

whether separate trade protocols are proposed to be signed with them; and

(e) if so, the names of such Republics?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) to (c). Yes Sir. The trade negotiations with the Russian Republic are likely to commence shortly. There is as yet no formal proposal to set up an Indo-Russian Joint Commission.

(d) and (e). A trade agreement has already been concluded with the Republic of Uzbekistan. Preliminary talks in this regard have also been held with Kazaksthan and Kirghizia.

[*Translation*]

**Sainik Rest House at Kotdwar  
(Garhwal)**

262. SHRIBHUWAN CHANDRA KHAN-DURI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to set up a Sainik rest house in Kotdwar (Garhwal);

(b) if so, the time by which it is likely to be set up?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) No proposal has been received from Government of Uttar Pradesh for setting up of a Sainik Rest House at Kotdwar (Garhwal).

(b) Does not arise.

[*English*]

**Elections in Punjab**

263. SHRI CHITTA BASU: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any decision has since been taken for holding elections in Punjab in February next; and

(b) if so, the steps taken or proposed to be taken for ensuring fair and free elections in the State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI RANGARAJAN KUMARAMANGALAM): (a) Elections in Punjab are proposed to be held before February, 15, 1992 though firm dates for holding elections in Punjab have not yet been decided.

(b) Government has already taken adequate steps to deal with terrorist violence, to provide security to the citizens and to maintain law and order. The Governor of Punjab has been touring various parts of the state along with senior officers and is attending to the grievance of the people in an effort to bridge the gap between the administration and the people. Attention is also being paid to the economic development of the State and to create more job opportunities for the youth, especially the educated unemployed to wean them away from taking to the terrorist path. All possible efforts are being made to create necessary atmosphere for the conduct of fair polls in the state. Further necessary steps will be taken to ensure free and fair poll as and when these are held.

[*Translation*]

**Alleged Irregularities in Customs  
House in Bombay**

264. SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR:  
SHRI SHIV SHARAN VERMA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have received any complaints alleging irregularities and bunglings in the Customs House in Bombay;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the actions taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESH-WAR THAKUR): (a) to (c). The Government does receive from time to time complaints from the trade and individuals regarding delays in clearance of goods, baggage of passengers etc. in various Custom Houses including Bombay Custom House. Such complaints are examined in consultation with the concerned Collectors of Customs and corrective action is taken, wherever called for.

[*Translation*]

#### Supply of Cotton Quota to Handloom Units in Bihar

266. SHRI MUMTAZ ANSARI: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether small scale handloom units in Bihar are lying closed on account of non-supply of the quota of cotton;

(b) if so, the reasons therefore; and

(c) the maximum quota of cotton per unit being given or proposed to be given by the Union Government to the Government of Bihar to encourage export by these small scale handloom units?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI ASHOK

GEHLOT): (a) to (c). Handloom units do not use cotton. Therefore, there is no question of any handloom unit being closed on account of non-supply of the quota of cotton.

While there are no problems on the availability of cotton hank yarn for consumption in the handloom sector, the problem has been one of prices. The cotton yarn prices have registered an increase in the last few months. Government had taken a number of corrective measures including suspending export of cotton yarn and by persuading the spinning mills in the cooperative, private and State sector to supply hank yarn to handloom weavers at pre-budget prices.

There is no quota for supply of cotton yarn to the handloom units.

#### Indigenous Technology for Production of Fighter Aircrafts

267. SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to develop indigenous technology for production of fighter aircraft; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) The Light Combat Aircraft is being developed indigenously. The technologies being developed under this programme include digital fly-by-wire control system, composites for wings, multi-mode radar and advanced avionics.

#### Powers of Income Tax Officials

268. SHRI JEEWAN SHARMA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state: