

- (iv) It is also specifically mandated in the Code of Conduct prescribed for Agents in IRDA (Licensing of Individual Agents), Regulations 2000 that they should ensure conservation of business procured by them through proper efforts.
- (v) All the insurance companies have procedures for intimating the policyholders in advance through various means of communication regarding the payment of renewal premiums.
- (vi) The IRDA also monitors persistency levels on a periodic basis and follows it up with the insurance companies.
- (vii) Many of the insurance companies take persistency as the basis to provide additional benefits and privileges to agents.

III-effects of honey mixed with antibiotics

*394. DR. BHARATKUMAR RAUT: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that according to a study carried out by the Centre for Science and Environment most of the honey brands available in the market contain varying amount of antibiotics;
- (b) whether it is also a fact that the over consumption of such branded honey could induce resistance to antibiotics, leading to blood-related disorder and injury to the liver; and
- (c) the steps Government intends to take to stop mixing antibiotics in honey by the well-known Ayurvedic medicine producing companies like Dabur, Himalaya, Patanjali, Baidyanath, Khadi, Gold, Himflora, Mehsons, Umang, etc.?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) The Centre for Science and Environment (CSE), New Delhi, an NGO, in a laboratory study on antibiotics in honey in September, 2010, has reported that out of 12 samples of honey analysed by them 11 samples contained antibiotics, out of which 2 samples were of imported honey.

(b) The Department of Health Research has constituted an Expert Group at the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) to address issues relating to antibiotics in honey.

(c) The standards of honey have been prescribed under the Prevention of Food Adulteration (PFA) Rules, 1955, wherein antibiotics are not permitted to be added in honey. The implementation of PFA Act and Rules is carried out by the State/U.T. Governments who draw samples of various food articles including honey and take action in case of any violation of Prevention of Food Adulteration Rules, 1955. An advisory has been issued to all State Governments/U.T. Governments to keep a strict vigil on the quality of honey sold in the market and to take necessary action under the provisions of

PFA, 1954 in case samples do not conform to the standards prescribed in PFA Rules, 1955. The Port Health Officers, Authorised Officers at the Ports and Customs Collectors, have also been advised to analyse all consignments imported into the country as per quality parameters prescribed under PFA Rules, 1955, as well as for the presence of antibiotics before the same is released for human consumption.

Access to safer drinking water in rural areas

†*395. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that only 30 per cent dwellers in rural areas of the country are getting pure and safe water;
- (b) if not, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the scarcity of this availability is due to water shortage in the country;
- (d) if not, the reaction of Government thereto; and
- (e) the reasons for non-availability of pure water to all the dwellers of rural areas?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI C.P. JOSHI): (a) and (b) No, Sir. As per data provided by the States, as on 22.11.2010, out of 16,61,058 rural habitations in the country, 345 habitations remain uncovered. 137565 habitations also are reported to have some sources with Iron, Fluoride, Arsenic and other contaminants.

(c) to (e) The Government of India supplements the efforts of the State Governments to make available potable and adequate drinking water, by providing financial and technical assistance for augmenting existing drinking water sources both from surface and ground, for extending the coverage and addressing water quality issues through its various programmes. The virgin villages as well as quality and water stressed villages are given priority.

New international AI hub abroad

*396. SHRI K.E. ISMAIL: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Air India (AI) proposes to set up new international hub abroad;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether Government has held discussions with various countries in the matter;
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) the details of the criteria fixed by Government for identification of sites for setting up of such international hubs; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.