However, the proposal of Medical Council of India (MCI) to amend the Post Graduate Medical Education Regulations, which makes one year mandatory rural posting at a Public Health Centre (PHC) for a MBBS student to apply for admission in a PG course from the academic year 2015-16, has been approved by this Ministry.

(c) to (e) In order to encourage the doctors working in remote and difficult areas, the Medical Council of India with the previous approval of Central Government, has amended the Post Graduate Medical Education Regulations, 2000 to provide –

(i) 50% reservation in Post Graduate Diploma Courses for Medical Officers in the Government service who have served for at least three years in remote and difficult areas; and

(ii) Incentive at the rate of 10% of the marks obtained for each year in service in remote or difficult areas upto the maximum of 30% of the marks obtained in the entrance test for admissions in Post Graduate Medical Courses.

Documentation of medicinal herbs

569. SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a British firm had filed a patent application claiming Ginger and Kutki, being used alone or in combination with other ingredients, to treat cough, bronchial asthma and lung diseases;

(b) whether incessant co-operation and useful promotion of research and Development programmes and propagation of Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani, Homoeopathy, Yoga and Naturopathy systems has resulted in creation of a comprehensive publication documenting such concoction of herbs, etc., so that frivolous claims filed by other countries could be successfully contested; and

(c) if so, whether it has been digitalised to enable common man to find out incorporation of any particular vital herb and its medicinal value thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI SANTOSH CHOWDHARY) : (a) As informed by the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP), no Patent application has been filed before the Indian Patent Office by any British firm in India, involving Ginger and Kutki, being used alone or in combination with other ingredients, to treat cough, bronchial asthama and lung diseases.

As far as patent filed outside India is concerned, according to the information received from CSIR-Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL), a British firm namely Nicholas John Larkins, had filed a patent application in year 2006 in United Kingdom (publication No. GB2436063) titled "Pharmaceutical composition for the treatment of excess mucous production" claiming the use of Ginger and Kutki for the treatment of Phlegmatic Cough, Bronchial asthma, Cough/ Bronchitis, Diseases of Phlegm and as Phlegmagogue. TKDL filed a pre-grant opposition on 25 April, 2011. The above Patent application terminated before grant on 12 May, 2011.

(b) and (c) The Department of AYUSH, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in collaboration with Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) has established Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL), which contains 2,91,008 medicinal formulations that includes concoction of herbs, from traditional texts on Ayurveda, Unani, and Siddha to prevent the misappropriation of India's Traditional Knowledge on Indian Systems of medicine.

The National Institute of Indian Medical Heritage (NIIMH), a unit of Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS) under the Department of AYUSH has also launched another web based Research Portal for dissemination of Research outcomes in AYUSH Systems including medicinal plants.

As per the Cabinet approval, access to TKDL at present is limited to International Patent Offices; therefore, it cannot be utilized for any purpose other than contesting frivolous claims. However, the AYUSH Research Portal is open to all to find information about research undertaken on AYUSH Systems including herbs/medicinal plants.

Shutting down of research projects of ICMR

570. SHRI PALVAI GOVARDHAN REDDY : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Finance Ministry has asked to shut down 30-40 per cent of research projects being carried out by Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR); and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD) : (a) No. The Indian Council of Medical Research has informed that no such instruction to shut down the project have been issued by the Finance Ministry.

(b) Does not arise.