

Contamination of Drinking Water

3494. SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT :
SHRI PRADIP BHATTACHARYA :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the World Health Organisation has submitted a report on arsenic contamination of drinking water in several parts of West Bengal;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether a large chunk of population in West Bengal has been suffering from arsenic contamination;

(d) whether the Government propose to provide special Central assistance to the State Government to tackle the disease; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY) : (a) World Health Organisation has forwarded a report of the study undertaken by two WHO consultants namely, Dr. K.S. Subramanian and Dr. Michael J. Kosnett on arsenic contamination of groundwater in eight districts of West Bengal.

(b) The report contains the following major recommendations :

- (i) The Government of West Bengal should establish a systematic programme to ascertain the extent of arsenic contamination in ground water throughout the State.
- (ii) Drinking water sources containing an elevated concentration of arsenic should be replaced with alternative sources at an accelerated pace.
- (iii) Programmes to ascertain the extent of the health problems associated with arsenic exposure should be expanded.
- (iv) An expanded local and regional medical programme is required for arsenic induced diseases.
- (v) Establishment of an extensive programme of public and professional education on arsenic related health problems.
- (vi) A high level office/programme, specifically dedicated to the arsenic problem should be set up by the Health Deptt. of the Government of West Bengal.

(c) According to a survey of April, 1996 conducted by the Government of West Bengal, the total population at risk is around 45 lakhs in the State.

(d) and (e) The Union Government have made the following releases of funds to the State of West Bengal for supply of safe drinking water :

| Year | Rs.in lakhs |
|---------|-------------|
| 1993-94 | 480.92 |
| 1994-95 | 607.04 |
| 1995-96 | 2873.79 |

Gastro-Enteritis

3495. DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the cases of gastro-enteritis have been increased in the Capital;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the details of the steps taken to provide proper treatment to the patients suffering from gastro enteritis?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY) : (a) Government of National Capital of Territory of Delhi has informed that the number of Gastro Enteritis/Cholera cases have shown a declining trend during the last three years in the capital.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi have chalked out a detailed action plan for treatment and prevention of seasonal diseases including gastro enteritis. Setting up of Oral Rehydration Therapy Centres in the out Patient Department of all dispensaries and hospitals in the main component of the Action Plan for providing treatment to the patients. The Action Plan also include surveillance and monitoring, supply of Oral Rehydration Salts, adequate supply of potable water, distribution of Chlorine tablets, environmental sanitation, food hygiene, health education etc.

Mandatory Test for HIV Infection

3496. SHRI BIJOY HANDIQUE : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the controversy involved in mandatory testing of certain population groups, especially jail inmates, for HIV infection;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether the Government have followed the guidelines formulated by the WHO in this regard?