

[28th July, 2000]

RAJYA SABHA

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE [DR. (SHRIMATI) RITA VERMA]: (a) to (c) In view of the significant epidemiological and demographic changes in the country since 1983, when the first National Health Policy was formulated, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has undertaken an exercise to revise the National Health Policy.

Emphasis will be laid in the policy on control of (a) communicable diseases like Malaria, T.B., AIDS etc., (b) non-communicable diseases like Cancer, Diabetes etc., health care for special groups-women, children and elderly persons and provision of health care to the poorer sections of the society.

Withdrawal of Directives of Iodisation of Salt

687. SHRI R. P. GOENKA:

SHRI CM. IBRAHIM:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have issued a notification proposing withdrawal of compulsory iodisation of edible salt;

(b) if so, the reasons prompting the withdrawal;

(c) whether it would affect the health of the people; and

(d) what alternatives, if any, are envisaged to provide the necessary dose of iodine for immunization against various iodine deficiency ailments and disorders?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE [DR. (SHRIMATI) RITA VERMA]: (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The notification was issued on 10.5.2000 in view of repeated representations received urging that there should be no element of compulsion in measures that seek to promote public health which should be left to the "informed*" choice of the public.

(c) The notification does not seek to ban the use of iodised salt but merely seeks to remove the restriction on sale of non-iodised

salt for direct human consumption. Hence iodised salt will continued to be available as a preventive against iodine deficiency disorder.

(d) Further, creation of community awareness about the benefits of using iodised salt and ensuring availability and accessibility of iodised salt to all sections of society will continue to be given greater emphasis and priority in the national programme against iodine deficiency disorders.

Diseases by Saltish Water

688. SHRI BACHANI LEKHRAJ: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state;

(a) whether Government have come to know through survey report that the water found in some States is saltish -and is full of nitrate and fluoride;

(b) if so, the details of such places, State-wise/UTs-wise;

(c) whether this kind of water is in abundance in Gujarat, as compared to other States;

(d) whether this kind of water is also available in drought-hit areas and due to this reason, public is affected with diseases;

(e) if so, the names of diseases; and

(f) the steps being taken to control this kind of diseases?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE [DR. (SHRIMATI) RITA VERMA]: (a) to (f) A report published by the Rajiv Gandhi National Drinking Water Mission in 1994 indicated that certain States of India are affected by the problem of excess fluoride in water. As per the report, the States declared endemic for this problem are 15 in number and Gujarat is also one of these. The other States are Jammu & Kashmir, Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Tamilnadu, Orissa and Bihar.