

**Press Information Bureau
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Ministry of Health and Family Welfare**

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Lab Reports Confirm WB case is not Polio

The 18-month old girl from West Bengal, reported as a polio case in a section of media earlier this month, has tested negative for polio. Both the stool samples of the child were found negative for polio in the Institute of Serology Kolkata. As thorough investigations were being carried out, a section of media flashed Sumi's case as a 'polio case' and reporting it as a huge setback to India's polio eradication program.

The child Sumi Naskar from Baruipur, 24-Parganas South, was admitted to a hospital in Kolkata earlier this month from where she was picked up by the polio surveillance network for investigation. As part of surveillance for polio, any child less than 15 years of age who suddenly develops floppiness or weakness or paralysis in any part of the body is investigated thoroughly. These cases are called Acute Flaccid Paralysis (AFP) cases. Polio is one of the several causes of AFP and not the only cause for AFP.

Two stool samples of the girl were collected on 13 March and 14 March and sent to the Institute of Serology Kolkata for investigation. Stool samples are collected from all AFP cases and tested to rule out polio as a cause of the illness.

Sumi is one of the many AFP cases detected this year and investigated for polio. In 2012 so far, around 9,000 AFP cases have been investigated by NPSP with the support of local health authorities. All the stool samples of these AFP cases have tested negative for polio. An update of the Acute Flaccid Paralysis (AFP) cases under investigation and the laboratory results is available on the website of the National Polio Surveillance Project. The information is updated every week and can be accessed at www.npsindia.org.

India has not reported any case of polio since 13 January 2011 and has been struck off the list of countries with active endemic wild polio transmission in February 2012. But the job is not yet done. As the risk of polio persists, the surveillance for polio continues to be of the highest sensitivity, detecting and investigating all cases of AFP to rule out polio. An AFP case cannot be reported as polio until confirmed by a laboratory.

SBS/ls