

quarterly progress reports and periodic review meetings with the State Governments. The scheme-wise allocation/releases are done by the Central Ministries/Departments. The Planning Commission does not have any direct role in their implementation or monitoring. It, however, reviews the implementation of Plan schemes during the Annual Plan discussions with the State Governments/Union Territories.

Foreign Investment

673. SHRI DINSHAW PATEL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the details of foreign investment attracted by the Government during each of the last three years for development of food processing industries;

(b) whether the foreign investment in this sector was far below the anticipated level; and

(c) if so, the steps taken by the Government to encourage foreign investment for promotion of food processing industries in the country during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) Year wise details of foreign investment approved by the Government during the last 3 years in the food processing sector is as under:

Year	Foreign Investment (Rs. in crores)
1995-96	1019
1996-97	4882
1997-98	1002

(b) No, Sir. Higher foreign investment in 1996-97 is on account of massive expansion undertaken by the soft drink foreign companies.

(c) Does not arise. The food processing industries except for alcoholic beverages has been delicensed since liberalisation in July 1991.

Issue of Passport

674. SHRI FRANCISCO SARDINHA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that Regional Passport Offices situated in four metropolitan cities are issuing large number of passports without conducting police verification;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and the number of such cases come to notice of the Government; and

(c) the action taken by the Government in these cases?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Government decided in December, 1992, that passports be issued by all Passport Offices, except in some sensitive States, on police report overdue basis if the reports are

not received from the concerned Police authorities in the Passport Offices concerned within four weeks of their being sought, and provided all other documentation is complete and in order. Since separate records of such cases are not maintained in the Passport Offices, precise figures in this regard are not available.

Pending Schemes

675. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether a number of schemes of food processing industries are pending with the Government for clearance;

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

(c) since when these schemes are pending and the steps taken to expedite clearance of these schemes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) to (c) The details of proposals for financial assistance under the Plan Schemes which are pending consideration by the Ministry are attached as statement. These proposals are pending for varying periods of time. However, action has been initiated to expedite early clearance of these proposals.

Statement

1.	Assam	1
2.	Bihar	1
3.	Kerala	1
4.	Orissa	3
5.	Tamil Nadu	3
6.	Uttar Pradesh	3
7.	West Bengal	3
8.	Maharashtra	2
9.	Andhra Pradesh	2
10.	Delhi	4
11.	Haryana	1
Total		24

Special Status to States

676. SHRI RANJIB BISWAL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of States which have been given special status;

(b) the reasons for giving special status to those States;

(c) whether any other State has demanded for special status; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?