

[English]

Shri M. L. Fotedar: I may tell the hon. Member—Mr. Khurana and all of us also know it very well—that health is basically a State subject. We provide only the funds and the necessary guidelines. So far as the needles are concerned, disposable needles are not provided and I have said that it is due to financial constraints. So, due to financial constraints, it will not be possible for us to provide disposable needles for testing malaria. (*Interruptions*).

[Translation]

Shri Dau Dayal Joshi: How it should be used in the villages. (*Interruptions*).

Shri M. L. Fotedar: The needle should be sterilized and then used to test the other person. (*Interruptions*).

Shri Dau Dayal Joshi: Needles are not available in the villages, these are not provided. (*Interruptions*).

Shri M. L. Fotedar: Sterilization means that the needle should be boiled in water for 20 minutes and then that needle should be used on another person. (*Interruptions*).

Shri Dau Dayal Joshi: Mr. Speaker, Sir, Malaria is spreading. It cannot be checked. (*Interruptions*).

Shri M. L. Fotedar: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to remove this impression of the hon. Member that "Malaria is spreading". It is not spreading, but has been controlled to a great extent. (*Interruptions*).

[English]

Forest Fires

*188. **Shri Krishan Dutt Sultanpuri:** Will the Minister of Environment and Forests be pleased to state:

(a) the names of States where cases of forest fires were reported during the last two years; and

(b) the estimated loss of forest wealth resulting from these fires?

The Minister of State of the Ministry of Environment and Forests (Shri Kamal Nath): (a) and (b) The occurrence of forest fire has been reported by Gujarat, Maharashtra, Kerala and West Bengal during 1989-90. The details for the last two years are being ascertained from the States and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[Translation]

Shri Krishan Dutt Sultanpuri: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to whether any assistance has been sought by the hill states such as Himachal Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya and Sikkim for the loss suffered by these States in forest fires.

Shri Kamal Nath: Mr. Speaker, Sir, no information has been received from the Himachal Pradesh Government in this regard during the last two years. I have the figures of 1988-89 with me. In the year 1988-89, Himachal Pradesh was the worst affected state. Nearly 24,070 hectare of land was affected by forest fires. We have not received the figures pertaining to the last two years. We have asked them to furnish the figures.

Shri Krishan Dutt Sultanpuri: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the date from which BJP has come into power in Himachal Pradesh. (*Interruptions*).

Is it a fact that the BJP Government has not taken suitable action to control these forest fires and a number of forests in Himachal Pradesh have been destroyed in fire. The State Government has tried to implement the policy of "Van lagao—Roji Kamao". I would like to know whether the Government is going to get this matter investigated through the CBI or at the Central level that the actual forest belt in Himachal Pradesh has been totally denuded this year and the Corporation has incurred loss in crores of rupees as a result thereof. Are you going to write to Himachal Pradesh?

Government to get this matter investigated? Will the hon. Minister please let us know the percentage to which afforestation programme in other states has succeeded. I would like to know whether any arrangements will be made in regard to the devastation caused by the BJP Government in Himachal Pradesh?

Shri Kamal Nath : Mr. Speaker, Sir, as I have said that we have called for information from the Himachal Pradesh Government. As soon as we get the figures of last two years, an enquiry will be conducted, if necessary.

[English]

Shri Bhuwan Chandra Khanduri : Sir, the hon. Minister will appreciate that there is a close link between the plantation of trees and the fire that subsequently takes place. I would like to know, has he got any data with regard to the trees that are planted and the number of trees that are burnt out every year all over India because of fire.

Shri Kamal Nath : Sir, the number of trees which are planted is a separate figure and the number of trees which are burnt out because of fire is a separate figure. I don't know what the hon. Member means when he says that one is equal to the other.

Shri Bhuwan Chandra Khanduri : Sir, I will explain it. If there is a programme for tree plantation, certain number of trees are planted and in summer those trees are burnt out. In fact this plantation goes on paper only. Trees are not planted on ground. So, every year though you plant lakhs of trees but at the end of the year you burnt these out by organising forest fires.

