

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The main demand is for creation of an Autonomous State in Assam comprising of the two Autonomous Hill Districts of Karbi Anglong and North Cachar Hills.

(c) Governments of India is not in favour of the demand for creation of autonomous State in Assam.

Problems faced by the Indians Abroad

878. SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) the number of Indian working abroad, State-wise and Country-wise;

(b) whether any study has been conducted by the Government on the various problems faced by the Indians abroad;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA) : (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Eradication of Polio

879. SHRI K.P. NAIDU : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have fixed any target for eradication of polio in the Country;

(b) if so, the arrangements made to achieve target for eradication of polio in rural and urban area of the country; and

(c) the effective action being taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI DALIT EZHILMALAI) : (a) The Government is aiming at eradication of Polio by the year 2000 A.D.

(b) and (c) 1. High coverage in the routine immunisation programmes;

2. Since 1995, the Pulse Polio Immunisation Campaign is being held every year on two specific dates for administering Oral Polio vaccine to all children in the country below five years of age.

3. The Programme has been further strengthened by the launching of a Surveillance Project for detecting all cases

of Polio and taking timely action for controlling the transmission of Polio Virus.

[Translation]

Village Health Workers Scheme

880. SHRI RAMA NAND SINGH : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the village health worker scheme was launched by the Government in 1977-78;

(b) if so, the amount of honorarium or salary paid to the village health workers at village level so far; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to made the village Health worker scheme more effective at village level?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI DALIT EZHILMALAI) : (a) Yes, Sir. Later on, the scheme came to be known as the Village Health Guide Scheme.

(b) Rs. 50 per month is being paid, by way of honorarium, to the Village Health Guides.

(c) The Government has constituted a Committee of experts to assess the usefulness of the Scheme and to suggest such further modifications or improvements to make the scheme more responsive.

[English]

Oil Exploration

881. SHRI ANANT KUMAR HEGDE : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) the result of Oil exploration made in different parts of South India, during the last three years state-wise;

(b) the details of feasibility of getting Oil and Natural Gas in Cauvery basin;

(c) whether the Government have any plan to set up Southern Gas Grid; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR) : (a) Details of the oil exploration carried out in Southern States of India during the last three years i.e. 1995-98 and results thereof are indicated below :-