

NORI certificates for foreign-settled doctors

1835. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has been issuing 'No Obligation to Return to India (NORI)' certificates to enable doctors to settle abroad;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor along with the number of NORI certificates issued by Government during the last three years, year-wise; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to ensure that the doctors who had gone for further study abroad come back to India and serve the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) to (c) As per immigration laws of United States of America, for all J-1 Visa holders, 2 years of home residency in India is mandatory. The NORI Certificate is one of the requirements for seeking waiver from the above mentioned 2 years of mandatory home residency, while applying for H1B visa, i.e., work visa. Eleven NORI certificates were issued in the year 2011.

Subsequently, it was decided that no NORI certificate will be issued till finalization of the revised guidelines. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare issued revised guidelines in March, 2013 which stipulate that NORI Certificates will not be issued under any circumstance. Accordingly, no NORI Certificate has been issued by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in the years 2012, 2013 and in the current year upto November, 2014. However, in relaxation of these guidelines, it has recently been decided to issue NORI Certificates to applicants who are above the age of 65 years.

As per the extant guidelines, Indian doctors applying for Statement of Need Certificate or Exceptional Need Certificate to pursue higher medical studies abroad are required to execute a Bond of Rupees Five lakh with two sureties, in addition to the requirement to furnish a written undertaking that upon completion of their training abroad, they will return to India and enter the practice of medicine in India in the specialty of their training.

Further, in order to stop brain drain of doctors working under the Central Government sector, the following steps have been taken:

- (i) Pay and allowances of doctors have been enhanced considerably after implementation of the Sixth Central Pay Commission (CPC);

- (ii) The age of superannuation of faculty of medical institutions has been enhanced to 65 years;
- (iii) Assured promotion scheme for faculty of Central Government institutions has been revised to make it more beneficial; and
- (iv) Various allowances available to faculty like Non-Practicing allowance, Conveyance allowance, Learning Resource allowance, etc., have been enhanced considerably.

Diarrhoea and pneumonia amongst children

1836. SHRI A.K. SELVARAJ: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether India loses most kids to diarrhoea and pneumonia as per a recent study;
- (b) whether India tops the global list with 318 deaths per 1,000 children under five years of age due to diarrhoea and pneumonia;
- (c) whether India continues to struggle with improving rates of basic childhood immunizations; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) and (b) Yes. As per the Pneumonia and Diarrhoea Progress Report, 2014 of the International Vaccine Access Centre (IVAC), India tops the list of 15 countries in terms of total burden of under-five deaths due to pneumonia and diarrhoea, with an estimated total of 3,18,000 under-five deaths due to diarrhoea and pneumonia, in 2013.

(c) and (d) Immunization coverage has improved in India as shown by improved coverage of full immunization of children from 54 per cent (DLHS 2007-08) to 61 per cent (Coverage Evaluation Survey 2009).

Conviction rate under Drugs and Cosmetics Act

1837. SHRI AMBETH RAJAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Drugs and Cosmetics Act is being implemented effectively across the country;