

(c) whether any deaths have occurred due to goitre, if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether there is proposal for introducing iodisation process of all kinds of common (consumable) salts, if so, the main features of this programme; and

(e) the steps being taken to eradicate goitre throughout the country ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SALEEM IQBAL SHERVANI) : (a) and (b) It is estimated that more than 200 million people are at the risk of Iodine Deficiency Disorders (IDD) in the country. Surveys conducted in 275 districts of 29 States and Union Territories have shown that the prevalence of Goitre and other Iodine Deficiency Disorders is more than 10% in 235 districts.

(c) No such death has been reported.

(d) and (e) National Iodine Deficiency Disorders Control Programme envisages universal iodisation of edible salt in the country. The Programme strategy includes IDD surveys, supply of iodised salt, monitoring of iodine content of salt and health education to increase public awareness. Sale of non-iodised salt has also been banned completely in all States/UTs except in Kerala, Goa and Pondicherry and partially in Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra.

[English]

Passport Offices

170. SHRI A.G.S. RAM BABU : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of Passport Offices in Tamil Nadu;

(b) the average number of applications processed every month;

(c) whether there is any delay in the issue of passport;

(d) if so, whether there is any proposal to open passport office in Madurai;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL) : (a) There are two Passport Offices in Chennai & Tiruchirappalli.

(b) The average number of applications processed every month from each Passport Office is as follows :

Tiruchirappalli	15,980
Chennai	11,180

(c) R.P.O., Chennai & P.O., Tiruchirappalli, take approximately 6-8 weeks to issue a passport.

(d) to (f) There is no proposal presently under consideration of the Government to open any more Passport Offices as the existing offices are able to cater to the needs of the passport applicants from the state and issue a passport within a reasonable period of time.

Family Welfare Projects in Rajasthan

171. SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) the details of Family Welfare Projects under implementation in Rajasthan;

(b) the efforts made by the Government for effective implementation of these projects; and

(c) the achievement made during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SALEEM IQBAL SHERVANI) : (a) and (b) Two Family Welfare area projects are under implementation in the State of Rajasthan, one with the assistance of United Nations Population Fund in 13 districts from 1st March, 1989 to 31st March, 1997 at a total cost of Rs. 34.85 Cr. and the second Ninth India Population Project at a total cost of Rs. 108.57 Cr. with World Bank assistance in 10 backward districts for a period of 7 years w.e.f. 16th June, 1994. The main objectives of the projects are to reduce maternal and child mortality, morbidity and birth rates. The projects are implemented by the State Government and progress in implementation is reviewed by the Government of India from time to time.

(c) Under the UNFPA project 418 sub-centres, 19 primary health centres, 28 LHV quarters, 10 ANM training schools, 3 LHV training schools and 1 building for state health education extension information communication have been constructed. So far, 7,000 dai's and 5,092 multipurpose health workers (male and female) have been trained.

Under the IPP-IX project 146 sub-centres have been constructed, 40 operation theatres and delivery rooms at first referral units have also been provided. So far, 2156 health functionaries have been trained under the project.

Issuance of Visa

172. SHRI A. SAMPATH : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it has come to the notice of the Government that certain countries are not issuing work permits and visas to Indian citizens on grounds of religion;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken or proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL) : (a) No specific instances of refusal of work permits and visas to Indian citizens by countries on grounds of religion have come to the notice of Government.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.