

gical experts, propose advising the State Government on planning natural water courses and protect the city from the deluge in future and retain the beauty of the city; and

(c) if so, the details in this respect ?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI A.P. SHARMA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir. The Government of India have not received any proposal from Government of Rajasthan for help from Meteorological experts to plan their natural water courses and protect the city from the deluge in future. If any such proposal is received from the State Government, the Government of India would consider it.

(c) The question does not arise.

News Item Captioned "Indian Surgical Dressing Banned in Australia"

*190. **SHRI HARINATHA MISRA:** Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Indian surgical dressing banned in Australia" in the Indian Express dated 31st October, 1981;

(b) If so, whether Federal and State Health Minister of Australia have issued a warning because surgical dressings made in India, Taiwan and Thailand have been found contaminated with bacteria capable of producing serious wound infections;

(c) whether the contaminated items were reported to include roller bandages, absorbent gauze, lint, wound dressings, triangular bandages, absorbent cotton-wool and X-ray detectable swabs etc.

(d) whether tests were made by the National Biological Standards Laboratory;

(e) if the answers to parts (a) to (d) be in the affirmative, Government's reaction to each of the above points; and

(f) whether action has been taken against Indian exporting firms; if so, what ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND STEEL AND MINES (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (f). A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

Government is aware of the news item carried by the Indian Express of 31st October, 1981, under the caption "Indian Surgical dressings banned in Australia".

2. In early September, 1981, the Australian authorities detected contamination in some consignments of surgical bandages exported from India and tests were carried out at the National Biological Standards Laboratory, Australia. Since the surgical dressings were considered capable of producing serious wound infections, the Australian authorities, took steps to recall and destroy all suspected dressings. In a joint Press statement, Commonwealth and State Health Ministers of Australia, warned consumers that certain wound dressings packed in First Aid kits or sold separately as replacement stocks were contaminated and should be burned.

3. In the later half of October, 1981, further lots of surgical dressings manufactured in India, Taiwan and Thailand were found to be contaminated with Bacteria. The con-