

India faces shortage of Yellow fever vaccine

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Yellow fever disease is endemic in 44 countries in the world. 23 countries are in African continent and 11 countries in South American continent. India being free from Yellow fever disease, has to ensure that passengers visiting endemic countries can get protection by immunization by yellow fever vaccine. Single dose of 0.5 ml vaccine provides lifelong immunity and repeated visits do not require fresh YF vaccinations. Total annual demand of yellow fever vaccine for the country is around 1.8 lakh doses.

There are 27 yellow fever vaccination centres in the country designated by Directorate General of Health Services, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare. Yellow fever vaccine to these centres is supplied by CRI, Kasauli (by partly 1/3rd manufacturing and partly 2/3rd by importing). No private hospital/ clinics/ institutions have so far been authorised by Govt. of India for providing YF vaccinations and issue WHO approved certificates.

However, off late there has been shortage of yellow fever vaccine in the government of India designated Yellow fever vaccination centres since March 2013. It has been due to break-down of equipment at CRI, Kasauli, and interruption in supply of importation through WHO due to global shortage.

Now due to shortage in supply, YF vaccination centres were informed by the government authorities that they should ask all the travellers seeking YF vaccinations, to procure the single dose YF vaccine vial (manufactured by Sanofi Pasteur) and get the WHO YF vaccination certificate (no cost was charged for this) at designated YF vaccination centres; as an interim measure; as government of India provides YF vaccination @ Rs. 300/- per dose and single dose Sanofi Pasteur in market is @ Rs. 1100/-

According to the ministry statement, simultaneously, order was placed with WHO again for total requirement of 2.57 lacs doses (including balance requirement for 2012-13 and 2013-14). This supply order is yet to be received. As per WHO supplies are expected in August 2nd week.

In view of the interruption of regular supply from CRI, K and anticipating the crisis situation, Sanofi Pasteur (the only company which has DCGI approval, but for single dose vaccine vial) was approached for supply of 60,000 doses (10 dose vial) in April, 2013. It was mentioned that, Sanofi Pasteur does not have license for multi-dose vial, it will have to get DCGI approval for Govt of India supply order.

Meanwhile, the supplies have arrived in Mumbai port and sample for quality control certification has been sent to CRI, Kasauli on 18.07.2013. The report from CRI, K has been received and Yellow fever vaccine has been supplied to all the Yellow fever vaccination centres in four metros on July 22, 2013. The regular vaccination at all the Govt. of India centres is expected to be normal within this week.