Shri Kamal Nath : Sir, the procedure to check forest fire is a very elaborate one. Forest fire cannot just be written off on a piece of paper. Certainly, I agree with the hon.

Member when he says that the plantations is not what it should be. We are taking steps and we will see that the trees which are planted in this season are planted on the ground and not on files.

[Translation]

Shri Ram Naik : Mr. Speaker, the hon. Minister has given information about Himachal Pradesh for the year 1988-89. It may be that after receiving the information for the years 1988-89, and 1990-91, Government would have taken adequate preventive measures which would have checked the loss to a great extent and if it has been so whether the Centre propose to provide some special assistance to the Himachal Pradesh Government to help take more preventive measures?

Shri Kamal Nath : Sir, we haven't yet received provisional figures for the year 1989-90 and the year 1990-91. If the State Government wants any assistance on the basis of its success, it can send the proposal. It will be considered sympathetically.

Prof. Prem Dhumal : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister has assured that if the State Government seeks assistance, it will be given. In 1983, a decision was taken to provide on Ecological Task Force to Himachal Pradesh. Is the Government going to provide it soon? Will he make it clear to the hon. Member Shri K. D. Sultanpuri that when the fires in question took place, Congress was in power. Will he try to extinguish the flames in his heart after the BJP came into power!

Shri Arjun Singh : This is not the question of heart-burning, but the question is about trees.

Mr. Speaker : Please confine yourself to the forest fire.

[English]

Shri Kamal Nath : I will confine myself to that only though I am trying to cover other points also.

[Translation]

Though Government had approved the proposal of constituting a Ecological Task Force in Himachal Pradesh, it could not materialise but in future priority will be given to Himachal Pradesh. So far as the question of forest fire is concerned, I would request the Himachal Pradesh Government to send the figures at the earliest so that I can present them before the House.

 WRITTEN ANSWERS TO
QUESTIONS

[English]

Efficacy of Ayurvedic Drugs

*185. **Dr. A. K. Patel**: Will the Minister of **Health and Family Welfare** be pleased to state :

(a) whether any tests have been conducted in the country about the efficacy of ayurvedic drugs to improve memory and learning, and

(b) if so, in which institutions such tests have been conducted and the outcome thereof?

The Minister of Health and Family Welfare (Shri M. L. Fotedar):

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The efficacy of medicinal plants like Brahmi, Mandukparni, Jyotishmati, Sankhapushpi and a compound Ayurvedic preparation namely, 'Smriti Sagar Rasa' have been studied as Medhya Rasayana at Central Council for Research in Ayurveda and Siddha, Central Drug Research Institute, Lucknow, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, Gujarat Ayurved University, Jamnagar, National Institute of Ayurveda, Jaipur and at Kasturba Gandhi Medical College, Manipal. These drugs have been reported effective in improving Memory and Learning.

Control over Indian Council of Historical Research

*187. **Shri Shankersinh Vaghela**: Will the Minister of **Human Resource Development** be pleased to state :

(a) Whether the Government exercise any control over the Indian Council of Historical Research in regard to sanction of foreign trips and maintenance allowance ;

(b) if so, in what manner ; and

(c) the details of the trips sanctioned and the maintenance amount granted for the same during the last three years ?

The Minister of Human Resource Development (Shri Arjun Singh): (a) and (b) The Indian Council of Historical Research gives financial assistance to scholars for undertaking foreign trips in connection with collection of source material or to present a paper at a seminar or conference. This assistance is sanctioned by its Research Projects Committee in accordance with the rules framed by the Council for this purpose. There is no representation of the Government on the Research Project Committee and approval of Government is not necessary for individual sanctions.

(c) The Council sanctioned foreign travel grants to 79 scholars during the last three years. 57 scholars have so far availed of the assistance. The Council have incurred an expenditure of Rs. 2,17,467 on maintenance and Rs. 5,92,820 on travel of these scholars.

Poor performance of Indians in Sports

*189 **Shri Vijaya Naval Patil**: Will the Minister of **Human Resource Development** be pleased to state :

(a) whether the poor performance of Indians in sports, games and youth activities in comparison to other