

(d) whether a NRI of Saudi Arabia on a transit between Dharan and Madurai was robbed on May 8, 1998 at Sahar Airport;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the steps taken by the Government to check such incidents in future?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SRHI L.K. ADVANI) : (a) and (b) During the current year, five cases in which foreign tourists after arrival at the Indira Gandhi International Airport were allegedly cheated/harassed by the taxi drivers, touts etc. came to the notice of Delhi Police.

(c) The measures taken to eliminate the touting menace at Indira Gandhi International Airport include deployment of Police personnel at vulnerable points especially during peak hours, constant vigil at the pre-paid taxi booth; and rigorous checking of the taxis carrying the passengers to their destination. In addition, Delhi Police arrested 943 "touts" and impounded 428 vehicles during the current year upto the 15th July, 1998.

(d) to (f) The information is being collected and will to be laid on the Table of the House.

Import of Natural Gas from Bangladesh

6064. DR. ASIM BALA :

SHRI R. SAMBASIVA RAO :

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether a meeting has been held between Foreign Secretaries of Bangladesh and India recently;

(b) if so, whether any agreement has been signed for import of natural gas from Bangladesh; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

Artificial Limbs

6065. SHRI MUKUL WASNIK :

SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA :

SHRI AJOY MUKHOPADHYAY :

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have conducted any survey to assess the number of persons requiring artificial limbs in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether any scheme has been formulated to provide artificial limbs to the needy persons;

(e) if so, the number of persons assisted during the last three years, State-wise;

(f) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the news appeared in the 'Pioneer' dated May 5, 1998 about the NGO's minting money from artificial limbs; and

(g) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI) : (a) to (c) No such specific survey has been undertaken. However, estimates on the number of disabled persons in the country are available.

(d) and (e) This Ministry is already implementing a Scheme of Assistance to Disabled Persons for purchase/fitting of aids and appliances since 1981-82. The Scheme is implemented through Registered society, societies/trusts/companies/DRDAs/IRCSs or any other institution recognised by the Ministry. Under the Scheme, aids and appliances are distributed by holding camps at various places in the country and also, and eligible disabled person can have aid and appliances after contacting these agencies anywhere in the country. Persons benefitted from this scheme in the country during last three years are given as under :-

1994-95	85,000
1995-96	60,000
1996-97	40,000

(f) Yes, Sir.

(g) There are factual inaccuracies in the Report. Under the Scheme of Assistance to Disabled Persons for Purchase/fitting of aids and appliances, an amount of Rs. 91.44 crore has been given as Grant-in-aid since the inception of the Scheme in 1981-82. It is, therefore, not known from where the figures of Rs. 130.00 crores mentioned in the report has been taken. Under the Scheme, grant is provided to centres run by the companies registered under the Companies Act, Registered Societies, Trusts on the basis of recommendation of the concerned State