

Ban on Pan Masala

2610. SHRI CHINMAYANAND SWAMI :

SHRI PRASAD BABURAO TANPURE :

SHRI S. S. OWASI:

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

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned 'Ministries divided over ban on Pan Masala' appearing in the Hindu dated August 17, 1998;

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto;

(c) whether DGHS has asked the State Governments and Union Territory Administrations for a massive education and public awareness campaign against use of gutka;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether some Ministries of Government have voiced against ban on pan masala; and

(f) if so, the main reservations put forward by them and decision taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI DALIT EZHILMALAI) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b), (e) and (f) In an interministerial meeting held under the Chairmanship of the then Union Health Secretary in May, 1998 divergent views were expressed by various Ministries/Departments which interalia included issues adverse impact on labour and tobacco farmers industry and exports in case ban was imposed on chewing tobacco/Gutka. The Government is seized of the entire matter with a view to evolving short, medium and long term plan for dealing with the problem.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The Food (Health) authorities of States/UTs have been sensitized for initiating action to promote mass awareness programmes through advertisements, lectures, exhibitions and hoardings including video shows in Schools/Colleges for discouraging consumption of Chewing tobacco/Gutka Pan Masala. A proposal is under consideration to bring forward a comprehensive legislation on Tobacco which is expected to reduce the use of tobacco in the country.

[English]

Prison Reforms

2611. SHRI BHARTRAHARI MAHTAB : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether National Human Rights Commission has launched a project on 'human rights' and 'prison management' to bring about prison reforms;

(b) whether this project is being funded by a foreign agency;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the time by which this project is likely to be implemented in each State?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI) : (a) The National Human Rights Commission is collaborating with the British Council in a Project on Human Rights and Prison Management being implemented by the latter organisation. The Bureau of Police Research and Development; Penal Reform and Justice Association "PRAJA" (an Indian NGO) and the international Centre for Prison Studies, King's College, University of London, U.K. are the other project partners.

(b) to (d) While a total amount of \$85,000 is proposed to be spent on the project by the British Council, the cost of travel within India and subsistence expenses of the trainer group and the 320 participants are expected to be met by NHRC and BPR&D.

The project is likely to be implemented from January, 1999 onwards.

Supply of Essential Commodities to Manipur

2612. KUMARI KIM GANGTE : Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the transportation of essential commodities to Manipur is severely hampered due to frequent road blockade resorted to by the Naga militants; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken or proposed to be taken by the Government to ensure regular supply of essential commodities to the State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI SATYA PAL SINGH YADAV) : (a) Transportation of essential commodities to Manipur has been sometimes hampered due to road blockade resorted to by various Naga organisations.

(b) Movement of essential commodities to the State of Manipur was severely hampered during the period from 23rd May, 1998 to 24th June, 1998 due to blockade of National Highways Nos. 39 and 53 and during a 50 hours bandh organised by the United Naga Council from 3rd of December, 98. The Government of Manipur have been taking suitable necessary action in co-ordination with the Government of Nagaland and the Government of India to ensure regular supply of essential commodities in Manipur.