

and deserving sections of the society.

Restoration of Fertilizers Subsidy

47. SHRI CHITTA BASU: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- whether the State Governments have demanded for restoration of fertilizer subsidy to 1992 level;
- if so, the details thereof; and
- the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ARVIND NETAM): (a) and (b). Only Karnataka has asked for restoration of fertilizer subsidy on decontrolled fertilizers to the 1992 level on the ground that their consumption has decreased because of hike in their prices.

(c) As the Phosphatic and Potassic fertilisers were decontrolled on the recommendations of the JPC, there is no proposal at present to go back to 1992 level.

River Pollution

48. SHRI ASTBHUJA PRASAD SHUKLA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

- whether the Government are aware that the water of certain rivers has been polluted;
- if so, whether the Government have made any study in this regard; and
- if so, the findings thereof and the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c). The Government has a National Water Quality Monitoring Network to regularly monitor the river water quality, based on the results of National Water Quality Monitoring data, 13 heavily polluted and 26 medium polluted river stretches have been identified.

Government had launched the Ganga Action Plan in 1985 and the Yamuna Action Plan in 1993 to clean the polluted stretches of the rivers Ganga and Yamuna. Schemes are also under formulation for cleaning the polluted stretches of other major rivers in the country, as part of the proposed National River Conservation Action Plan, which is in the final stages of formulation.

[Translation]

Concessions for Journalists

49. PROF. RITA VERMA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- the provisions of facilities to be provided by the Railways to the journalists recognised at State level;
- whether such facilities are being provided to the journalists recognised at district level also;
- if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF): (a) At present, Rail travel coupons at 25% concessions in First Class and 50% concession in Second Class/Sleeper Class, for journeys upto 2500 Kms. per month on bonafide press work, are issued to Press Correspondents accredited to the headquarters of State Governments/Union Territories, and residing within a radius of 25 Kms. of the respective capital.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) The scope of existing concessions is not being enlarged due to financial constraints.

[English]

Irregularities in Reservations

50. SHRI RAMASHRAY PRASAD SINGH:
SHRI SURAJ MANDAL:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are number of touts who collect the reservation in advance in large scale from Railway reservation authorities;

(b) if so, the number of such cases detected during the last six months, zone-wise;

(c) whether existing rules of the Railways are not sufficient to check these irregularities and to punish the touts; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by the Government to check these irregularities?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF): (a) and (b). A total number of 1416 such cases were detected during August, 1994 to January, 1995. The Railway-wise break up is as under:—

Railway	No. of cases detected
Central	10
Eastern	368
Northern	16
North-Eastern	nil
Northeast Frontier	nil
Southern	239
South-Central	104
South-Eastern	116
Western	563

(c) and (d). The existing provisions for dealing with such cases were made more stringent in the Railways Act, 1989. To check the activities of touts, surprise checks are conducted by the Commercial and Vigilance staff at the station premises and also in the trains.