

(b) and (c) The entire State of Jammu & Kashmir is an integral part of the Indian Union. The issue which remains to be resolved is the vacaton of the territory of the State of Jammu & Kashmir which is under Pakistan's illegal and forcible occupation. India's position on Jammu & Kashmir was conveyed to Pakistan during the Foreign Secretary level talks held in Islamabad from 19-23 June, 1997. The position was also reiterated by the Indian Foreign Secretary during his press conference in New Delhi on 25 June, 1997.

Unauthorised Occupation

31. DR. BALIRAM: Will the Minister of URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 804 dated February 26, 1997 and state:

(a) whether the information has since been collected;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT (DR. U. VENKATESWARLU): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Leprosy

32. SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the estimated number of leprosy patients in the country at present;

(b) whether there is an increase in the incidence of leprosy patients during the last three years;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) the details of measures taken by the Government to check this disease;

(e) whether the Government have also launched any special rehabilitation programmes for these patients; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) The estimated number of cases in the country at present is 0.68 million.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) National Leprosy Eradication Programme is being implemented as a 100% Centrally Sponsored Scheme in all States/UTs with an aim to achieve elimination of leprosy as a Public Health Problem by the year 2000. All the 490

districts in the country have been sanctioned Multi Drug Therapy (MDT) Scheme for free treatment services to all the leprosy patients. Community awareness is being increased through information, education and communication activities. Continuous contact survey, School survey and sample survey are being carried out for early detection of leprosy. Special action project for elimination of leprosy has been developed for difficult to reach and inaccessible areas.

(e) and (f) Under the National Leprosy Eradication Programme Services are provided for (i) Medical correction of disabilities, (ii) Physiotherapy services, (iii) Prosthetics and appliances, (iv) Care of hands, eye and feet (v) Care of leprosy ulcer. Deformity and ulcer care services are being strengthened.

Reconstructive surgery for the deformity which are correctable are being done at selected centres at present which are proposed to be strengthened further.

Economic and vocational Rehabilitation is done by Ministry of Welfare.

Financial Assistance through Minister's Discretionary Grant

33. SHRI RAMASHRAYA PRASAD SINGH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received complaints from various States particularly from Andhra Pradesh relating to provision of financial assistance from the Minister's discretionary grant to the needy patients during the current year;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have taken any action on these complaints;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (e) Do not arise.

Female Circumcision

34. SHRI DILEEP SANGHANI:

SHRIMATI BHAVNA BEN DEVRAJ BHAI CHIKHALIA:

SHRIMATI SHEILA GAUTAM

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether his attention has been drawn to the State of World Population Report 1997 brought out by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) stating that "some minority groups in India" are reported to have undergone some form of female circumcision;

(b) If so, the names of the said minority groups and the names of the places where female circumcision is practised alongwith the number of girls on whom the operation performed during the last three years;

(c) the nature of the ill effects of females circumcision on the health of women; and

(d) the action contemplated to be taken to curb the practice?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (d) Information has been called for from the States/UTs and will be laid on the Table of the House.

(c) The immediate and long term health consequences of female genital mutilation vary according to the type and severity of the procedure performed.

T.B. Vaccine

35. SHRI AJMEERA CHANDULAL:

SHRI L. RAMANA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh has developed a new vaccine for treatment of tuberculosis;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the steps proposed to produce it on a mass scale and to popularise it;

(d) whether BCG vaccine has become ineffective in controlling the spread of the disease; and

(e) if so, the reasons for its use being continued?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Do not arise.

(c) Do not arise.

(d) BCG vaccine has been demonstrated to prevent disseminated forms of TB.

(e) Do not arise.

Medicinal Plants

36. DR. KRJPASINDHU BHOI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry has taken steps to promote the cultivation of medicinal plants;

(b) if so, the details of action plan formulated for the purpose;

(c) whether some Central Ministries and State Governments are involved in this programme; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. The Department of Indian Systems of Medicine & Homoeopathy in the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare is implementing schemes for setting up/expansion of herbal gardens for cultivation of identified species of medicinal plants used in ISM & H and for development of Agro-techniques for cultivation of medicinal plants. Under these schemes financial assistance is given to Government/Semi Government organisations.

(c) and (d) Yes Sir. Ministry of Environment and Forest is implementing a Centrally sponsored scheme for conservation and development of non-timber forest produce including medicinal plants. This scheme is implemented through State Forest Departments. Similarly, Ministry of Agriculture & Cooperation is implementing a Centrally sponsored scheme through Agriculture Universities, CSIR and State Government Departments for the development of medicinal and aromatic plants.

Janta Darbar

37. SHRI SUKH LAL KUSHWAHA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the objective behind organising "Janta Darbar" at the residence of Prime Minister and the arrangement made therefor;

(b) the number of complaints received on 30th May, 1997 in the "Janta Darbar" and the section of Society from which these complaints were received and the action taken thereon;

(c) whether all the complaints received have since been acknowledged; and

(d) the arrangements likely to be made to expedite action on the complaints received from the public?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI S.R. BALASUBRAMONIYAN): (a) Janta Milan programmes are organised at the Prime Minister's residence to enable the Prime Minister to have a direct interaction with people and knowledge of the various grievances of the public. Public has free access to meet the Prime Minister during the time fixed for it.

(b) to (d) During the Janta Milan of 30.5.97, Prime Minister received 146 petitions from all such people who came to express their grievance to the Prime Minister. All the petitions received have been scrutinised and forwarded for appropriate action to the concerned authority as per the prescribed procedure. The position of petitions received on 30th May, 1997 is as under:-