

sponsored by this Department and are currently operational. The total cost of the research projects during 1984-89 is Rs. 31.60 lakhs.

5. Rs. 1.975 lakh have been released as Central assistance to Mizoram during 1986-87 for development of infrastructure for protection of forests from biotic interference.

Alleged cheating of depositors by Auditya Finance Company

1646. SHRI G. S. BASAVARAJU:
SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA:
SHRI H. N. NANJE GOWDA:
SHRIMATI GEETA
MUKHERJEE:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Director General of Police has ordered an enquiry into the alleged cheating of more than Rs. 14 crores belonging to nearly 25,000 depositors in Karnataka of the Auditya Finance Company having branches all over the country;

(b) whether enquiry was ordered on the basis of complaints from all over Karnataka;

(c) if so, whether a number of depositors had protested to the Prime Minister to freeze the company's activities;

(d) whether the Director General of the Police has submitted its report to Government; and

(e) if so, whether Union Government has seen the report and the action being considered against the company?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY): (a) to (e). Information is being collected and to the extent available and permissible under the statutes will be laid on the Table of the House.

Exploration of Sea Wealth

1647. SHRI K. S. RAO: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken steps to tap the rich sea wealth by deep sea mining, pelagic fisheries, sea farming etc;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government will be in a position to improve the socio-economic conditions of people living along coastline;

(d) if so, the details of plan made in this regard; and

(e) whether the required funds and the technological base to achieve the objective had been provided by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT, ATOMIC ENERGY, ELECTRONICS AND SPACE (SHRI K. R. NARAYANAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. In the deep seabed, polymetallic nodules have been indentified as a large resource for mining. Research and development activities on the exploration of nodule reserve and extraction of metals like manganese, copper, nickel and cobalt from the nodules are in progress. Exploration of marine fisheries including pelagic fish is being undertaken by various State Fisheries Corporations and private agencies. Sea farming is also being actively pursued in several regions of our coastline.

(c) and (d). Yes, Sir. Specific programmes like the survey of living and non-living resources of the sea, manpower development, control of marine pollution and extraction of energy from the sea etc. have been launched by the Government which will have a great impact on improving the socio-economic conditions of our coastal population.

(e) Yes, Sir. Both financial outlay and technological base are considered adequate to meet the objectives.