

12th January, 2022

CAIT QUESTIONED SILENCE OF HEALTH MINISTRY & ICMR ON CLARIFICATION FOR CURRENCY NOTES CARRYING VIRUS OR NOT

Expressing deep regrets over the **deep silence of Ministry of Health Affairs and Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) over one of the most crucial issue of clarifying whether currency notes are carrier of virus or not**, the Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) has today sent a memorandum to Union Health Minister Shri Mansukh Mandaviya and Dr. Balram Bhargava, Chairman of ICMR , asking them to urgent clarify whether the currency notes in circulation carries viruses or not.

CAIT National President Shri B.C. Bhartia & Secretary General Shri Praveen Khandelwal said that the matter is hanging fire **since 2018 for which the CAIT has regularly sent various representations but astonishingly both the Union Health Ministry and ICMR have kept utter silence . In the present covid scenario where the covid spreads through a virus, the clarifications assume much significance. The CAIT is worried because handling of currency notes by crores of traders across the Country is a routine and integral part of business activities and if it proves that currency notes are carrier of virus, then it could be fatal not only for the traders but their consumers as well. Both Mr. Bhartia and Mr. Khandelwal said that the issues was first raised by CAIT when it sent a memorandum to the then Finance Minister Late Shri Arun Jaitley & the then Health Minister Dr. Harshvardhan on 2nd September,2018 followed by series of reminders in 2019 as also several other reminders to Health Ministry & ICMR in September,2020 and June,2021 but no clarification was received from both Health Ministry & ICMR although the issue was serious in nature. " We are unable to understand why the clarification is being suppressed"-said the trade leaders.**

In its communication to Shri Mandaviya, Shri Bhartia & Shri Khandelwal asked the Ministry to clarify whether currency notes are a potential carrier for viruses including Covid since various credible studies have revealed that currency notes carry major risk of containing various virus which may lead to number of infectious diseases. In the wake of current Corona virus and for other precautionary reasons, an early clarification from the Govt is more important. It's a fact that currency notes carry micro-organisms that can cause diseases and infections. Experts have warned that several diseases, including urinary and respiratory tract infections, skin infections and recurrent meningitis, are being transmitted through currency notes. They can also contribute to causing septicemia and toxic shock syndrome.

The CAIT has referred report of Journal of Current Microbiology and Applied Sciences, International Journal of Pharma and Bio Science, International Journal of Advanced Research, in 2016 and King George's Medical University, Lucknow in their various studies and research have corroborated and established that currency notes do carry virus with them during exchange of hands between the people. If the report is correct, then it is very alarming for the people and therefore the credible clarification is needed by Ministry of Health and ICMR, so that the people should be make aware about the proper handling of cash in a way which should not cause any harm.