

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL) : (a) and (b) Passport Offices and Passport Collection Centres are functional at Mumbai, Thane, Pune, Nagpur and Aurangabad in the state of Maharashtra. The Passport Office at Pune and the Passport Collection Centre at Aurangabad have been opened in July 1998. There is no proposal yet to open any other Passport Office or Collection Centre in the state of Maharashtra as the need for the same is not felt at present.

(c) The number of applications received for issue of fresh passports and for renewal during the last three years by the Passport Offices in Maharashtra is given below:

Year	Fresh Passport	Renewal
1. Regional Passport Office, Mumbai		
1995	223397	44579
1996	241763	35086
1997	278507	38570
2. Passport Office, Nagpur		
1995	9510	3220
1996	12107	1726
1997	14171	1618
3. Passport Office, Thane (Opened in 1997)		
1997	8491	158

(d) Passports are normally issued within a period of 45 days. Where-ever delays occur, these are due to receipt of negative or incomplete reports from police authorities, discrepancies in documents submitted by the applicants, particularly in respect of applications received by post, lack of response from applicants who are asked to submit additional documents, etc.

(e) There is comparatively little backlog of applications pending at the Passport Offices in the State of Maharashtra. Among the measures taken to expedite processing of passport applications are: computerisation of processing procedures, improved coordination between passport issuing and police authorities, enhancing validity of passport to 20 years, provision for despatch of passport by speed post wherever practical, additional staff to clear the backlog of pending cases, etc.

Clearance to Irrigation Projects

6182. SHRI CH. VIDYASAGAR RAO : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the irrigation projects such as Inchampalli, Srisailem Left-Canal, Sirram Sagar and other projects are being shelved by the Government of Andhra Pradesh for want of Central clearance; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Union Government to clear these projects?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL) : (a) and (b) No, Sir. Irrigation being a State subject, irrigation projects are executed by the State Governments as per their own priorities. Clearance of pending irrigation projects by the Union Government depends upon the compliance of observation of the various Central Appraising Agencies by the State Governments.

Wind Energy Power Projects

6183. SHRI C.P. RADHAKRISHNAN : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government plan to provide the infrastructure status for wind energy power projects in future:

(b) if so, the time by which it will come into effect; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI RAM NAIK) : (a) to (c) Projects for generation of power from wind energy are already covered under the category of infrastructure facility for which there are provisions under the Income Tax Act.

[Translation]

Indian Fishermen in Pakistani Jails

6184. SHRI SADASHIVRAO D. MANDLIK : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether many Indian fishermen are put in Pakistani jails for many years;

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

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government for their release?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL) : (a) and (b) According to available information, 254 Indian fishermen/crew members belonging to Gujarat and Daman & Diu are believed to be held in custody in Pakistan.

(c) Government are vigorously pursuing the matter relating to their release/repatriation with the Government of Pakistan. In order to secure the early release/repatriation of fishermen it has been conveyed to Pakistan that, in accordance with the understanding reached during the Foreign Secretary level talks in June 1997, Government are ready to hold immediate discussions to confirm/verify the fishermen held in each other's

custody. Despite repeated reminders, Government of Pakistan is yet to respond. Our efforts in this direction continue.

(English;)

**Indian Council of Veterinary and
Fishery Research**

6185. SHRI A.F. GOLAM OSMANI : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to set-up Indian Council of Veterinary and Fishery Research on lines of Indian Council of Medical Research;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the time by which the decision is likely to be taken in the matter; and

(d) if not, the other measures being taken to undertake research works in the fields of veterinary and fishery?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL) : (a) to (d) The proposal for setting up of Indian Council of Veterinary and Fishery Research was mooted on the basis of representations received from several quarters. In the meantime, the Fifth Pay Commission had recommended, inter-alia, that the Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying should be merged with the Department of Agriculture and Cooperation. Therefore, any proposal for setting up of Indian Council of Veterinary and Fishery Research can be pursued only after the issue relating to the merger of the Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying with the Department of Agriculture and Cooperation is settled.

Trawlers Confiscated

6186. SHRI S.S. OWAISI : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) the number of Indian registered trawlers confiscated during the last two years alongwith the details of countries which confiscated them;

(b) whether crew members of these confiscated Indian trawlers have been freed but their trawlers have not been released so far; and

(c) if so, the steps taken by the Government to get back these trawlers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL) : (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be placed on the Table of the Lok Sabha.

Amendment to NDDB Act

6187. DR. ULHAS VASUDEO PATIL : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to amend National Dairy Development Board Act, 1987;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the National Dairy Development Board has suffered huge losses in its Market Intervention Operation during last five years;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor and action taken by NDDB in this regard; and

(e) is it true that the Western Region Office at Mumbai of NDDB is not functioning presently and investment made by NDDB for construction of building is not utilised for the objects of NDDB?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL) : (a) and (b) There is no proposal before the Government for amending the National Dairy Development Board Act, 1987.

(c) The Market Intervention Operation (MIO) which was terminated on 31st March, 1994, incurred losses of Rs. 273.49 crores.

(d) The MIO incurred losses on account of:

- i) Holding of large stocks of inventory and fall in its market prices;
- ii) Higher rate of interest paid by NDDB (19%) rather than 15% which was expected to be charged on the line of credit asked for the purpose;
- iii) Losses due to retail marketing of Dhara;
- iv) Supply of imported oils by STC to NDDB at rates in excess of Rs.15,000 per tone, as had been originally approved.

(e) It is not correct to say that the Western Region Office of the NDDB at Mumbai is not functioning. At present 75 employees of the NDDB and its subsidiary/managed units are working at NDDB Mumbai, of which 51 employees are staying in the campus. The NDDB Mumbai Office is performing the job of co-ordination and monitoring of the progress of dairy and oil projects in Maharashtra and Goa.

Job Oriented Scheme

6188. SHRI T. GOVINDAN : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to announce job oriented schemes for the unemployed and educated youth in the country; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?