

(b) whether Government are aware that about 3 lakh patients in the capital are experiencing difficulties because of non-availability of these medicines; and

(c) if so, what are the details in this regard and what steps are being taken to solve the problem?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (MISS KUMUD-BEN M. JOSHI): (a) to (c) With the introduction of new set of Rules by the Government in the Drugs and Cosmetics Rules in June, 1982, for exercising strict control on the psychotropic drugs, a number of chemists in Delhi have not obtained licences for manufacture/sale of these drugs. These drugs, however, are available at nine branches of Super Bazar and with some Chemists. Applications for issue of licences from a few other Chemists are being processed to by the Delhi Drug Control Authority.

Supply of Essential Commodities to the Tribes of Bastar, M.P.

221. SHRI BHAGATRAM MANHAR: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the facilities of having public distribution system is aimed at making available in time the essential commodities to weaker sections of society living below poverty line both in rural and urban areas in the country;

(b) whether the essential commodities are being made available to weaker sections of societies in rural and urban areas and if so, in what way;

(c) whether Government are aware of non-availability of essential commodities through public distribution system to the tribes of Bastar in Madhya Pradesh; and

(d) if so, what steps are being taken to make available the essential commodities to the tribes of Bastar?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD): (a) and (b) The Public Distribution System is functioning in the country with the primary object to meet certain minimum requirements of essential commodities of the consumers, particularly the weaker and vulnerable sections of the society (including those living below the poverty line), both in the rural and urban areas. The main way in which this is being done is issue of such commodities through fair-price shops at pre-fixed rates and quotas per consumer. Under the New 20-Point Programme, guidelines have been issued to State Governments/Union Territories to take effective steps to strengthen and streamline the Public Distribution System in their respective territories for better serving the consumers. These include opening of more fair-price shops, particularly in areas which are relatively underserved or unserved by the system.

(c) and (d) Within each State, the distribution of essential commodities, supplied by the Central Government is the responsibility of the concerned State Government. Information is being collected from the Government of M.P. in this regard and will be laid on the Table of the House.

National Policy on Food

222. SHRI BHAGATRAM MANHAR: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to formulate National Policy on Food for the next two years;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) if answer to part (a) above be in the negative, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD): (a) to (c) Government have