

Government Medical Centres in the Country for treating respiratory tract infection has been found ineffective in treating majority of the children suffering from these diseases;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

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

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

(b) to (d) Under the Child Survival and Safe Motherhood Programme, Cotrimoxazole is the recommended drug for use in mild to moderate cases of pneumonia among children under 5 years of age. There are a few reports regarding resistance of common causative organisms to the drug. Most of these reports are for hospitalised cases and are based on laboratory settings. Some of these studies also show that in areas where drug resistant strains have been identified in laboratory settings, the clinical efficacy of the drug is still high. There are no adverse reports regarding the efficacy of the drug when used in field situations by the Health Workers, based on programme guidelines.

The National guidelines on use of drugs in acute respiratory infections among children are reviewed periodically. An expert group consisting of eminent national and international experts and representatives of Indian Academy of Paediatrics and Indian Council of Medical Research who reviewed the issue in March, 1997 have opined that in view of the clinical performance of Cotrimoxazole in community setting being still good any change in the policy on use of this drug should be based on clinical trials.

Clinical studies are being currently carried out at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences and by a number of agencies including the WHO.

#### Indian Workers in Gulf

2276. PROF. P. J. KURIEN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Indians recruited for employment in Gulf countries during the year 1996-97 and the current year;

(b) whether the Government have received complaints that the salaries and allowances agreed to in the contract are denied to the workers by the employers;

(c) if so, the details of such cases; and

(d) the action taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA): (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be placed on the Table of the House.

#### Remote Sensing Technique for Treating Salt Affected Soils

2277. SHRI AYYANNA PATRUDU: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Remote Sensing Agency has introduced remote sensing technique for treating salt affected soils for reclamation measures which can increase food production;

(b) if so, the details of the States where these tests are being conducted;

(c) whether the Government propose to popularise this technique in coastal regions for more agricultural yield and to assist farmers in this regard?

(d) if so, the details thereof, and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

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) to (e) National Remote Sensing Agency (NRSA) has not by itself introduced any advanced remote sensing techniques for treating salt affected soils for reclamation measures, which could increase food production.

NRSA has, however, developed the methodology for identification and delineation of salt affected soils and for categorising them into different groups based on the nature and magnitude of the problem of soil salinity, using satellite remote sensing data. The information from these maps is useful for taking further steps towards reclamation measures of salt affected soils by Agriculture Departments/ Research Institutions.

Mapping of salt affected soils on 1:250,000 scale using satellite data, has been taken up for Andhra Pradesh, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Bihar, Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Punjab, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. The work is nearing completion.