

NEWS

India's Five-Year Anti-leprosy Campaign

According to the *Indian Express*, Madras, 100 leprosy control centres are to be opened throughout the country under the second Five-Year Plan. There was also a proposal to spend about Rs. 1.5 crores under the Plan for giving financial assistance to private bodies doing work on T.B. and leprosy control.

In the Madras State there is a proposal to train 200 medical graduates in clinical work for the treatment of leprosy.

The Leprosy Sanatorium at Thirumani is to be upgraded into an all-India teaching and research institution at a total cost of Rs. 30 lakhs (about £230,000). The scheme will be pushed through as soon as a new director is appointed.

Under the Government of India's Central Scheme (including the Extended Scheme) which was included in the First Five-Year Plan, at a cost of Rs. 30 lakhs, four Treatment and Study Centres and 31 Subsidiary Centres have been allotted to the various States where leprosy is a problem.

The four Treatment and Study Centres are located in Madras, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh. Out of the 31 Subsidiary Centres Bihar was allotted 8, Bombay 1, Orissa 2, Assam 1, Vindhya Pradesh 1, Saurashtra 1, Madras 2, Madhya Pradesh 4, Andhra 2, Uttar Pradesh 1, Hyderabad 2, Travancore-Cochin 4, Himachal Pradesh 1, and West Bengal 1.

In the Treatment and Study Centres, apart from giving treatment and necessary health education on the subject, a survey of the type and intensity of leprosy prevalent in the area will also be made by a special team and the results achieved evaluated. The necessary laboratory facilities will also be provided for such studies. It is also contemplated to undertake large-scale trials on the efficacy of B.C.G. vaccination as a prophylactic against leprosy. In the subsidiary Centres treatment will be given on a mass scale and Health education carried out.

Many Leprosy Control Centres have been established in the various States. The Central Government will meet the entire recurring expenditure of the centres for the first six months; two-thirds of the expenditure for the succeeding 12 months and 50 per cent for the remaining period. The centre will also bear the cost of transport vehicles and the more important laboratory equipment and the entire cost of B.C.G. vaccination (about Rs. 20,000) as this will be a purely research project. The State Government will bear the balance of the recurring expenditure during the years 1954-1955 and 1955-1956 and salaries of local staff, if appointed; and will provide the necessary accommodation for the location of the clinic, laboratory and office of the centre free of charge. They will also continue the operation of the centres after the financial help from the centres ceases. The cost of co-ordination work in connection with the scheme will be borne by the Central Government.