

PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE

New Delhi-110101

Please find enclosed a representation made to the Prime Minister by Shri T.K. Rangarajan, MP, Rajya Sabha in connection with the uncertainty in status of the public sector vaccine producing units.

2. The undersigned has been directed to request the Ministry to submit point-wise responses to the following:

i) Has the Pasteur Institute in Coonoor been awarded ISO 9002 certificate? If yes, has this not had any bearing on the decision to discontinue vaccine production from this institute?

ii) Has the BCG vaccine laboratory, Guindy been meeting the entire vaccine needs of the country and by stopping production in this unit, has the Government's immunization programme been adversely affected?

iii) Is the Central Research Institute at Kasauli, the only Institute in South Asia to produce Yellow Fever vaccine? Has the Director General of Health Services recommended the setting up of state-of-the-art manufacturing facilities for production of Yellow Fever vaccine in Pasteur Institute of India Coonoor, and at Central Institute Kasauli?

iv) What is the amount of additional financial expenditure incurred on procurement of vaccines done during the period from the ordering of the closure and 1st December, 2008?

v) What is the strategy proposed in the interim of making vaccines available? Is it to be procured from the private sector/imported?

vi) Are such vaccines also being imported from countries/units which do not have WHO-compliant standards?

What would be the expected cost likely to be incurred in procuring these vaccines which is stated to continue up to 2012 according to the representation enclosed?

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Dr. No. 24/306
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viii) How would this cost under (vii) compare with the costs in upgrading the existing public sector undertakings to raise them to good manufacturing standards?

ix) Did these public sector vaccine producing institutions request for support to measures to be able to subscribe to WHO guidelines on good manufacturing practices and did the Ministry respond to such requests for augmentation of facilities?

Has the immunization programme been adversely affected because of this decision to not source vaccines from public sector units?

Given the fact that the NCMP explicitly provides (quote) - "the UPA Government will take all steps to ensure availability of life saving drugs at reasonable prices. Special attention will be paid to the poorer sections in the matter of health care. The feasibility of reviving public sector units for the manufacture of critical bulk drugs will be re-examined so as to bring down and keep a check on the prices of drugs." - was the decision to close down the public sector units taken in consultation with the Ministry of Finance and Planning Commission given the financial implications of the step? Had the Department of Public Enterprises been consulted which has been mandated to revive public sector undertakings through the BRPSE as per NCMP?

2. The Ministry is requested to kindly submit the response by 29th December, 2008 positively.

3. This may please be treated as **MOST URGENT**.

(Kalpana Awasthi)
Director

Secretary, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare

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