

over the increasing hold of western countries over the knowledge of Herbal medicines;

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto; and

(c) by when Government would take effective steps in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Government have already taken step to establish Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL) which will made available the Ayurvedic knowledge of the medicinal use of plants already in the public domain, in patent compatible format in order to prevent the grant of Patent for claims which are neither inventions nor discoveries. Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL) for 35,000 formulations will be completed soon.

New Medical Colleges

2664. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state the number of new Medical Colleges to be sanctioned by the MCI during the current financial year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): Seven new medical colleges have so far been permitted by the Central Government on the recommendations of Medical Council of India during the current financial year. In addition, 18 proposals are pending with the Government/Medical Council of India. Out of 18 pending proposals, Letter of Intent have been issued in 7 cases and 11 proposals are at various stages of consideration with the Government of India/Medical Council of India. No assurance can be given for clearance of these proposals as clearance of these proposals depend upon fulfilment of qualifying criteria prescribed in the "Establishment of Medical College Regulation, 1999", availability of infrastructure facilities and recommendation of the Medical Council of India thereon.

News-item "No cure for fake Medicines"

2665. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news