

(c) and (d) A Parliamentary team has visited refugee camps in Kokrajhar in June, 1997. Action is being taken by the Central Ministries/State Government on the basis of the recommendations made by the Parliamentary Team.

A Central Study Team of Directorate General of Health Services, visited, in May 1998, refugee camps in Kokrajhar and Bongaigaon districts to elicit the magnitude of health problems faced by the persons living in the refugee camps in.

(e) Does not arise.

Response by Underground Insurgents

*398. SHRI K.A. SANGTAM : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether NSCN (IM) and NSCN (K), the underground insurgents have responded to the peace-talks initiated by the Union Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Union Government have initiated peace-talks with other insurgent groups also;

(d) if so, the details thereof alongwith the reaction of the insurgent groups thereto; and

(e) the other measures being taken by the Union Government to bring peace to Nagaland ?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI) : (a) to (e) The then Prime Minister had visited Nagaland and other States in the North East in October, 1996 and reiterated Government's willingness to hold unconditional talks with the underground elements.

2. After talks with the Isaac-Muliyah group of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland, It was mutually agreed to cease-fire for three months with effect from August 1, 1997 and embark upon political level discussions.
3. The cease-fire has since been extended till July 31, 1998 and political level discussions have also since begun. Shri Swaraj Kaushal has been appointed as the political negotiator on behalf of the Government of India.
4. The cease-fire was unilaterally extended to the other underground outfits also. The NSCN(K) has not responded positively for a cease-fire and peace talks.
5. The Prime Minister during his visit to Assam in April, 1998, extended an invitation to insurgent groups to come forward and hold talks to bring about peace in the region. The Prime Minister, in his press statement at Guwahati on April, 15, 1998 had stated : "To all those who have strayed from the paths of togetherness, whether in Assam or other States of the North East, I extend an invitation : come forward;

let us discuss, my Government is committed to holding talks, to a restoration of peace; let us do so within the four corners of our Constitution". The Prime Minister also stated that if necessary the Constitution could be amended to find solution to the problem.

6. No other insurgent outfit has so far responded for talks within the parameters indicated by the Prime Minister.
7. Other steps taken by the Government to check militancy and restore normalcy in Nagaland include, *inter-alia*, deployment of units of Central Para Military Forces and Army; improved co-ordination and sharing of intelligence; modernisation/upgradation of State Police forces; sanction of Special Central Assistance; declaration of Nagaland State as a 'disturbed area' and notification of the major insurgent groups as 'unlawful associations'. The situation is also kept under watch and is reviewed from time to time for taking appropriate action.

Medical Profession Under Consumer Protection Act, 1986

*399. SHRI S.S. OWAISI :

SHRI SURESH WARPUDKAR :

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the medical profession was brought under Consumer Protection Act, 1986 two years ago;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and the main achievements made in this regard;

(c) whether Indian Medical Association has recommended for setting up a screening body at all level of redressal fora to curb filing of complaints under CPA;

(d) if so, the details of demands made by Indian Medical Association and the number of demands out of them accepted by the Government;

(e) the total number of cases booked under this Act during each of the last three years; and

(f) the steps taken by the Government to make the Consumer Protection Act more effective ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI DALIT EZHILMALAI) : (a) and (b) All services, if rendered for consideration, have been covered under the provisions of the Consumer Protection Act (CPA), 1986. The Supreme Court of India in its judgement dated 13th Nov., 1995 had upheld the provisions of the Act and made it clear that doctors and hospitals that render services without any charge whatsoever would not fall within the ambit of service under section 2 (1) (0) of the Consumer Protection Act, 1986.