

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 (c) The planning and development of an area allocation of funds for the purpose is primarily the responsibility of the concerned State Government. The Central Government supplements the efforts of the State Governments through appropriate weightage for backwardness in the formula for distribution of Normal Central Assistance among the States. Further, Special Central Assistance is allocated to various States, including Assam, for Special Area Programmes such as the Border Area Development Programme, the Hill Area Development Programme and the Tribal Sub-Plan.

(d) and (e) No Schemes are pending with the Planning Commission at present.

Indians in Pak Jails

2252. SHRI GORDHANBHAI JADAVBHAI JAVIYA:
SHRI JAGDAMBI PRASAD YADAV:
SHRIMATI BHAVANA KARDAM DAVE:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether as many as 1,622 Indian service personnel including 54 officers and several para-military persons are present in the Pak jails;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the above service personnel were declared dead and their family members are getting pension;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the matter relating to their release was discussed with the Pakistan delegation during the meeting of Indo-Pak Officers; and

(f) if so, the outcome of the discussion?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF DEPARTMENT OF ELECTRONICS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) to (f) According to available information, 54 missing Indian defence personnel are believed to be in custody in Pakistan. Pakistan has been maintaining that there are no such Indian defence personnel in its custody.

Government have extended to the families of the 54 missing defence personnel believed to be in Pakistan's custody liberalised family pension, family gratuity and education allowance for children.

The matter has been taken up on several occasions with Pakistan at various levels, including that the Prime Minister. During his visit to Pakistan from 20-21 February 1999, Prime Minister raised this issue with the Prime Minister of Pakistan and it was decided that the two sides shall appoint a 2 member committee at ministerial level to examine humanitarian issues, including that of missing POWs.

[Translation]

Transfer of Centrally Sponsored Schemes

2253. SHRI SURENDRA PRASAD YADAV
(JAHANABAD):
SHRI MOHAMMAD ALI ASHRAF FATMI:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are contemplating to transfer the Centrally Sponsored Schemes to the State Governments;

(b) if so, the details thereof and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

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) and (b) In the meeting of the National Development Council held recently on 19.2.99, it was decided to constitute a sub-committee of the National Development Council to go into the issue of transfer of Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) and the modalities involved therein. The sub-committee will be under the Chairmanship of the Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission, with members from both Central Ministries and States.

(c) Does not arise.

[English]

Securing Release of Mortal Remains

2254. SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are working out any proposal with the Government of Saudi Arabia for expediting the