

(iv) **Wages paid to Term based officers**

HPCL has intimated that it does not engage any term based officers.

High mortality due to malaria in the country

*188. SHRI S. THANGAVELU : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the mortality rate due to malaria in the country is higher than the actual data projected by the World Health Organisation (WHO);

(b) whether it is also a fact that 90 per cent of deaths due to malaria are in rural areas, out of which 86 per cent occur at home without any medical attention;

(c) if so, the details thereof and whether Government has initiated any specific programme to control malaria and bring awareness about this dangerous disease in rural areas; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and followup action taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Out of total reported deaths due to malaria, around 80% are reported from rural areas. Majority of these deaths occur in tribal and remote areas where early diagnosis and prompt treatment of *P. falciparum* malaria continues to be challenging.

(c) and (d) For prevention and control of vector-borne diseases including malaria, Government of India is implementing an integrated National Vector Borne Disease Control Programme (NVBDCP) under the overarching umbrella of National Rural Health Mission (NRHM). The main strategy for prevention and control of vector-borne diseases focuses on integrated vector control, early case detection and complete treatment and behaviour change communication. In order to improve outreach of the programme in rural and tribal areas, Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHA) are being trained under NRHM in high malaria endemic areas for performing Rapid Diagnostic Test for early detection of *P. falciparum* malaria and for providing Artemisinin-based combination therapy (ACT) promptly to patients.

To create awareness in the community about malaria, an IEC campaign is carried out through print and electronic media. In addition, health camps and other local strategies like 'nukkad natak'

etc are organized to sensitize the community. Further, each year, the month of June is also observed as 'Anti-Malaria month.

The programme is primarily being implemented through the State/UT Governments and is periodically monitored by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare through review meetings, field visits and follow-up actions.

Uniform taxation in all states

†189. SHRI ANIL MADHAV DAVE : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether any matter is under consideration of Government to bring uniformity in taxes in all States of the country; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and by when a decision in the matter is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Government has announced its intent to introduce Goods and Services Tax (GST) in the country. One of the important objectives of introducing GST is to minimize the difference of tax rates in different States and consequently establish a common national market.

The Empowered Committee of State Finance Ministers (EC) has proposed a dual GST model for the country, which has been accepted in principle by the Central Government. The introduction of this dual GST model requires certain amendments in the Constitution. A draft Constitutional amendment bill has accordingly been prepared and sent to the EC for obtaining the view of the States. The draft Constitutional amendment bill envisages inter-alia, setting up of a GST Council which will recommend to the Centre and the States, the tax rates, items to be exempted, registration threshold, etc. EC is yet to revert back with its clear view on the draft. Since developing consensus on such issues generally takes time, it is not possible to indicate any time limit by which a decision for introduction of the constitutional amendment bill in the Parliament will be taken.

Change in computation of price index in the country

†*190. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.