients in milk products etc.), if any, in the trade of milk and milk products through laboratory analysis.

Further, safety parameters *viz.* maximum limits of pesticide and antibiotic residues, heavy metals, aflatoxins and other chemical contaminants/toxins are specified in the Food Safety and Standards (Contaminants, Toxins and Residues) Regulations, 2011.

Food standards specified in said regulations are reviewed from time to time keeping in view the developments in technology, emerging science, innovations and consumer expectations; and revised, if required.

(c) FSSAI is also constantly working to improve the quality and safety of the milk and milk products at the national level and some major initiatives taken recently to ensure supply of safe and quality milk and milk products to the consumers include:—

- (i) FSSAI has conducted the National Milk Safety and Quality Survey, 2018 to identify hotspots of non-compliance so that more intensified efforts for surveillance and enforcement could be taken up in such areas. The survey was carried out in 1103 cities covering all States and Union Territories and a total of 6432 samples collected both from the organized as well as the unorganized sectors were analyzed for presence of various adulterants / food safety parameters. The survey results showed a low level of adulteration in milk with only 156 samples containing maltodextrin, 78 samples containing sugar and other 12 samples showing presence of adulterants like hydrogen

peroxide (6 samples), detergents (3 samples), urea (2 samples) and neutralizers (1 sample) while none of the samples showed presence of any other adulterant including cellulose, glucose, starch and vegetable oil.

Regarding contaminants, coming mainly from poor farm practices, the survey showed presence of aflatoxin MI residues beyond permissible limits in 368 out of 6,432 samples, that is 5.7% of the samples. The survey further showed that 77 out of 6,432 samples, constituting 1.2% of the samples had residues of antibiotics above the permissible limits. Only one raw milk sample was found to contain pesticide residue above the permissible level.

- (ii) A harmonized Scheme of Inspection and Testing (STI) has been specified for dairy processing plants for the purpose of self-monitoring and strengthening of internal controls to ensure safe and good quality of milk and milk products to consumers.
- (iii) It has been made mandatory for dairy businesses to get their operations audited for food safety by recognized auditing agencies at specified intervals as per Food Safety and Standards (Food Safety Auditing) Regulations, 2018.
- (iv) FSSAI has set up Food Safety Training & Certification (FoSTaC) ecosystem to ensure widespread and effective delivery of food safety training, inter-alia, to dairy businesses across the value chain.
- (v) FSSAI has published a compilation of simple tests for detection of adulteration in milk and also consumer guidance note on milk products which are available online and enable consumers to a large extent in sourcing safe and adulteration free milk and milk products. In this context, FSSAI has also developed a Food Safety Magic Box (FSMB) which is a Do-it-Yourself tool for carrying out 100 super easy tests, including sensory tests even at consumer level.
- (vi) The state food laboratories and referral food laboratories have been equipped with primary rapid testing machines such as Electronic Milk Analyzer and Tester (EMAT) for testing of various quality parameters and adulterants in milk, as well as and portable/hand-held type screening device (RAPTOR™) to test Aflatoxin, antibiotic and pesticides residues in milk.

- (vii) For on the spot testing of adulterants in milk and milk products in remote areas, mobile food testing laboratories, referred to as Food Safety on Wheels (FSWs) equipped with rapid milk analyzer (MilkoScreen™) have been made available to governments of States / Union Territories.
- (viii) Food Safety Departments of States/UTs are regularly instructed to maintain strict vigil on milk chilling units to eliminate chances of adulteration and to intensify surveillance during festive seasons when demand of milk and milk products is comparatively high.
- (ix) Regular inspection, testing and sampling of milk and milk products is being done by the officials of State Food Safety Department and where samples are found non-conforming, penal action is taken as per provisions of Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006.

Insurance claims of health workers

1040. SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has asked various State Governments to ensure swift processing of frontline health workers' claims under the Government's insurance scheme amidst the COVID-19 pandemic;
- (b) if so, to what extent have the State Governments implemented the directions of Government; and
- (c) the details of pending insurance claims under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Package (PMGKP) as on 31st August, 2020?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY): (a) and (b) Yes The Government of India has through a number of letters asked the States to ensure swift processing of claims of front-line health workers under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Package (PMGKP): Insurance Scheme for Health Workers Fighting COVID-19.

Regular video conferences have been held with States along with the representatives of the New India Assurance Co. Ltd to coordinate and expedite the submission of claims so that the benefit reaches the bereaved family in time. All these efforts have resulted in streamlining the processing of claims.