

(b) The following measures have been taken, to check Hepatitis-B infection :-

- (i) It is mandatory to screen, all Blood Donations for Hepatitis-B Virus, before transfusion.
- (ii) Efforts are being made, to promote safe sex behaviour under the National AIDS Control Programme. The routes of transmission for both diseases are the same.
- (iii) Provision of separate syringe and separate needle, for each vaccination under the Universal Immunisation Programme.
- (iv) It has been decided to immunize Hospital Workers of Central Government Hospitals against Hepatitis-B.
- (v) Guidelines have been issued for the use of a separate sterile syringe, and needle for each injection and aseptic surgical intervention.
- (vi) Health Education.
- (c) No, Sir.
- (d) Does not arise.

Amendments in Essential Commodities Act, 1981

1026. SHRI NARESH PUGLIA : Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

- (a) whether the Government propose to make any amendment in the Essential Commodities Special provision Act, 1981;
- (b) if so, the reasons thereof;
- (c) whether any Committee has been set up for this purpose;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the extent to which the amendments in the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 are going to help the general public ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI SATYAPAL SINGH YADAV) : (a) and (b) The Essential Commodities (Special Provisions) Act, 1981 has lapsed on 31.8.1997.

(c) and (d) An Expert Group was set up under the Chairmanship of Secretary (Consumer Affairs) to review the

various provisions of the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 and Essential Commodities (Special Provisions) Act, 1981. The Group recommended scrapping of the Essential Commodities (Special Provisions) Act, 1981 and certain amendments in the Essential Commodities Act, 1955.

(e) Amendments have been proposed in the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 in public interest in order to deal more effectively with persons indulging in hoarding and blackmarketing and profiteering in essential commodities, ensure easy availability of essential commodities to the consumers, facilitate expeditions disposal or cases, prevent misuse of power by local field functionaries, provide for certain allowance for minor variation of stock due to climatic conditions or transit and also to keep pace with the path of liberalisation.

Rehabilitation of Jobless Textile Workers

1027. SHRI HARIN PATHAK : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

- (a) whether Government have enhanced stipend and training period for National Renewal Fund beneficiaries at Gandhi labour Institute, Ahmedabad;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government have declared any scheme for rehabilitation of jobless unemployed textile workers in Gujarat;
- (d) if so, the criteria fixed for the said scheme by the Government;
- (e) whether the Government have extended some financial assistance to Gujarat Government for rehabilitation of displaced textile workers; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA) : (a) to (f) The Government has revised the rate of daily stipend per trainee under the NRF to Rs. 60/- for Class 'A' cities and to Rs. 50/- for the trainees located elsewhere. The duration of training period has been extended to a maximum of 6 months for seven specified trades.

It has been reported by the Ministry of Industry in a communication dated 6.3.98 that NRF (National Renewal Fund) assistance is being extended through Gandhi Labour Institute, Ahmedabad for counselling, retraining and redeployment of rationalised workers in Gujarat. The