

Health for All

2304. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to ensure proper medical facilities in small towns under the objective of "Health For All by 2000";

(b) whether there is any proposal to finance improvement of medical facilities through grant-in-aid programme for specific hospitals under the State Governments; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI S. SHANKARANAND): (a) Health is a State subject and the upgradation of medical facilities is the responsibility of the State Governments. The Central Government provides support to cover critical areas primarily for the control of diseases among the vulnerable groups.

(b) and (c) There is no such proposal. However, the possibility of availing of external assistance for upgrading some hospitals is being explored.

Fire in Dhanbad-Jhana Coal Belt

2305. SHRI ANKUSHRAO RAOSAHEB TOPE: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) the quantum of coal being lost due to underground fire in Dhanbad-Jhana coal belt;

(b) the steps taken by the Government to control the underground fire in this coal belt;

(c) whether there is a proposal to approach international agencies in this task; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI AJIT PANJA): (a) A precise estimate of coal reserves lost due to fire in Dhanbad-Jharia Coal Belt is difficult. However, it is estimated that about 37 million tonnes of coal might have been damaged in these fires.

(b) Since nationalisation of the coal mines, concerted efforts have been made through implementation of various schemes for dealing with 70 identified fires in Jharia coalfield. As a result of these efforts, five fires have been extinguished and a further spread of six has been controlled, contained. Fire fighting efforts are continuing in all the cases through application of conventional techniques.

(c) and (d) In view of the seriousness of the problem of fires in Jharia coalfield and the difficulties coming in the way of extinguishing these fires with the available methods, technologies, the Government have been making efforts to seek technical assistance from other countries. The International Development Association has provided a credit amount equivalent to Special Drawing Rights 8.6 million (US Dollar 12.00 million) under the Jharia Mine Fire Control Technical Assistance Project which aims at a detailed diagnostic study for dealing with Jharia Coalfields fires.

[*Translation*]

LPG Plant in Bihar

2306. SHRI SURYA NARAYAN YADAV: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state: