

purchase Centres have not so far been opened by Jute Corporation of India in North Bengal areas of West Bengal, Assam and Meghalaya;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and the target date by which these are likely to be opened in various areas of above states; and

(c) The remedial steps proposed to be taken by the Government to save the jute growers from the clutches of middle-men, who purchase the jute at a very cheaper rate and make money by sell the same to Jute Corporation's Purchase Centres at higher rate?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA): (a) and (b) Jute purchase centres of the Jute Corporation of India (JCI) have already started procurement under Price Support Operations in North Bengal and Assam from 25.7.1997. As regard Meghalaya, manpower and storage space are in total readiness, and necessary funds have also been provided for Price Support Operations. Procurement in Meghalaya will start on arrival of raw jute in the market.

(c) The Government have released requisite funds of JCI to undertake Price Support Operations. JCI have prepared action plan to enter the market to purchase jute directly from the growers.

Azad Hind Bank, Calcutta

1568. SHRI RAJA RANGAPPA NAIK : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the deposits of Azad Hind Bank, Burma has transferred their deposits to Azad Hind Bank, Calcutta;

(b) whether the Azad Hind Bank, Calcutta Branch has been merged with Imperial Bank of India (now State Bank of India);

(c) the total amount deposited and transferred to Azad Hind Bank, Calcutta Branch;

(d) the name of the persons to whom the balance amount yet to be paid; and

(e) the steps being taken by the Government for payment of their amount?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) to (e) Reserve Bank of India (RBI) have reported that there are no deposits of cash, jewellery and ornaments with RBI, Mumbai in the name of erstwhile National Bank of Azad Hind, Rangoon. RBI have further reported that their enquiries with the State Bank of India have been revealed that there is no record available with them regarding the merger of Azad Hind Bank with the Imperial Bank.

Conference held by Election Commission

1569. SHRI RATILAL KALIDAS VERMA :

SHRI KASHIRAM RANA :

SHRI JAI PRAKASH AGARWAL :

SHRI HARIN PATHAK :

SHRI P.S. GADHAVI :

SHRI B.K. GADHVI :

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Election Commission held recently a Conference of various political parties on the revision of Electoral Rolls and Voter Identity Cards;

(b) if so, the decisions arrived at the Conference; and

(c) the action proposed to be taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP) : (a) to (c) According to information made available by the Election Commission of India, a meeting with various political parties was held to ascertain their views on various aspects of electoral process to enable the Commission to formulate proposals in this regard. The meeting, inter alia, discussed the issues of revision of electoral rolls and voter identity cards. No formal decisions were taken at the meeting. The Commission has since decided to undertake summary revision of electoral rolls in all the States/Union territories (except Assam) with reference to 1.1.1998 as the qualifying date. In Assam, intensive revision of electoral rolls is in progress.

[Translation]

Sale of Soft Coke

1570. SHRI BRAJ MOHAN RAM : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government have issued directives to sell the soft coke allotted to Government of Bihar through public distribution system;

(b) the details thereof;

(c) whether the utility certificate regarding the soft coke supplied to Bihar has been received; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH) : (a) to (d) As per decision taken by the Government the distribution of soft coke has now been decontrolled and consequently Ministry of Coal is not making State-wise allocation any longer.

[English]

Vacant Posts of SC/ST/OBCs in Various Banks

1571. SHRI PRADIP BHATTACHARYA : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a good number of vacant posts in Group D in the reserved categories of SCs, STs and OBCs have been lying vacant in various banks i.e. State Bank of Patiala, Oriental Bank of Commerce, Canara Bank and Bank of Baroda in their Delhi/New Delhi offices since long; and

(b) if so, the action taken by the Government concerned authorities to fill up the said reserved vacancies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) and (b) As per reports received from the banks mentioned in part (a) of the Question, the position of backlog are as follows :-

	Backlog in the Category of		
	SCs	STs	OBCs
State Bank of Patiala	3	4	5
Oriental Bank of Commerce	2	—	9
Canara Bank	2	4	20
Bank of Baroda	—	—	3

Necessary action for filling up the backlog vacancies in these categories have already been initiated by Oriental Bank of Commerce and State Bank of Patiala. The other two banks have reported that they are also taking necessary action for filling up these vacancies during the current year.

[Translation]

Fund for Construction of Chambers in Supreme Court

1572. SHRI BHIMRAO VISHNUJI BADADE : Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have any scheme for welfare of advocates and betterment of the legal profession;

(b) if so, the details thereof along with the amount earmarked therefor during the current financial year;

(c) whether the amount earmarked for the purpose is being utilised for construction of additional chambers for the advocates in Supreme Court;

(d) If so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP) : (a) to (e) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[English]

Cases against Additional Session Judges

1573. SHRI RAMCHANDRA VEERAPPA : Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state :

(a) the number of on going cases in Tis Hazari Court in which Additional Session Judges are them-selves involved;

(b) if so, whether the Government expect a Sub-Ordinate Civil Judge to give verdict against his superior in the interest of justice when the ADJ's are working in the same court; and

(c) if not, the step taken by the Government to ensure justice in such cases ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP) : (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[Translation]

Commercialisation of Ganga Water

1574. SHRI KACHARU BHAAU RAUT : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Ganga water is being commercialised and a number of companies are engaged in filling up the bottles with Ganga water for sale and export;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (DR. BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) to (c) Government is aware of sale of Ganga water in the traditional form. Bottling and export through commercial companies has been reported in the press. Under the current Export Import Policy, there are no restrictions on export of mineral waters and aerated waters (ITC HS Code : 22011000) and other water (including natural waters - ITC HS code : 22019009.

[English]

Import of Virgin Polymers

1575. SHRI BALAI CHANDRA RAY : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that virgin polymers are imported under the declaration of scrap or recycled plastics at Kandla port; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefore?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) and (b) No import of virgin polymers declared as scrap or recycled plastics at Kandla port has been noticed.

Jute Corporation of India

1576. DR. ASIM BALA : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have fixed support price of raw jute for the current year;