

The choice and research programmes rests with the respective companies.

Approvals are granted for a limited period of 3 years or even less. The progress made by the unit is examined before the approvals are renewed.

For granting recognition to In-house R&D units, it has been laid down that Market Research, work and method study, operational and management research, testing and analysis of routine nature for operational, process control, quality control, and maintenance of day-to-day production etc. may not be treated as research and development activity.

#### Falling of Soviet satellite in Indian Ocean

546. SHRI VIRDHI CHANDER JAIN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to reports about the falling into the Indian Ocean recently of the debris of a crippled nuclear powered Soviet Satellite;

(b) whether Government are also aware of reports that a burning object believed to be part of the Soviet Satellite fell down at a place in Sri Lanka, North of Colombo and started emanating radioactive energy; and

(c) whether it has been ascertained that radiation threats are not posed to the coasts of India by the object mentioned above?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, ATOMIC ENERGY SPACE, ELECTRONICS AND OCEAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL): (a) and (b). Yes, Sir.

(c) No radiation threats are posed by the parts of crippled Soviet Satellite. Atmospheric monitoring carried out continuously has not shown detectable increase in radio activity.

#### Top posts Lying Vacant

547. SHRI HARISH KUMAR GANGWAR: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of top posts in the Ministry of Home Affairs are lying vacant for quite sometime now to be filled up by promotion; and

(b) if so, details thereof together with reasons of not filling them up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI NIHAR RANJAN LASKAR): (a) and (b). No Sir, However, one post of Joint Secretary (Training) is lying vacant in the Department of Personnel which is covered by the Senior Staffing Scheme and is to be filled up from amongst officers belonging to IAS and other Central Group 'A' Organised services on tenure deputation.

#### "Development of Western Ghats"

548. SHRIMATI USHA PRAKASH CHOUDHARY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of continued degradation and depletion of resources and destruction of ecology in the Western Ghats; and

(b) the steps under consideration of Government to arrest the decay of the beauty and resources and ensure coordinated development of the Western Ghats?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINH): (a) Yes, Madam.

(b) Eco-development programmes involving research and educational institutions, voluntary organisations and government agencies have been initiated. Coordinated measures for proper land use, watershed management, protection of forests, pollution control and revegetation of denuded areas among the steps envisaged under these programmes.