

[Translation]

SHRI RABI RAY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, you may have seen the statement of Shri Fotedar in which he has said that there is no cause of concern and this disease will not spread in India. But WHO reports that it is going to spread like an epidemic. Therefore, I would like to know as to what preventive measures are being taken by the Government in this regard.

[English]

In view of the warning given by the WHO Director General?

[Translation]

SHRI M.L. FOTEDAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I fully agree with him that WHO has stated so and on this basis only we have prepared an action plan during the last eight months of one year. About the blood bank I have submitted that this will come in the second question which is about the blood bank and the preventive measures to be taken. The best thing we can do in North-Eastern Region is to give wide-publicity about the ill-effects of drugs, Heroin and use of same syringe by five six or seven people at a time due to which cases of HIV positive, Seropositive and AIDS are on the rise in the Manipur. This is the only reason. We have tried our best and have discussed it with the different ministries and administration of that area and have told the people and NGOs of that place so that this may not spread more and is controlled effectively. (*Interruptions*)

[English]

SHRI KABINDRAPURKAYASTHA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, is it a fact that the main causes for spread of AIDS are: Hetrosexual promiscuity, use of contaminated blood and Intravenous drug intake? Is it a fact that 46.20 per cent of the infection is due to hetrosexual promiscuity, 18.46 per cent for use of contaminated blood and 18.28 per cent for intravenous drug intake?

MR. SPEAKER: You need not give the

information. You ask the question.

SHRI KABINDRAPURKAYASTHA: Sir, I would like to know out of these three cause which is the main causes responsible for the rapid growth of AIDS in the North-Eastern States.

MR. SPEAKER: He has already replied.

SHRI KABINDRAPURKAYASTHA: In his reply the Minister has stated various measures which he has taken in this regard. I would say that these are very meagre. Sir, considering the rapid growth of AIDS in the North-Eastern region will the Minister take further steps to stop this disease?

MR. SPEAKER: His question is; will you take effective steps to prevent this, and naturally the reply will be, yes.

SHRI M.L. FOTEDAR: All appropriate steps, not only appropriate but all effective steps, to prevent this have been initiated and will be taken in cooperation with the State Government, people of the States as also the NGOs.

[Translation]

Blood Banks

*286. SHRI RAMESHWAR
PATIDAR:
SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a uniform standardised procedure for handling, labelling transporting the blood samples has been worked out;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether facilities for testing HIV infection have adequately been provided at all the Zonal blood testing centres and particularly at the commercial blood banks; and

(d) the steps taken or proposed to be

taken to ensure that the blood supplied by the commercial blood banks and professional donors is free from HIV anti-bodies?

[*English*]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI D.K. THARADEVI SIDDHARTHA): (a) to (d). A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

(a) to (d). A uniform and standardised procedure for handling, labelling and transporting the blood samples has been worked out for the purpose of HIV screening. Necessary instructions have already been issued to all the zonal blood testing centres during 1989 that the blood banks would collect a third sample of blood of 3 cc quantity, label it with proper donor number, screw cap the container and seal with a adhesive taps for sending the same to the identified zonal blood testing centre for HIV testing. The details of the donor would be maintained in the blood bank. Required facilities like testing equipments, testing kits and trained man power have already been provided in the 128 zonal blood testing centres. 52 more such centres are being established. The zonal centre would screen the blood for HIV and if found Elisa positive, instruct the concerned blood bank to discard the blood. State Government and State Drug Controllers have been instructed to link all blood banks including commercial blood banks to the identified zonal blood testing centres. HIV testing for Blood Safety has already been notified under the Drug & Cosmetics Rules, on July 11, 1989 as a mandatory test.

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAMESHWAR PATIDAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to submit that there are one thousand and eighty six blood banks in the country and Government has admitted in Rajya Sabha that six hundred and sixteen blood banks are running without licence. There are a total of

six hundred and two blood banks in twenty two States and Union territories and out of them two hundred and fifty two blood banks are running without licence. This means that sixty percent of blood banks in the whole country and more than fifty percent in various States are unlicensed. National Medical Journal of India has reported that All India Institute of Medical Sciences has conducted a survey which reveals that almost all the commercial blood banks have neither any equipments as per norms, nor facilities or accommodation. How are these blood-banks running? (*Interruptions*) I would like to ask the Government whether it will take steps to identified those un-recognised blood banks as also the banks which are running secretly and launch a campaign to keep a regular check on them.

