

Nicobar Islands by foreign vessels mostly those engaged in fishing. In a few cases it was noticed that the boats were found carrying fire arms. Whenever detected the boats are chased away and in some cases apprehended. The apprehended boats are dealt with by local Civil Administration. All efforts are made to discourage intrusions in our territorial waters by deploying as many patrol vessels as can be available for this purpose.

Increase in Malaria Cases in West Bengal

436. SHRI R. N. BARMAN:
SHRI NIMBALKAR:

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

(a) whether cases of Malaria have recorded an increase of 400 per cent since 1972 onward in West Bengal;

(b) whether Central Government have made any State-wise assessment of the recrudescence of the disease so far, if so, the facts thereof;

(c) whether a national policy for eradication of Malaria is under consideration with Government of India; and

(d) if so, what type of assistance West Bengal Government will be given immediately to fight Malaria?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY PLANNING (SHRI A. K. M. ISHAQUE): (a) There is an increase in the number of Malaria cases though not to the extent of 400 per cent.

(b) The Statewise assessment of the malaria situation is made regularly by the Directorate of National Malaria Eradication Programme on the basis of the reports received from the States. Most of the States have shown increase in the incidence of malaria cases in 1974 as compared to the previous years.

(c) and (d). The National Malaria Eradication Programme which is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme, is already

in operation. Under it, the Government of India provided 100 per cent central assistance for attack and consolidation phase areas of the Programme. During 1974-75 the Government of West Bengal have been allocated Rs. 24.95 lakhs for operational cost and Rs. 11.90 lakhs for Material and Equipment.

Shortage of Medicines in the country

437. SHRI P. A. SAMINATHAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY PLANNING be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is an acute shortage of medicines in the country; if so, the reasons therefor;

(b) whether major hospitals all over the country have stopped and free medical aid which was provided to the poor sections of the people;

(c) if so, whether even a poor man whose income is Rs. 50 per month has to pay full medical charges in the hospital and for medicines even at the time when the patient is dying;

(d) if so, what steps are being taken in this regard; and

(e) whether many deaths have taken place in the country due to non-availability of medicines and refusal by the hospitals' authorities to provide any medicines to the dying patient?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY PLANNING (SHRI A. K. M. ISHAQUE): (a) There is no acute shortage of medicines in the country. However reports of occasional shortages of certain drugs mainly proprietary branded preparations are received in the Ministry of Petroleum and Chemicals from the State Drug Controllers. For these, similar preparations of other manufacturers are usually available. In this connection attention is invited to a similar question, being Question No. 2572, answered in the Lok Sabha on the 28th November, 1974.

(b) to (e). The information is not available.