**Stop mosquito breeding – prevent dengue**

**New Delhi, 24th August :** Dengue cases are on the rise, and it is important that each one of us works towards preventing the onset on the disease. However, to do so, we must know all about the disease carrying vector and the disease itself.

Dengue fever is a disease caused by a family of viruses that are transmitted by mosquitoes. The symptoms include severe joint and muscle pain, swollen lymph nodes, headache, fever, exhaustion, and rashes. Because dengue fever is caused by a virus, there is no specific medicine or antibiotic to treat it. For typical dengue fever, the treatment is directed toward relief of the symptoms. The acute phase of the illness with fever and myalgias lasts about one to two weeks.

Speaking about this, Padma Shri Awardee **Dr. KK Aggarwal**, President HCFI & Honorary Secretary General IMA said, “What most people do not realize is that the dengue mosquito breeds in fresh clean water as opposed to dirty drains. Thus, people living in clean urban surroundings are more at risk of acquiring the disease. People must ensure that they do not let water accumulate in their houses, wear full-sleeve clothing and use mosquito repellents during the monsoon season when the incidence of the disease is the highest. Prevention is always better than cure. In case of being diagnosed with dengue, people must not panic, consume ample amounts of fluids since the dangers of dengue lie in dehydration and must only get a platelet transfusion if their platelet counts are below 10,000 or there is active bleeding. Unnecessary transfusion can cause more harm than good."

The dengue mosquito lays its eggs on the walls of water-filled containers in the house and patio. The eggs hatch when submerged in water and they can survive for months. Female mosquitoes lay dozens of eggs up to 5 times during their lifetime. The life cycle of the mosquito from egg to larvae, pupae, and to an adult mosquito, is about eight days and occurs in water. Adult mosquitoes live for about one month and rest indoors in dark areas (closets, under beds, behind curtains). It is only the female mosquitoes, which bite humans.

The dengue mosquito can fly several hundred yards looking for water-filled containers to lay their eggs. A few mosquitoes per household can produce large dengue outbreaks. The dengue mosquito does not lay eggs in ditches, drainages, canals, wetlands, rivers or lakes; pouring chlorine into these habitats is useless. Chlorine is harmful to aquatic life.

The risk of complications is in less than 1% of dengue cases and, if warning signals are known to the public, all deaths from dengue can be avoided. The onus of prevention lies in the hands of each person. We must not let mosquitos breed around our houses, wear full sleeve clothes while going out and use mosquito repellent in the monsoon season.