

Spurt in drug abuse incidence

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842. SHRI BHADRESWAR*TANTI :****DR. V. VENKATESH :**

Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there has been a sudden spurt in drug abuse incidence during the last three months in the country;

(b) if so, whether any comprehensive plan is being chalked out to contain this menace; and

(c) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WELFARE (DR. RAJENDRA KUMARI BAJPAI) : (a) There is no information to support a conclusion that there has been a sudden spurt in drug abuse incidence during the last three months in the country. The available information indicates, however, that the problem of drug abuse has spread to all sections of society. All efforts should be made to control and, if possible, eradicate the evil of drug abuse. Building up of public awareness is the most important step in mobilising community efforts for preventing further spread of drug abuse and for this purpose several meetings and publicity campaigns have been undertaken in the recent past. There has hence been a rapid increase in public awareness about the dangers of drug abuse.

(b) and (c). Yes Sir. The Government has adopted a multi-dimensional approach involving identification, referral services, treatment, public awareness, education, rehabilitative aspects, training of functionaries and control of illicit trafficking.

SHRI BHADRESWAR TANTI : The Minister has taken a lot of trouble to reply to my question and I am thankful to her. But the answers given to this House are very vague. It is a vague answer. According to her, there is no information to support a conclusion that there has been a sudden

spurt in drug abuse incidence during the last three months. But we find from the reply that this drug abuse has spread to all sections of society in the country. Now, may I ask the Hon. Minister how many cases—since everybody knows that it has spread to all sections—have been detected as yet, because you have information that it has spread to all sections of the society. I want a specific reply on this, as to how many cases have been detected so far.

DR. RAJENDRA KUMARI BAJPAI : There is no specific number with me. (*Interruptions.*)

SHRI BHADRESWAR TANTI : Smack and heroin these are very popular names in the country now. Everybody, particularly school and college students are addicted to these drugs. The drug menace is much more dangerous than cancer and TB. These deadly drugs affect the brain, the intestines, the lungs and ultimately the entire body leading to the death of our young men. (*Interruptions.*) The Minister has information—according to the reply—that this menace has spread in the entire country. It is also mentioned that the Government has adopted a multi-dimensional approach involving identification, referral services, treatment, public awareness, education, rehabilitative aspects, training of functionaries and control of illicit trafficking. You have adopted it. But may I know whether anything is done to materialise these schemes, or are these only on the paper ?

[*Translation*]

MR. SPEAKER : Earlier, you were saying that he should speak loudly. Were you able to hear him ?

[*English*]

DR. RAJENDRA KUMARI BAJPAI : Sir, the Government is seized of the matter and we are very much concerned about this menace of drug abuse in our society, and we want to eradicate it. For that several measures have been taken.

During 1986-87, for the first time a fifteen-bedded de-addiction centre has been

funded and set up in Delhi; it is in progress. In 1987-88 six more de-addiction centres for the treatment of drug addicts have been sanctioned to voluntary organisations. We are trying to do this through voluntary organisations. These are in U.P., Rajasthan, Delhi, Bangalore and Calcutta. Then again, during 1985-86, 21 De-addiction camps were organised by four voluntary organisations, wherein 1,026 drug addicts were treated. Then during 1986-87, 23 such camps were funded. During the current financial year, 1987-88, 26 such De-addiction camps have been funded in Delhi, Rajasthan and Gujarat. Then, for the first time, during 1985-86, 7 Counselling Centres were set up in Delhi. During the financial year 1987-88, 21 new centres have been sanctioned in U.P., Rajasthan, Manipur, Punjab, Delhi, West Bengal, Gujarat and Karnataka.

MR. SPEAKER : You lay it on the table of the House.

DR. RAJENDRA KUMARI BAJPAI : It is not on paper alone. We are doing it very sincerely.

PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ : At some point of time in the past, some films were imported liberally. The intention must have been good. My information is that unauthorisedly there are about two hundred films in cassettes that are in circulation. There must be lakhs of cassettes. There is a great danger because these films depict scenes of sex, violence and drug addiction. Sir, fortunately for us, there is a Ministry of Welfare. The life of our children in schools and colleges is in great danger. My question is, whether the Hon. Minister will be prepared to have a survey so that we have authentic data as to what is happening in the country and thereafter, will she take concrete measures to eradicate this menace ?

DR. RAJENDRA KUMARI BAJPAI : We have taken measures and we are trying to take more stringent measures to eradicate this menace. We also want to build up the public opinion and for that we are working. As far as cassettes and other things are concerned, what the Hon. Member has mentioned, I have no information about that.

DR. CHANDRA SHEKHAR TRIPATHI : Sir, undoubtedly the Government has taken various measures involving some voluntary organisations to have a proper control on drug addiction and drug abuse. May I know from the Hon. Minister certain drugs like Barbitrates, Sedatives, Tranquillisers are being manufactured on a large scale in our country ? If they will be manufactured, they will be consumed. What action Government is proposing to have a proper control on manufacturing of these drugs, which are being consumed in a big way by youths of our country and thus, they fall victim of the drug abuse and drug addiction.

DR. RAJENDRA KUMARI BAJPAI : Sir, certain drugs are used as medicine. That is true, but licences are given to those manufacturers who manufacture it as medicine. If other things are produced, the Government is on the look and will take serious action.

SHRI D. N. REDDY : Sir, the main reason for drug abuse in our country is that there are basic drugs from which component medicines are prepared. About 150 of them are unnecessary and unhealthy. In China and recently in Bangladesh, they have reduced the number to only about forty to fifty basic drugs, by which they control the drug abuse. Will the Minister follow their example and reduce the number of basic drugs in our country, which is the main reason for the spurt in drug abuse. China has done it. Bangladesh has done it. Why not we ? This subject was discussed in detail in the Consultative Committee and the Hon. Minister assured that she will go into this matter and reduce the unnecessary and harmful drugs from such a big number to a lower number, so that the drug abuse will be lower.

DR. RAJENDRA KUMARI BAJPAI : The Hon. Member's suggestion has been noted down and we will see to it.

Loss due to Bharat Bandh

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*844. SHRI SUBHASH YADAV :

SHRI SITARAM J. GAVALI :

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :