

(a) whether Planning Commission has decided to review Plan panels;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any concrete revamping plan has been worked out;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the details of new features being considered to make it more objective?

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 (e) It is proposed to bring in functional changes in the working of the Planning Commission in the context of the implementation of the economic reforms so that the Commission could concentrate more on new emerging areas/trends. A view on the proposal for restructuring of the Commission will be taken by the Government after due process.

AIR and DD in West Bengal

558. SHRI BIR SINGH MAHATO: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the details of All India Radio stations and Doordarshan Kendras in West Bengal having the facilities of Producing original programme in Bengali language, location-wise;

(b) the details of such projects under consideration in the State;

(c) whether Bengali language is given adequate time for telecast on the National network and DD channels; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI MUKHTAR NAQVI): (a) Whereas all AIR stations in West Bengal, namely, Calcutta, Kurseong, Siliguri and Murshidabad except Asansol are equipped with programme production facilities, three Studio Centres of Doordarshan at Calcutta, Jalpaiguri and Shantiniketan have facilities for programme production, including in Bengali language.

(b) There is no such approved AIR/DD project at present.

(c) and (d) Regional language programmes in Bengali are telecast exclusively on DD Satellite Channel in addition to programme telecast by DDK Calcutta primary service. None of the regional programmes are telecast on National Network.

Revision of Pension

559. SHRI K.P. NAIDU: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have any proposal to revise the pension of retired Central Government employees before January 1, 1996 as per formula recommended by the Fifth Pay Commission;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which the orders are likely to be issued for implementation of revised pension formula?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE): (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The recommendation of the Vth Pay Commission to the effect that the pension of those Central Government employees who have retired prior to 1.1.1996 should be brought to the level of 50% of the minimum of the revised scale of pay of the post held by the pensioner at the time of his retirement has been accepted. Necessary orders on the subject are under issue in consultation with the Minister of Finance.

Ban on Irrigation Schemes

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

(a) whether Planning Commission has proclaimed a ban on new irrigation schemes despite the fact that water is most crucial input in the agricultural sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof along with the reasons therefor;

(c) whether financial constraints and inadequate water facilities have become an impediment in the way of achieving foodgrain target;

(d) whether the Planning Commission propose to help the State Governments to tide over the situation; and

(e) the number of irrigation projects pending for sanction with the Planning Commission and since when, State-wise?

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) No, Sir, Planning Commission has not put any such ban.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The achievement of foodgrain targets depends on several factors including irrigation facilities. Irrigation is a State Subject and, therefore, the development and management of irrigation facilities primarily is the responsibility of the State Government. As such the irrigation development programmes are financed under the State Plan. The Government of India is providing financial assistance to the State Governments under various schemes to increase agricultural production and achieve the targets.

(d) Under the Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme the Government of India provides financial assistance in form of loans to the States for timely completion of selected irrigation and multi-purpose projects.