

(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 :-

	Andhra Pradesh	Tamil Nadu	Pondicherry
Seismic data acquired (GLK)			
2D	2871	1265	151
3D	3673	4602	-
Exploratory wells drilled (No.)			
	74	67	01
Accretion of Oil+Oil Equivalent gas			
Inplace (MMT)	13.5	21.59	-
Ultimate reserves (MMT)	8.42	7.0	-

(b) The exploratory efforts in Cauvery Basin have resulted in discovery of 17 oil and 9 gas finds with establishment of 97.92 MMTOE of in-place and 16.46 MMTOE of recoverable, reserves in the basin. Currently 15 oil and gas fields are under production.

(c) and (d) The Government have approved in principle the concept of a Southern Gas Grid to transport gas from the Western Offshore fields, supplemented by imported natural gas/LNG.

Guidelines for Treatment of Patients in Private & Government Hospitals

882. DR. BIZAY SONKAR SHASTRI : 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 "Many private hospitals refuse critical patients" appearing in the Hindustan Times dated January 14, 1998;

(b) if so, whether it is a fact that majority of the private hospitals refused critical patients on the plea of non-availability of beds in their hospitals;

(c) if so, whether the Government have provided exemption from custom duty for importing equipment and subsidised land to these hospitals; and

(d) if so, the action taken by the Government to provide adequate medical facilities to the critical patients/poor patients in private hospitals?

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

(b) As per directions of Hon'ble Supreme Court, instructions have been issued by the Central Government

to all State Governments/Central Government Hospitals and by the Government of NCT of Delhi to all Hospitals including private Hospitals in National Capital, not to deny admission to victims of road accidents brought to their Hospitals, and to provide them necessary treatment irrespective of it being a medico-legal case or not.

(c) and (d) Some States have given land and other facilities at concessional rates and prescribed free treatment for poor patients in lieu thereof. Similarly Custom Duty exemption had been extended to certain Hospitals and Diagnostic Centres, who were expected to provide free indoor/outdoor treatment to the poor. The State Governments are required to check whether these conditions are being met by private Hospitals/Nursing Homes. The general experience has been that the requirement of free treatment is being met only partially at places.

[Translation]

LPG Connections

883. SHRI JAYSINHJI CHAUHAN : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether some gas agencies have committed irregularities in the allotment of cooking gas connections;

(b) if so, the details of such agencies in each State; and

(c) the action proposed to be taken against those agencies by the Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR) : (a) According to PUS Oil Companies, some cases of irregularities in allotment of cooking gas connection have been reported during 1997-98.

(b) The details of established complaints relating to forced sale of hot plate, out of turn unauthorised release of connections reported in the country during the year 1997-98 are as under :-

1997-98

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(c) Appropriate penal action was taken against the erring distributors under the Marketing Discipline Guidelines, which included warning letters, fines and suspension.

Border Wing in Gujarat

884. SHRI P.S. GADHAVI : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :