

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI P.V. RANGAYYA NAIDU) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Very approximate cost of inter-linking of the various Peninsular Rivers and Himalayan Rivers as worked out by National Water Development Agency (NWDA) may be around Rs. 2,30,000 crores including Power Component. However realistic cost estimates will be known only after all the feasibility reports are completed. The prefeasibility Reports of all the 17 links under the Peninsular Component and 5 out of 19 links under Himalayan Component have been completed.

Some Feasibility Report have been completed in 1994-95. Their cost estimates are given below :

1. Ken-Betwa Link - Rs. 1988 crores
2. Pamba Achankovil Vaippar Link - Rs. 3469 crores
3. Par-Tai-Narmada Link - Rs. 1398 crores

#### Hepatitis 'B' virus

1425. SHRI VIJAY NAVAL PATIL : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether as per World Health Organisation, the Hepatitis 'B' virus infaction has caused more deaths than by the AIDS infection;

(b) if so, the deaths resulted in India during last two years from Hepatitis 'B' virus infection; and

(c) the steps Government are taking to alert people from this dangerous infection?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI A.R. ANTULAY) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The total number of deaths reported due to Viral Hepatitis by the States/Union Territories are as under :

Year	No. of deaths reported	
1994	1112	(Report from 28 States/UTs)
1995	540	(Provisional report from 25 State/UTs)

(c) Since Hepatitis B Virus infection is often caused by infected blood or syringes and intimate contact with infected persons, measures to avoid this are being constantly published through the media. Health education folder on prevention of Jaundice has been also prepared.

#### Revamped Public Distribution System

1426. SHRI K. MURALEE DHARAN : Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether requests have been received by the various State Governments to include some more blocks under the Revamped Public Distribution System;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the time by which this proposal is likely to be implemented; and

(d) whether there is any delay in accepting the request of Kerala Government for including 16 more Blocks of the coastal and other Backward tribal concentration areas under the Revamped Public Distribution System?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM) (SHRI VENOD SHARMA) (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Requests are received from time to time from States/UTs for inclusion of additional blocks under the Revamped Public Distribution System (RPDS). It has been decided in principle to extend RPDS to all blocks covered under Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS).

(d) Request of Government of Kerala could not be agreed to as these areas were not covered under EAS.

#### Unani Dispensary

1427. SHRI M. KRISHNASWAMY : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is persistant demand for opening up of a CGHS Unani dispensary at the Gole Market area.

(b) whether the Government have taken any steps in regard to the demand;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the time by which the said dispensary is likely to be opened; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI A.R. ANTULAY) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) The priority of the Government is to open CGHS dispensaries (including Unani unit) in CGHS uncovered areas. Since the CGHS beneficiaries residing in Gole Market area are already availing of the facility from the nearby Unani Unit at South Avenue, there is no proposal to set up such a unit at Gole Market at present.

[Translation]

#### Forest fires

1428. SHRI LAKSHMAN SINGH : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) the area of forest land in the country destroyed by fires during the last three years, State-wise; and

(b) the steps taken by the Union Government to check the recurrence of such incidents in the future?