

(d) its likely impact on ecological balance, astronomy and the universe.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN DEPARTMENT OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND DEPARTMENT OF SPACE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI BHUVNESH CHATURVEDI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The 21 fragments of the Comet Shoemaker-Levy 9 started colliding with Jupiter in sequence from 00.56 hours (IST) on July 17 and the final major fragment impacted at 13.11 hours on July 22, 1994. These astronomical events were powerful and caused visible effects on the Jovian atmosphere such as change in the intensity of methane bands and emission of intense radiation from heated clouds of gas which mushroomed above the atmosphere. The event also left prominent changes on the visible appearance of the atmosphere of the planet.

In India, the following observatories are involved in the programme of observations and analysis:—

- (i) Vainu Bappu Observatory, Kavalur (Karnataka) of the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA), Bangalore.
- (ii) Kodiakanal Observatory of IIA.
- (iii) Gauribidanur Observatory of IIA.
- (iv) Japal Rangapur Observatory at Osmania University.
- (v) Ooty Radio Telescope.
- (vi) Giant Meterwave Radio Telescope (GMRT) Pune.

(vii) Uttar Pradesh State Observatory (UPSO), Nainital.

The other institutions similarly involved include Physical Research Laboratory, Ahmedabad; National Physical Laboratory, New Delhi; Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Bombay; and Raman Research Institute, Bangalore.

(c) Scientists view this event as a unique occurrence of this century. The event has created excitement among Indian and foreign scientists. This event would provide detailed information on the nature and consequence of major collisions of cometary bodies with the planets.

(d) As per available information, there is no impact on the earth's ecology.

[English]

Small Scale Industries in Rural Areas

2505. SHRI GABHAJI MANGAJI THAKORE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether small scale industries in various States including those in Gujarat and fully exempted from excise duty under small scale exemption scheme in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government propose to review the scheme and include the small scale units located in the rural areas therein;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (DEPARTMENT OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES AND AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES) (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) and (b). Yes, Sir. Under the General Small Scale Industries Exemption Scheme covering majority of the goods under C.E. Tariff, clearances upto a value of Rs. 30 lakhs of the SSI units including those in Gujarat are fully exempted from excise duty and concessional rate of duty on the subsequent clearances upto Rs. 75 lakhs is applicable subject to the condition that the turnover of such units in the preceding financial year has not exceeded Rs. 200 lakhs.

(c) The scheme already covers rural areas.

(d) and (e). Do not arise.

[Translation]

Submarine Capability

2506. SHRI AMAR PAL SINGH:
SHRI ASTBHUJA
PRASAD SHUKLA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item appeared in "Nav Bharat Times" dated May 31, 1994 wherein declining trend in the Indian submarine capability has been expressed;

(b) if so, the facts thereof; and

(c) the remedial steps proposed to be taken in regard thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE AND THE

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) The Government is aware of the news item in Nav Bharat Times of 31 May, 1994.

(b) The force levels of the Indian Navy are determined with reference to the geostrategic environment, the threat perception at a given time, the role envisioned for the Navy in this context and the availability of resources. Accordingly, the Navy is adequately equipped to perform its assigned tasks.

(c) Does not arise in view of (b).

[English]

Backward Districts in U.P.

2507. DR. SAKSHIJI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Uttar Pradesh has sent any proposal to the Union Government for declaring some districts as industrially backward;

(b) if so, the names of the Government for declaring a district as industrially backward; and

(c) the facilities provided to such districts?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND DEPARTMENT OF HEAVY INDUSTRY) (SMT. KRISHNA SAHI): (a) and (b). Yes, Sir. The Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh has proposed that the eight hill districts of the State be included in the list of backward areas.

(c) the Central Government has set up a Study Group for laying down a set of