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Kerala | Posted on Sep 16, 2011 at 12:28pm IST

Panel formed to study Pentavalent vaccine issues



Express News Service , The New
Indian Express

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THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: A committee has been constituted by the State Government to look into the issues and problems connected with the pentavalent vaccine, that is soon to be included in the National Immunisation Programme. This move is in the wake of several complaints and concerns raised regarding the pentavalent vaccine from various quarters, including the media, said Health Minister Adoor Prakash.

The members of the committee which will study the issues related to the vaccine, especially safety and efficacy, are former head of the department of paediatrics, Thiruvananthapuram Medical College, Dr Noel Narayanan, head of the department of medicine Dr Lalitha Kailas, head of the department of community medicine at the Amr Institute of Medical Science Dr Laila and Director of Health Services Dr P K Jameela.

It may be recalled that the government decision to vaccinate lakhs of children in the state with the controversial pentavalent vaccine from November-end had kicked up a lot of dust and not just in matters concerned with safety, but also with the efficacy of the vaccine.

The pentavalent, by combining vaccines for the regular diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus (DPT), hepatitis B and also the vaccine against Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib), has been hailed for the reduction in the total number of shots for the babies and indirectly equipment used such as the vials for storage and syringes.

The Hib vaccine is supposed to provide immunity against the dreaded meningitis and pneumonia, that may turn out to be fatal to children under the age of five. However, the immunisation programme with the pentavalent vaccine in several countries like Bhutan and Sri Lanka was followed with several adverse events, which led to the withdrawal of the vaccine for quite a long period of time.

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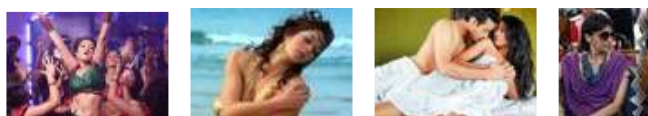


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