Research on Malaria Control

866. **Shrimati Geeta Mukherjee:** Will the Minister of **Health and Family Welfare** be pleased to state:

(a) whether coconut by-product has been found useful in limiting mosquito larvae, by a Canadian Scientist as reported in the 'Rajasthan Patrika' dated June 16, 1991;

(b) whether the Government have any plans to do similar research in India to combat the menace of mosquitoes;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the Government are aware of the large scale resistance developed against DDT by malaria parasites and the danger level of DDT contamination in ground water and environment; and

(e) if so, the alternative steps taken/proposed in this regard?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (Shrimati D. K. Thara Devi Siddhartha): (a) There is no information available about use of coconut by-product which can limit mosquito-larvae. However, some by-product of coconut are being used to grow the bacteria called BTI. Thuringiensis (H.14) which has long been used for vector control of various vector borne disease like Malaria.

(b) and (c) In India, larvaecidal researches are already being conducted at Vector Control Research Centre, Pondicherry. The Indian Council of Medical Research is conducting and supporting research on identifying various plant extracts for control of mosquito breeding. Given the laboratory and culturing infrastructure available in India, there is no necessity to use the innovative methods of growing BTI by injecting spores of this bacteria into the coconut as reported in the Patrika.

(d) No, Madam. The Malaria parasite has not developed resistance to DDT; but it is the mosquito, which transmits the disease that has shown varying degrees of tolerance and resistance to DDT.

(e) As a result of years of basic and applied research Malaria Research Centre, Delhi, has formulated a Bio-environmental strategy for control of Malaria. In this technique, insecticides are either not used at all or used in only special circumstances. The emphasis is on reduction of breeding sites of mosquitoes using mechanical means like filling, draining, levelling and use of biological agents (like larvivoraous fishes) for eliminating the larvae. The success of this strategy has been demonstrated in various geoecological sites with varying degree of endemicity.

[*English*]

(*Interruptions*)

Shri Dwarka Nath Das (Karim Ganj): Mr. Speaker, Sir, although rural electrification is a State Subject, the Centre cannot shake off its responsibility altogether. Rural electrification in Barak Valley of Assam, specially in remote villages and tea gardens is very slow. On the other hand, price of kerosene is always fluctuating and sometimes becomes non-available in the local market.

So, under the rural welfare scheme, the Electricity Authority may install three points with fixed consumption-unit-rate per household for the benefit of the common masses along with the speeding up of rural electrification process.

Will the hon. Minister concerned be pleased to do the needful at the earlier in this regard?