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI M.L. FOTEDAR): Mr. Speaker, Sir, there are a total of one thousand and eighteen blood banks in the country. Out of them six hundred and eight blood banks come under the public sector. If these figures are wrong, then I may be corrected. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI RAMESHWAR PATIDAR: This information has been given in Rajya Sabha (*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

SHRI M.L. FOTEDAR: I am giving you the figures. In the Rajya Sabha what I have said is this. There are 608 Blood Banks in the public sector. Since, you have asked about these 1018 Blood Banks, I am just giving you the break-up of all the Blood Banks. There are, as I said, 1018 Blood Banks, out of them, 608 Blood banks are in the public sector viz. both in the States as well as in the Centre. There are private hospitals which are having Blood Banks, their number is 151. There are commercial blood banks, their number is 203. Then, there are voluntary organisations which are having Blood Banks, their number is 56. So, the total comes to 1018.

The hon. Member has asked a question

whether, the Blood Banks are licensed. I can tell him that many of the Blood Banks, even, in the public sector are not licensed. Now, we have issued a Notification. We propose to make it mandatory that all Blood Banks in the country, whether in the private sector or in the public sector or even voluntary organisations which are having Blood Banks, it will be mandatory for them to get the licence not from the Drug Controller of the States but the Drug Controller of the Government of India. If any Blood Bank does not conform to the rules indicated or made by the Health Ministry or the Drug Controller of the Government of India in this regard, the power of the Drug Controller of the Government of India will be that, after due notice, cancel the licence. So, we are already at it. We have issued necessary instructions that all Blood Banks should be licensed and those which are not licensed so far will get licence subject to the specifications.. (Interruptions)

SHRI RAM NAIK: What about registration? Why should it be done by the Central Government and why not by the State Government?

SHRI M.L. FOTEDAR: So far, the State Governments were doing the registration. The State Drug Controllers have also said that this authority should rest with the Central authority because if any Blood Bank contravenes the rules, the Central authority will have the power to cancel, after adequate notice is given to them.

So, before we cancel that, we have to see that they conform to the rules mentioned or indicated or circulated by the Drug Controller of the Government of India. So, the licence will be given on the condition that they use the latest modern technique or get the blood from the blood donors, preferably, those who are voluntary donors.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMESHWAR PATIDAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Indian Red Cross Society and other commercial blood banks had issued a notification and under that they have

demand financial assistance from the Central Government. The demand of the Indian Red Cross Society is lying pending with the Government. Would the Government provide any financial assistance to such commercial blood bank or Red Cross Society. According to the records of Delhi Administration the samples which had been issued safe certificates out of them 499 samples were found to be having HIV Virus which infected the people. The Government has said that according to the Rao Committee in 1962 and Fergusan Committee in 1982, the commercial blood banks are meeting the requirements of 43 percent patients in Delhi. The Medical report is that their samples are not upto the mark. What stern action the Government will take against it.

MR. SPEAKER: If you will ask so many questions, you will not get proper answer and that will create problems.

SHRI RAMESHWAR PATIDAR: People acquire so many dangerous diseases through the blood of professional donors who are drug addicts and who are selling their own blood because of poverty. May I know whether the Government is formulating any law so as to prevent the habitual donors from donating the blood and insisting blood of the relatives only would be given to the patients?

SHRI M.L. FOTEDAR: There is a need of nearly 40 lakh units of blood in our country, but with great difficulty we hardly get only 20 lakh units of blood and the professional donors provide only 29 per cent. The hon. Member has rightly said that the professional blood donors or such blood banks which accept their blood, shall be declared illegal and should be closed down. But the difficulty is that if we close them absolutely, there will be shortage of blood in the country, because it is required in hospitals. That is why we have tried to regulate the blood banks. Through this, action would taken against a bank if it does not follow the rules laid down for the blood bank. The hon. Member mentioned about the Redcross. There are 50 blood banks in Orissa and 49 blood banks belong to the Indian Red Cross. Of these, 22 are unlicensed. The third point

mentioned by the hon. Member was whether any grant or allowance would be paid to such banks. I would say that other than the public sector, we shall help such organisations by giving some grants to voluntary organisations. There is no question of giving such grants to non Governmental organisations and to professional blood donors.

[English]

SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI: The hon. Minister has just stated while answering to the question that Government has made it mandatory on the part of Blood Banks to have testing facility for HIV-positive; otherwise their licences will be cancelled. May I know from the hon. Minister, when this was made mandatory how many Blood Banks they have confirmed as per the guidelines issued to them.

So far as Zonal Laboratory Testing Centres are concerned, how many of them have testing facilities for HIV positive as well as AIDS? In the State Government sector how many Blood banks are functioning in the Government hospitals? Do they also these testing facilities for HIV-positive as well as AIDS cases?

SHRI M.L. FOTEDAR: Two questions arise from the question of the hon. Member. One is about the testing facilities. This HIV testing has to be done where the blood has to be transfused into a patient. Once it is deposited in a bank, it goes to the blood bank, from there it goes to the zonal centre and in the zonal centre in case it is proved that it tests HIV positive, then that blood has to be disposed off. We have made all the arrangements in the zonal banks for HIV positive testing. So far as the blood banks at the lower level are concerned, by the end of the financial year we will have in all the district of the country blood banks equipped with most modern equipment.

