

## **We are closely monitoring the situation : Nadda**

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INVC NEWS Assam , J P Nadda, Minister of Health and Family Welfare held a review meeting with senior officials of Health Ministry in the backdrop of recent outbreak of Japanese Encephalitis (JE) in Assam. He stated that the Director General of Health Services has been directed to immediately rush a team of experts to Assam to assist and advise the State health authorities in clinical management of the cases. Enumerating on the steps taken by the Ministry to assist the Assam Government, the Health Minister stated that "All the necessary assistance is being provided to the state of Assam to handle this outbreak effectively. We are closely monitoring the situation and whatever additional help is required would be provided with immediate effect," Shri Nadda said. "Senior officers of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare are in regular touch with the State health authorities. Sufficient number of testing kits has already been provided to the state," added Shri Nadda. The Additional Director of the National Vector Borne Diseases Control Programme is camping in Assam since 22nd July, 2015.

The Ministry of Health & Family Welfare has already sanctioned funds for establishment of three paediatric ICUs in district hospitals at Sivasagar, Golaghat and Lakhimpur. The Health Minister has advised the State Government to operationalize these ICUs immediately. Also, keeping in view the large number of JE deaths the State Government has been advised to manage the cases locally to save precious lives. Extensive fogging is also being carried out. To address the situation, the State Government has asked the physicians from medical colleges to stay in district hospitals on rotation. In addition, The IEC activities have been strengthened with the help of PRIs.

365 JE positive cases and 66 deaths due to JE have been reported from the State so far. More number of deaths has been reported from the upper Assam districts namely Sivasagar (9), Dibrugarh (7), Jorhat (7) and Golaghat (4). During the review meeting of the Health Minister, it was learnt that majority of the victims are adults. 12 districts of Assam including Sivasagar, Dibrugarh, Jorhat and Golaghat have been covered under the adult JE vaccination campaign. All the districts of Assam have also been covered under JE child (1-15 years) vaccination campaign and routine JE immunisation programme. Cases detected are generally the persons, who have not been vaccinated.

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