

[English]

SHRI P.M. SAYEED: Sir, this does not arise out of the question.

Blood Banks

*146. SHRI BIJOY KRISHNA HANDIQUÉ: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to check the proliferation of unlicensed, commercially operated blood banks in the country; and

(b) if so, the measures taken/proposed to be taken to check this menace?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI PABAN SINGH GHATOWAR):

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Statutory provisions for Licensing of Blood Banks have been suitably amended whereby Government of India has assumed concurrent powers of independent inspection and licensing by the central licence approving authority (Drug Controller of India) before either issuing or renewing of any licence to the blood banks. Simultaneously the inspection mechanism is being strengthened to ensure adherence to the statutory requirements.

SHRI BIJOY KRISHNA HANDIQUÉ: Mr. Speaker, Sir, in a public interest Petition filed in 1992 in the Supreme Court, a citizens' lobby known as "Common Cause" said that out of about 1100 Blood Banks operating in the country, as many as 600 are without licence, and blood is not adequately tested for infection, and the total collection of blood in the country is less than 50 per cent of the aggregate requirement of hospitals and nursing homes. May I know from the

hon. Minister whether the Government has enquired where from the remaining 50 per cent of blood comes and whether the blood is tested particularly for HIV and AIDS and how many of the unlicensed Blood Banks have so far been detected?

SHRI PABAN SINGH GHATOWAR: Sir, an organisation called "Common Cause" represented by the Chairman, Mr. Sourie has filed a public interest litigation petition in the Supreme Court about this. And they have suggested some measure and this is now pending in the Supreme Court, and when this matter comes up in the Supreme Court, the Government will give their views on the matter.

About the second part of the question, Sir, we have the information about the blood donation given for our Blood Banks. In many of the cases the relatives and the friends of the patients give a blood donation for the benefit of the patients. There is no record from the Government side about the donations given by the friends and the relatives of the patients and about the scrutiny of the blood, we have a scientific system in every blood bank by which our expert doctors and the technicians go through the whole process of the screening of the blood before transmitting to the patients. All the blood banks are taking all the steps to see that proper blood is given to the patients.

SHRI BIJOY KRISHNA HANDIQUÉ: Sir, the same organisation has submitted a scheme pleasing for a Central Authority for the purpose of improving the blood banking transfusion technology, monitoring licences utilisation of sophisticated equipment organising training and prescribing rules with a suggestion that donors to the Central Authority be given 100 per cent exemption from Income Tax. May I know from the hon. Minister whether the Government will consider this scheme which aims at providing cleaner and safer blood, eliminating the

middlemen who supply blood from the professional blood donors that include drug addicts, beggars, under-nourished and infected people.

SHRI PABAN SINGH GHATOWAR: Sir, the main thing about this is, there is a lot of misgiving in the minds of the blood donors and the voluntary donors are not coming forward to donate blood. That is the main reason why the relatives on the patients go to the professional donors and take blood from them. From the Government side, we are trying to propagate voluntary blood donations by the citizens of this country so that the required blood will be available in all blood banks and the blood can be given to the patients.

SHRI RAM KAPSE: Sir, all of us know that the private blood banks have created a menace. I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to how many complaints have been received by the Government about private blood banks and what is the machinery with the Central and State Governments to redress them.

SHRI PABAN SINGH GHATOWAR: Sir, complaints have been received, but, we do not have the exact number now, because it comes through the State Governments.

SHRI RAM KAPSE: Sir, I would like to know whether I will get the information later.

SHRI B. SHANKARANAND: Sir, there are about 244 licensed blood banks in the Government sector and 488 blood banks in the private sector. There are about 325 unlicensed blood banks in the Government sector and 52 blood banks in the private sector. There have been complaints about the quality control aspect and about the functioning of the blood banks. We are looking into the complaints.

SHRI DEVEI BUX SINGH: Mr. Speaker,

Sir, my question has been left. So, I should be allowed to ask it now.

MR. SPEAKER: This is not the practice please take your seat.

[*English*]

You are expected to read the rules and follow them also.

[*Translation*]

Promotion of Vegetarianism

*147. **DR. CHINTA MOHAN:**
DR. MAHADEEPAK SINGH SHAKYA:

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

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned 'Vegetarian path to good health' appearing in Hindustan Times of January 3, 1993;

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto;

(c) whether the Government propose to evolve any scheme to promote vegetarianism;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

[*English*]

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI PABAN SINGH GHATOWAR):

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (e). Providing proper and adequate nutrition to the people is the main concern of