

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH RESEARCH**

**RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2515
TO BE ANSWERED ON 17TH DECEMBER 2024**

FUNDING FOR HEALTH RESEARCH

2515 SHRI K.R. SURESH REDDY:

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

- a) whether Government intends to increase the spending on health research as recommended by the Standing Committee on Health and Family Welfare in 2023;
- b) the reasons as to why the fund utilisation for Department of Health Research fall from 149 per cent in 2020-21 to 76 per cent in 2022-23; and
- c) the reasons for reduced allocation and expenditure towards epidemic management and prevention despite the Standing Committee recommending a full-proof surveillance system for timely identification of viruses and intervention?

**ANSWER
THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY
WELFARE
(SHRI PRATAPRAO JADHAV)**

(a) to (c): The Department of Health Research was created as a new Department in 2007-08 and its full-fledged working started from 2013-14 after the roll out of various schemes for promotion of health research in the country. Since then, with the increase in the activities and research programmes of DHR mainly through Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), the budget and spending have been increasing. The budgetary allocation of Department of Health Research has increased from Rs.567.00 crores in 2008-09 to Rs. 3301.73 crores in the year 2024-25.

In the financial year 2020-21, the allocation of the Department was Rs. 2100.00 crore. Later on, additional funds were allocated to the Department specifically for procurement of Covid-19 related items and research. This resulted in utilization of 149% of BE. However, in the year 2022-23, situation of Covid-19 had improved considerably. This led to a sharp decline in the demand of Covid-19 related procurement and research activities.

A new scheme titled “Programme for Strengthening Research & Development towards Integrated Disease Control and Pandemic Preparedness for the National One Health Mission” has been approved with a budget allocation of ₹ 386.86 crore. The objective of this scheme is mainly to undertake integrated and holistic R&D across human health, animal, plants and environment for early detection of epidemics/pandemics, following an ‘One Health’ approach. It also aims to establish frameworks of integrated disease surveillance across human, animal and environmental sectors and develop roadmap for targeted R&D for fast-tracking medical counter measures. Besides, a total of 163 Virus Research and Diagnostic Laboratory (VRDL) have been sanctioned across the country under the scheme titled “Establishment of network of laboratories for managing epidemics and national calamities”, actively contributing to routine diagnosis and outbreak management. The Department also supports a scheme titled “Development of tools to prevent outbreak and epidemics” whose main objective is to facilitate preparedness and rapid response to infectious disease outbreak management and mobilise technical and financial support to combat disease outbreaks.
