

to provide assistance worth 300 million yens (about Rs. 115 lakhs) to cover the cost of imported equipment required for the purpose of production of vaccine against Japanese Encephalities at the Central Research Institute, Kasauli.

(b) with the availability of the vaccine indigenously, it is expected that the susceptible population will be protected through immunisation which coupled with the adoption of preventive measures will considerably help in the prevention of the disease.

(c) and (d). The details in this regard are to be worked out. However, Government of Japan has also agreed to provide technical know-how chemicals, equipments etc., for the purpose of production of vaccine.

Closure of B.H.U.

2052. SHRI B. V. DESAI:
SHRI HARINATHA MISRA:

Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Banaras Hindu University was closed for indefinite period during January, 1982;

(b) if so, the main reasons for its closure;

(c) whether this closure has greatly affected the education of the students; and

(d) the time Government is confident to reopen this University and whether some political parties are involved in creating disorder in the University Campus?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRIES OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE AND SOCIAL WELFARE (SHRIMATI SHEILA KAUL): (a) and (b). Yes, Sir. The University had to be closed following violent incidents in and around the Campus including clashes between students and the Police. These incidents followed the attempts by a Section of non-teaching employees and students to disrupt the examina-

tions, damage the University's property, and set fire to some buildings on the Campus.

(c) The closure had temporarily displaced the academic schedule of the University.

(d) The University has reopened in phases from February 15, 1982. The violent incidents were sparked off in the context of the call for a general strike on 19th January, 1982 given by certain political parties.

Manufacture of Chemical Weapons by U.S.

2053. SHRI B. V. DESAI:
SHRI KAMAL NATH:
SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it has been reported in the press that U.S. is considering resuming the manufacture of chemical weapons after 13 years of suspension;

(b) if so, whether this decision of the U.S. will encourage the other big powers also to manufacture chemical weapons;

(c) whether India has opposed this move of U.S.; and

(d) if so, what steps Government is considering to take the help of other countries to impress upon the big power not to manufacture this type of weapons?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO): (a) Yes, Sir. The Government is aware of press reports to this effect.

(b) to (d). India is concerned at the possibility of chemical weapons race. Our views on the question of chemical weapons, as well as on that of other weapons of mass destruction, are well known. We have expressed our opposition to these categories of weapons at the appropriate multilateral fora and

shall continue to do so.

Blindness of 30,000 Children every year

2054. SHRI NAVIN RAVANI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that nearly 30,000 children go blind every year in the country according to noted scientist of Nutrition in Hyderabad;

(b) if so, whether any survey has been conducted to know the reasons of blindness;

(c) if so, what are those reasons; and

(d) what measures are being taken to check the same?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (KUMARI KUMUD-BEN M. JOSHI): (a) to (c). The National Nutrition Monitoring Bureau, under the auspices of ICMR, has been conducting diet and nutrition surveys since 1972 in 10 States of India. The surveys revealed that blindness among children was due to Vit. A deficiency in the diet. The incidence of Vit. A deficiency found among pre-school children (1—5 years) during 1979 is as follows:—

Orissa	8.9%
Tamil Nadu	2.9%
West Bengal	2.4%
Andhra Pradesh	2.0%
Karnataka	1.1%
Madhya Pradesh	0.9%
Uttar Pradesh	0.8%
Gujarat.	0.6%
Maharashtra
Kerala

(d) The Government of India is implementing a National prophylaxis programme against nutritional blindness among children in the age group 1—5 years, through the distribution of massive dose of Vitamin A (2,00,000) I.U. every-six months. About 25 million pre-school children have been covered so far under the programme and this programme is expected to reduce the incidence of blindness among children. The Department of Social Welfare has also launched various nutritional programmes to combat nutritional deficiency in children.

The Strategy of the programme is:—

I. Intensifying health education through mass media and extension method on eye care services.

II. Creation of eye services to provide eye care in rural areas through mobile units.

III. To provide permanent facilities for eye care as an integral part of general health services at different levels.

Exodus of Nurses from Hospitals of the Capital for better Prospects Abroad

2055. SHRI RASHEED MASOOD: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that of late there has been large scale exodus of Nurses from the Government Hospitals in the Capital to better their prospects abroad;

(b) if so, the number of the nurses who left their jobs in the hospitals in Capital during 1980 and 1981;

(c) how does their service conditions compare with the other developed developing countries; and

(d) what steps have been taken by the Government to improve their working conditions to check their exodus?