

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned " Pak producing Plutonium" appearing in the Hindustan Times dated November 19, 1998;

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

(c) the steps taken by the Government to raise the matching capability in the country and the Government's reaction to the 50-70 MW Khushab reactor having gone critical?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Government is aware of reports that Pakistan has constructed a 50 MW reactor at Khushab.

(c) Government has been closely monitoring and continuously assessing the nuclear capability of Pakistan. India has a large, diversified and advanced nuclear programme geared to meeting India's developmental and security challenges.

#### Pay Scales of JAOS/JTOS

4033. SHRI UPENDRANATH NAYAK :

SHRI ARJUN SETHI :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Cabinet has approved the report of Fast Track Committee regarding pay scales alongwith recruitment rules of Junior Accounts Officers and Junior Telephone Officers;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of the recommendations made by the Fast Track Committee which were not accepted?

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) to (c) : The Fast-track Committee recommended that the recommendations of the Fifth Pay Commission granting higher pay scale to JTOs should be accepted subject to upgrading the entry qualification and that the service conditions of JAOs should not be linked to JTOs. The recommendation of the Fast-track Committee has been accepted by the Cabinet.

#### Expert Committee

4034. COL. SONA RAM CHOUDHARY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have constituted an Expert Committee to give suggestions for increasing the Agricultural production in the country;

(b) if so, the composition of the said committee;

(c) whether the Committee has since started its work; and

(d) if so, the time by which the Committee is likely to submit its report to the Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL) : (a) to (d): No, Sir.

[Translation]

#### Fund For Basic Needs

4035. SHRI PRADEEP KUMAR YADAV :

SHRI SHANTILAL PURSHOTTAMDAS PATEL:

SHRI ARVIND KAMBLE:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to be state :

(a) the details of minimum basic needs programme announced by the Government;

(b) whether the Government have estimated the required amount to implement the programme for creating basic needs during the Ninth Five Year Plan;

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

(d) the amount released for the purpose to each State for the current year, sector-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMANTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI RAM NAIK) : (a) The Basic Minimum Services (BMS) programme was launched in 1996 as the outcome of the Chief Ministers Conference of July 1996 which adopted the following objectives for the BMS programme with an all out effort for their attainment within a specified time frame.

1. 100 per cent coverage of provision of safe drinking water in Rural and Urban areas.
2. 100 per cent coverage of primary health service facilities in Rural and Urban areas.
3. Universalisation of Primary Education.
4. Provision of Public Housing Assistance to all shelterless poor families.
5. Supplementary Nutrition via Extension of