

below the poverty line including potters and cobblers but other than weavers, tailors, needle workers and beedi-workers. Fishermen can be covered under IRDP.

(b) Under the scheme of SITRA rural artisans below poverty line are provided improved toolkits with the objective to enable rural artisans to enhance the quality of their products, increase their production and income with the use of improved tools. The average cost of a toolkit is Rs. 2,000/- for hand-driven tools and Rs. 4,500/- for power-driven tools. The unit cost is to be fixed by the respective DRDA. 90% of the cost of toolkit is subsidy from the Government of India and remaining 10% is contributed by the beneficiary.

Under IRDP rural poor are provided with productive assets in the shape of term credit and Government subsidy to have sustainable income generation.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

[English]

SC/ST Employees in Air India

705. PROF. JOGENDRA KAWADE : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the total strength of staff of Air India and strength of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe employees among them;

(b) whether there is any backlog of reserved vacancies for SCs/STs;

(c) if so, the details thereof, post-wise;

(d) whether the Air India propose to fill up these posts through special recruitment drive; and

(e) if so, the time by which the vacant posts are likely to be filled up?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR) : (a) As on 31st March, 1998, the total strength of Air India is 18751 including 4164 SCs and 1096 STs.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. Details are as under:

Group	SC	ST
A	18	14
B	17	31
C	01	05
D	02	47

(d) and (e) Presently, there is a freeze on recruitment in non-operational categories in Air India. Necessary steps are taken by Air India to fill up reserved vacancies, whenever recruitment is to be made in operational categories.

[Translation]

Urbanisation of Villages

706. SHRI RAMESHWAR PATIDAR : Will the Minister of URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of villages in Delhi urbanised by the Government so far; and

(b) the number of villages proposed to be urbanised in the near future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA) : (a) The total number of urbanised villages in Delhi as reported by MCD, Delhi Cantonment Board and NDMC are as under :—

MCD	—	135 villages
Delhi Cantt. Board	—	6 villages
NDMC	—	1 village

(b) MCD and DDA have reported that 15 and 68 villages respectively are proposed to be urbanised.

Policy for Foreign Companies for Domestic Operator

707. SHRI SUSHIL CHANDRA VARMA : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the policy of the Union Government in regard to operating domestic air services by the foreign companies; and

(b) the details of foreign companies with whom an agreement has been signed by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR) : (a) In accordance with the existing policy 100% NRI/OCB equity and 40% foreign equity participation in the domestic air transport service is permissible. However, equity from foreign airlines, directly or indirectly, is prohibited.