

(d) If so, the time by which such a Bill is likely to be introduced;

(e) whether the Government have studied various aspects of this Bill to avoid misuse of the Act; and

(f) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI) : (a) and (b) By virtue of constitutional provisions, various State Governments have amended the Indian Police Act, 1861 to meet their local requirements. The Indian Evidence Act, 1972 has also been amended from time to time to meet the requirements.

(c) to (f) The Central Government is interacting with the State Governments on the question of providing capital punishment for rapists. All aspects of the matter will be kept in view while formulating necessary legislation.

[English]

Education to Blind Children

266. SHRI RANJIB BISWAL : Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have any scheme to impart education to blind children;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the States where these schemes are being implemented by the Government;

(d) the amount of Central Assistance extended to those States for running blind schools and other institutions for providing education to the blind children; and

(e) the number of blind children studying in those schools?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI) : (a) and (b) While there is no specific Scheme of impart education to blind children, however, a scheme namely Grant-in-aid to Voluntary Organisations for establishment and development of Special Schools for the disabled is being administered by this Ministry. Under the scheme, voluntary organisations are given grant-in-aid to establish and develop special schools for the disabled including the visually handicapped children to impart education to them.

(c) to (e) A Statement is enclosed.

Statement

(Rs. in Lakhs)

Sl. No.	State	Name of the Organisation	Amount released 1996-97	Number of beneficiaries	Amount released 1997-98	Number of beneficiaries
01.	Delhi	National Association for the Blind	1.77	32	1.88	42
02.	Orissa	Neelanchal Seva Pratishthan	6.17	76	5.41	76
03.	Andhra Pradesh	Navjeevan Blind Centre	3.30	50	3.32	50
04.	Tamilnadu	Indian Association for the Blind	3.86	88	4.12	91
05.	Haryana	All India Confederation of the Blind	2.43	31	3.16	55

[Translation]

Institute for Physically Handicapped

267. SHRI SURESH CHANDEL :

SHRI MAHESHWAR SINGH :

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether three and half years B.Sc. (Hon.) Physiotherapy and B.Sc. (Hon.) vocational studies degree courses the Institute of Physically Handicapped

which is affiliated with Delhi University are inferior in comparison to the four and half years degree courses of similar nature run by other institutes;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government propose to increase the duration of the course being run by the Institute for Physically Handicapped to four and half years;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI) : (a) and (b) The B.Sc. (Hon.) Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy courses of Institute of Physically Handicapped which are of three and half years duration are affiliated to University of Delhi. These courses are being conducted as per the requirement of University of Delhi. Even though duration of OT/PT courses in some of the institutes is four and half years, on mere difference in duration, the comparison can not be made.

(c) to (e) The Physiotherapy and Occupational therapy courses of IPH have been brought under the purview of Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI). The duration of the courses will be decided by RCI.

Protection of Cows

268. SHRI MANIBHAI RAMJIBHAI CHAUDHARI:

SHRI JANARDAN PRASAD MISRA :

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether cows are not being given proper protection in various parts of the country;

(b) if so, the steps taken for providing protection to cows; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI) : (a) to (c) One of the Directive Principles of State Policy enjoins that "the State shall endeavour to organise agriculture and animal husbandry on modern and scientific lines and shall, in particular, take steps for preserving and improving the breeds, and prohibiting the slaughter of cows and calves and milch and draught cattles." However, under List-II of the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution, the preservation of cattle is a matter on which the State Legislature have exclusive power to legislate upon.

The following State Governments/Union Territories have enacted legislation relating to prevention of slaughter of cow and its progeny.

Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, National Capital Territory of Delhi, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Chandigarh, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Daman-Diu and Pondicherry.

However, State of Arunachal Pradesh, Kerala, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura and Union Territory of Lakshadweep have not undertaken any such legislation.

[English]

Revival of the Ayurvedic System of Medicine

269. SHRI PANKAJ CHOUDHRY : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to revive the Ayurvedic System of Medicine and to conduct an intensive scientific research, analysis and experiment on it keeping in view the importance of Indian system of medicines in the World of Medicines;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which the final decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI DALIT EZHILMALAI) : (a) to (c) In order to promote and propagate Indian system of medicines which includes Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani, Yoga, Naturopathy and Homoeopathy, the Government has already set up an independent Department of Indian Systems of Medicine and Homoeopathy (ISM&H) under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in March, 1995. The Department has identified the thrust areas for the development and promotion of these systems including Ayurveda. They are education, standardisation of drugs, enhancing availability of raw materials, research and development, information education and communication and involvement in national health programmes. Schemes have been taken up around these thrust areas. For undertaking systematic research in Ayurvedic system of medicine there is already a Research Council by the name Central Council for Research in Ayurveda and Siddha (CCRAS) under the Department of ISM&H which is engaged in scientific research and other researches for further development of Ayurveda system of medicine so that the system could play a more effective role in providing better health care delivery to the citizens of this country.

Oil Exploration Agreements

270. SHRI CHINMAYANAND SWAMI :

SHRI MAHBOOB ZAHEDI :

SHRI AJAY MUKHOPADHYAY :