

Fate of Indian citizens in Sri Lanka

822. SHRI KISHAN LAL SHARMA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the future of Indians in Sri Lanka has become uncertain due to the slow pace both in grant of citizenship and of repatriation; and

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard and steps so far taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SAMARENDRA KUNDU): (a) Both the Governments of India and Sri Lanka remain committed to the repatriation of or the grant of Sri Lankan citizenship to the stateless persons of Indian origin covered under the 1964 and 1974 Agreements. As such any delays which have earlier slowed implementation are not a cause of uncertainty.

(b) Nearly half the persons due to be repatriated under the original Agreement of 1964 have already been repatriated. Steps are being taken to ensure that the implementation will continue smoothly and at a steady rate in future.

People infected with T.B. in the country

823. SHRI KALP NATH RAI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that over 30 crores of people are infected with tuberculosis and about six lakhs of them die every year in the country; and

(b) if so, what action Government are taking in this regard and in the matter of providing necessary preventive measures and medical aid in the early stages to the patients suffering from tuberculosis?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI RABI RAY): (a) According to the studies conducted in India the average rate of infection with tuberculosis is about 45 per cent. However, infection does not necessarily mean occurrence of disease. It only means introduction of tubercle bacilli in the body. Only about 4 per cent of them may get the disease at any time during their life.

Over 5 lakhs tuberculosis patients die in the country annually at present.

(b) A statement containing the action taken by Government is enclosed.

Action taken for providing preventive measures and medical aid to T.B. patients:

1. 27 more District T.B. Centres have been established. Thus 311 District T.B. Centres are now functioning in the country.

2. 42,500 T.B. beds have been provided to look after the acutely ill T.B. patients. A statement showing the distribution State-wise is enclosed.

3. Anti T.B. drugs for domiciliary treatment of T.B. patients are supplied to State Government/Voluntary Body run T.B. clinics by the Central Government.

4. B.C.G. Vaccine is being supplied to States for vaccination of susceptible population. Nearly 13 to 14 million B.C.G. vaccinations are performed every year and about 1 million patients are under treatment under the programme at any time in a year.

5. Steps have been taken for the involvement of health workers of various categories posted at the Primary Health Centres in T.B. cases finding, treatment and B.C.G. vaccination activities.