

(b) if so, the details and terms and conditions thereof; and

(c) the time by which this agreement is likely to be effected?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI DALIT EZHILMALAI): (a) Yes, Sir. An Implementing Agreement in the field of Health and Medicine under the Agreement between the Government of Federative Republic of Brazil and the Government of the Republic of India on Co-operation in the fields of Science and Technology was signed in Brazil on 5th May, 1998 during the recently concluded State visit of the Hon'ble President of India to that country.

(b) The Implementing Agreement based on the Standard terms and conditions, envisages co-operation between India and Brazil in the following fields:

- (i) Biotechnology on Health and Pharmaceutical products
- (ii) Epidemiology
- (iii) Sanitary Surveillance
- (iv) Management of Public Health Systems
- (v) Traditional Medicine
- (vi) Pharmacology and Pharmaceuticals
- (vii) Infectious Diseases and Parasitology
- (viii) Maternal and child health care and family planning
- (ix) Occupational Health
- (x) Tropical Medicine
- (xi) Any other area as may be agreed between the parties.

The Agreement of Co-operation is envisaged to be implemented in the following forms:

- (A) Exchange of information and transfer of technology in similar areas.
- (B) Conducting mutual scientific co-operation programmes including workshops, and exchange of delegations with pharmaceutical health and medical background.
- (C) Publication of scientific and technological information resulting from the activities of the agreement by common consent and through formal authorisation.
- (D) Any other programme or activity as may be agreed between the parties.

(c) This Implementing Agreement came into effect from the date of its signature i.e. 5th May, 1998.

[English]

Joint Patrolling on Indo-Bangladesh Border

2029. SHRI RANJIB BISWAL: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have a proposal to undertake joint patrolling on the Indo-Bangladesh Border;

(b) if so, whether the Bangladesh Government has made any suggestion to the Government of India in the matter;

(c) is so, the details thereof; and

(d) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): (a) No proposal for undertaking joint patrolling on Indo-Bangladesh border has been taken up with Bangladesh.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Ban on One-Digit Lotteries

2030. SHRI HARI KEWAL PRASAD: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have imposed ban on one-digit lotteries by issuing an ordinance;

(b) if so, the number of persons rendered jobless on this account;

(c) whether the Government propose to impose ban on all types of lotteries;

(d) if so, the time by which the ban is likely to be imposed; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): (a) to (e) The prevalence of single digit and instant lotteries and the temptation offered by them had proved to be the undoing of many families, especially those belonging to low income groups. It was felt that a Central legislation to regulate the conduct of lotteries was necessary to protect the interests of the gullible poor. Considering the exigencies of the matter and as Parliament was not in session, the Lotteries (Regulation) Ordinance, 1997 was promulgated on 1.10.1997. In order to give continued effect to the provisions of the said Ordinance, the Lotteries (Regulation) Second Ordinance, 1997 was promulgated on

30.12.1997. As the Lotteries (Regulation) Second Ordinance, 1997 was going to lapse on 5.5.1998, the Lotteries (Regulation) Ordinance, 1998 was promulgated on 23.4.1998.

The Ordinance bans the sale of single digit and instant lotteries. It also regulates the conduct and sale of other types of lotteries.

The Ordinance is a piece of social legislation. Specific information relating to part (b) of the question is not available.

[English]

Fixation of Gas Prices for Power Plants

2031. SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the gas prices fixed for various power plants in the country;

(b) the price at which gas is supplied for Ramgarh Gas Power Plant in Jaisalmer, Rajasthan;

(c) whether Government of Rajasthan has requested to review the prices of the gas;

(d) whether the gas supplied to Ramgarh Gas based thermal power plant contains high concentration of Nitrogen, which does not contribute to heat energy/power generation; and

(e) if so, the action proposed to be taken in this regard and to consider to supply gas to the said plant at concessional rate in order to boost gas utilisation from small fields?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) The consumer price of natural gas, having calorific value of ten thousand kilo calorie per cubic metre, for the quarter April-June 1998 is Rs. 2271 per thousand cubic metre (MCM). However, the consumer price of natural gas in the North-Eastern region is Rs. 1250 per MCM with the provision of a discount of Rs. 300 per MCM on case-to-case basis. The above price of natural gas excludes transportation charges, royalties and other duties.

(b) The consumer price of natural gas for Ramgarh Power Plant for quarter April-June 1998 is Rs. 772 per MCM excluding transportation charges, royalties and other duties.

(c) Government of Rajasthan has requested for continuation of the discounted price available for natural gas supply to Ramgarh Power Plant.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) Exploration efforts are being continued in order to find natural gas in Rajasthan with better composition. Gas is already being supplied at a concessional rate to the Ramgarh Gas Power Plant.

Pending Cases under Consumer Courts

2032. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA :
SHRI CHAMAN LAL GUPTA :
SHRI RAJVEER SINGH :

Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether "Consumerism" movement has been accelerated in the country during the last three years;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of cases filed/disposed of in various consumer courts till date, level-wise, State-wise; and

(d) the steps taken or proposed to be taken to further strengthen the consumer's interest in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI SATYAPAL SINGH YADAV): (a) Consumer movement in the country has picked up in the last three years.

(b) Consumer awareness has gained momentum in the country as it is evident from the growth of the number of voluntary consumer organisations which have started functioning in the country during the last three years. Similarly, the number of cases filed in the Consumer Courts all over the country has increased from 6 lakhs at the end of 1994 to 13.3 lakhs at the end of May, 1998.

(c) Based on the information made available to the Central Government, the state-wise position of the number of cases filed in and disposed of by the State Commission and District Fora is given separately in the statement I and II respectively. In so far as the National Commission is concerned, 13,713 cases have been filed and 7,903 cases disposed of as on 1.5.98.

(d) A three tier consumer disputes redressal machinery at the National, State and District levels have been set up to provide simple, speedy and inexpensive redressal of consumer grievances. The Central Government has taken a number of measures to increase consumer consciousness amongst people through various multi media publicity measures. Such measures include, among other, preparation of audio visual materials for broadcasting and telecasting through AIR and Doordarshan, printed publicity literature in the form of booklets, brochures, posters, post card size material in the field of consumer protection. The Department is also publishing a quarterly journal, "Ubbhokta Jagam", which disseminates useful information to the consumer. The printed material is made available to consumer organisations free of cost. In addition, Consumer Welfare Fund has been set up to provide financial assistance to eligible agencies/organisations for undertaking activities in the field of consumer protection and promoting consumer movement in all parts of the country with special emphasis on rural and tribal areas.