At this time — I think I have already given the figures — we have a large number of blood banks in different parts of the country in different hospitals. In addition to

that, to save blood we are just having blood component separation facilities available in the country. We propose to have about 30 such units in the country in the coming three years. This year we are proposing to have four such units in the country in the four metropolitan cities of Bombay, Delhi, Calcutta and Madras. Next year, we will be having nine and in the third year we will be having 17 such facilities available in the country. This will save lot of blood and our demand for blood, I think, according to this facility, will be met to a large extent.

SHRI ANANTRAO DESHMUKH: In the recently held International AIDS Conference in Amsterdam the head of the Micro-biology Department of K.E.M. Hospital, was also a participant. He has observed that the virus HIV-II which also causes AIDS, which was not found in India during the last one year, has also been found in India now. This is going to have grave implications on our AIDS control programme. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the regional laboratories and the commercial blood banks set up by the Government are fully equipped to detect the presence of HIV-II virus; if not what does the Government propose to do thin this regard?

SHRI M.L. FOTEDAR : I am happy that the hon. Member takes note of what happens at the international level and it is a matter of period for us that one of our Indians has investigated this thing. We are aware of this. Till this time we have ordered for such kits which would test only HIV-I. Now we have ordered others and those kits have come in Bombay which will test HIV -II also. For the information of the hon. Member, medical science is not static. It is very rapidly advancing. Today we have HIV -II, may be tomorrow we will have HIV -III and the day after HIV -IV. We are taking care of it. As the medical science advances we will make available in the country kits which can test HIV -I, II, III and so on. That will be taken care of.

[Translation]

SHRI SURYA NARAYAN YADAV: Mr.

Speaker, Sir, as far as blood is concerned, it is an essential item and most of the diseases are transmitted through blood. In all the metropolitan cities, the number of Blood Banks is more, and it is through these Blood Banks that diseases are communicated. I would like to tell you that the blood of villagers is more clean but the Indian Government has not set up a blood bank in any block so far. I would like to know whether the Government intends to set up blood banks in each block headquarter?

SHRI M.L. FOTEDAR: Perhaps the Member is also hailing from a village. Even I take pride in having a rural background. Such diseases do not affect the villagers, and these diseases are mostly spread in the cities. Once the disease spreads in the city, by and by it spreads, in the villages also. So, first of all we will control the hubs in the city. Later on, in case the spokes of the hub travel to rural areas we will be supplying modern equipment to every district Hospital for H.I.V. positive test.

SHRI SURYA NARAYAN YADAV: Please inform us the time by which the task would be completed, i.e. would it be done according to a time-bound programme?

SHRI M. L. FOTEDAR: We would be able to complete the time bound programme by the end of March, 1993.

[English]

DR. RAJAGOPALAN SRIDHARAN: Sir, I would like to know about this HIV 2 virus that has been recently harnessed by the Microbiologist from Bombay. And the kit that was recently supplied was only with respect to HIV 1. These groups have not yet reached us. I would like to know whether he is going to issue the kit for HIV 2 virus, which has been harnessed in India recently.

SHRIM.L. FOTEDAR: We have already ordered for such kits.

SHRI SYED SHAHABUDDIN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, a blood bank is an essential

perquisite of a modern hospital and it was so even before this AIDS alarm began ringing. However, Sir, there are many districts in the country which do not have a blood bank facility in the public sector and even in the district hospital which is the key link in the chain of the health services of the country. So, I would like to know from the hon. Minister the number of such districts in the country today, which do not have a blood bank in the district hospital, that is to say, in the public sector; and the time limit for the modernisation of the existing blood bank facilities in the public sector that the Minister has just talked about, installing modern equipment without which licensing shall not be permitted. He has already given a time limit for the establishment of new blood banks. I would like to know the time limit for the modernisation of the existing blood banks and the number of districts which do not have a blood banks as of today.

SHRI M.L. FOTEDAR: I would like to tell the hon. Member and share with him that fortunately I have not received any case of AIDS from Bihar so far. It is a happy news.

The second thing is that I have not said that we are going to open new blood banks. I do not say by that that there may not be any AIDS patient of HIV positive. But no report,, no surveillance report suggest this so far.

The hon. Member has asked whether we are going to have new blood banks. I did not say that we are going to have new blood banks. All I said was that by March 1993, we are going to upgrade all the district level blood banks in the country, in the public sector. That is what I said. And I adhere to that, and in your State also, we will see the list. I know your problem, you will be having three districts. I will also take note of that.

SHRI SYED SHAHABUDDIN: Sir, my question has not been answered. I wanted to know the number of districts which do not have any blood bank at all... (Interruptions)

SHRI M. L. FOTEDAR: I have got the list.