

Languages Used in Competitive Exams

275. SHRI RAM TAHAL CHAUDHARY : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government have given option to write answer in Indian languages in all the competitive examinations for recruitment in various services;

(b) if so, the list of all such services;

(c) whether the resolution passed by the Parliament to this effect on 18 January, 1968 has been fully implemented; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor and the time by which the Government propose to implement it?

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) and (b) No, Sir. The option to write answers in any of the languages included in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution of India is available only in Civil Services (Main) Examination conducted by Union Public Service Commission.

(c) and (d) An Expert Committee under the Chairmanship of Dr. Satish Chandra was asked to examine *inter alia* the issue relating to introduction of the Indian languages included in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution as medium of competitive examinations. The recommendations made by the Expert Committee are under consideration of the Government. In view of the importance and sensitivity of the matter and divergent views on the subject, the Government's effort is to arrive at a consensus.

[English]

Cultivating Global Markets

276. SHRI MUKUL WASNIK : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn towards the news-item captioned 'Cultivating Global Markets' appearing in the Business India dated December 14-27, 1998;

(b) if so, the details of the facts of the matter reported therein;

(c) whether the Government have any plans to tap the massive potential available in horticulture and floriculture development; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI SOMPAL) : (a) and (b) The News Item points out that the export potential for India's agricultural produce has remained untapped, inadequate and primitive post-harvest infrastructure, insufficient

storage and cooling facilities and lack of immediate market for the perishables are the main reasons for not being able to tap the potential. While attempting to tap the potential for exports, the vulnerability of the Indian consumer due to increasing population also cannot be overlooked. It has also been mentioned that India enjoys strong advantage in food production and a growth in the food industry will bring increased benefits to the economy, raising agricultural yields, improving productivity, creating employment and raising the standard of living of the large number of people. The promise held by horticulture and floriculture has been specially mentioned.

(c) and (d) The Government of India, recognising the potential of horticulture and floriculture, increased the allocation of Horticulture including Floriculture of Rs. 1000/- crores during the 8th Five Year Plan. Various schemes implemented in this sector promote expansion of area under these crops, availability of seeds and planting material of high yielding varieties, improved productivity of existing plantations, development of infrastructure for Post harvest management, demonstration and export enhancement.

Ground Water

277. COL. SONA RAM CHOUDHARY : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is constant fall in Ground Water level in desert districts of Western Rajasthan viz., Barmer, Jaisalmer and Jalore;

(b) if so, whether a number of drinking water schemes in said districts have become defunct due to fall of underground water level; and

(c) the details thereof and the measures being taken by the Government to increase ground level in these districts?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI SOMPAL) : (a) Long term observations made by the Central Ground Water Board have shown a decline of more than four metres in the level of Ground Water in desert districts of Barmer, Jaisalmer and Jalore in Western Rajasthan.

(b) and (c) Water supply being a State subject, it is the responsibility of the State Governments to plan, execute, operate and maintain water supply schemes. Union Government have not identified any water supply scheme which has become defunct in the desert districts of Western Rajasthan. The steps taken by the Union Government to check the decline in the level of ground water in the country, including the desert districts of Western Rajasthan include:

(i) Constitution of Central Ground Water Authority under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 for regulation and control of ground water management and development.

(ii) Circulation of a Model Bill to all the States/Union Territories, including Rajasthan, to enable