

area of operation. Further, these banks are district based with low capital structure and their operations are predominantly confined to rural and semi urban areas. They are not comparable to public sector banks in terms of branch net work and business prospects in aggregate terms. The RBI has reported that LABs will be allowed selectively taking into consideration inter-alia the potential of the districts, promoters strength/capability and good track record. LABs will complement the efforts of cooperatives and other rural credit agencies in improving the rural credit delivery structure.

Hindustan Machine Tools

445. SHRI SURESH PRABHU: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Hindustan Machine Tools (HMT) has been threatened to be placed on the watch list by the United States of America;

(b) if so, the reasons for such threats; and

(c) whether the Government likely to take up the matter with the U.S. Government?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) to (c) Hindustan Machine Tools (HMT) is not aware of any threat to place it on the watch list by the United States of America.

Pending Power Projects under FIPB

446. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether 35 major power projects are pending for review before Foreign Investment Promotion Board;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the date since pending;

(c) the number of projects cleared by the Board so far; and

(d) the time by which the remaining projects are likely to be cleared by the Board?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) to (c) So far, 72 proposals in Power Sector have been approved.

(d) An on 17.7.1997, 6 proposals in the Power Sector are pending consideration of Foreign Investment Promotion Board (FIPB). Consideration and recommendation of proposals by FIPB is an ongoing process.

[Translation]

Gujarat Companies under MRTP Act

447. SHRI MAHESH KUMAR M. KANODIA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether some Gujarat based companies are facing investigation by the Monopolies and Restrictive

Trade Practices Commission for the charges of false and misleading advertisements;

(b) if so, the findings thereof; and

(c) the action proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) to (c) information with regard to investigations, enquiries or compensation matters is not maintained state-wise in the MRTP Commission. As such, the information sought in respect of Gujarat based companies facing investigation before the MRTP Commission for the charges of false and misleading advertisements is not readily available. However, a complaint was recently received in the MRTP Commission from the National Consumer Protection Council, Ahmedabad against Madhur Food Products Limited, Ahmedabad alleging false and misleading advertisements. The matter was heard by the Commission on 22.7.1997 and it is now listed on 4.9.1997 for consideration of Injunction Application.

The MRTP Commission is a quasi-judicial body and will take necessary action in the aforesaid matter under the provisions of the MRTP Act, 1969.

[English]

Legal Aid to Poor

448. SHRI PARASRAM BHARDWAJ: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) the amount allotted to Madhya Pradesh under Legal Aid Scheme to the poor people during each of the last three years; and

(b) the steps taken to streamline this arrangement and to ensure that the needy poor people get the aid in time?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP): (a) The grants-in-aid released to the State of Madhya Pradesh during the last three financial years are as under:-

S.No.	Financial year	Grant-in-aid released (Rs.)
1.	1994-95	1,15,000
2.	1995-96	1,15,000
3.	1996-97	4,70,000

(b) The National Legal Services Authority sanctions grant-in-aid to State Legal Aid & Advice Boards/State Legal Services Authorities for implementation of strategic Legal Aid programmes. The Legal Aid is provided by the State Legal Aid & Advice Board.