

(b) The estimated per capita consumption of tea during 1998 was 665 gms.

(c) The surplus quantity of tea available for exports during the year 1998 was 225.41 Mn.Kgs.

(d) Indian tea is exported to more than 80 countries of the world. Major importers of India tea are Russia and C I S countries, UK, Germany, Poland, U.A.E., Iran, Arab Republic of Egypt, Japan, Saudi Arabia etc. The foreign exchange earned through exports during the last three years are as follows :-

Year	Qty. (Mn.Kgs)	Value (US \$ Mn.)
1995-96	167.47	372.08
1996-97	169.04	366.62
1997-98	211.76	525.74

(e) and (f) Government has permitted free import of tea, as one of the 2307 items, from SAARC Countries in order to give a fillip to intra-regional trade.

#### Decline in Cotton Yarn

3759. SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) whether production of Cotton yarn in 1998-99 has shown a decline;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken for modernisation of textile mills to stand in competition ?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RANA) : (a) As per the data available upto December 1998, the production of cotton yarn had declined. The figures of production of cotton yarn are given below :-

Year	Quantity (Mn. Kg.)
1998-99(April-Dec)	1494
1997-98(April-Dec.)	1693

(b) The major reasons for decline in the production of Cotton yarn are World wide recession in the economy; South East Asian crisis; decline in production of Cotton crop during 1997-98 due to disease and unseasonal rains ; increase in price of raw cotton etc.

(c) Government have approved the launching of Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme (TUFS) for technological upgradation of the textile and jute industries. Under the Scheme, eligible units from identified sector of textile and jute sectors would be able to apply for loans at applicable rate of interest from designated nodal agencies, which after satisfying themselves, as regards viability etc.

would advance loan to applicant unit stipulating the condition for repayment of loan etc. Under the scheme difference in the amount of interest to the extent of 5% points would be reimbursed to the lending nodal agencies by the Ministry of Textiles to be passed on to the eligible borrowing units.

The Government is also proposing to launch a Cotton Technology Mission to improve the production productivity and quality of cotton.

[Translation]

#### Subsidy to Retired Persons

3760. Dr. PRABHA THAKUR :

COL. SONA RAM CHOUDHARY :

SHRI RAM NARAIN MEENA :

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Hon'ble High Court of Rajasthan have flayed the Government for not setting up the committee in time to release the production incentives/subsidy to the workers of certain NTC mills of Rajasthan who took voluntary retirement and started their own business;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have directed the concerned authorities to release immediately production incentives/ subsidy alongwith interest to such retired workers of NTC;

(d) if so, the action taken thereon by the concerned authorities and the number of workers benefited therefrom, mill-wise, alongwith the amount of subsidies given;

(e) if not, the reasons for delay ; and

(f) the steps taken by the Government to ensure that production incentives/subsidy is provided to such NTC workers immediately?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RANA) : (a) and (b) Some of the former workers of mills under NTC (DPR) who had availed VSR and who had been given loans under rehabilitation scheme had filed a writ petition before the Jaipur Bench of Rajasthan High Court requesting for production incentives/subsidy. The Rajasthan High court dismissed the writ petition as the Union of India had not been made a party. The Court, however, directed the mill authorities to forward a copy of the judgement to the Government for re-consideration of the whole rehabilitation scheme.

(c) to (f) The rehabilitation scheme for the workers who availed the VRS was formulated as part of the 1992 Turn Around Strategy for NTC mills. However, on account of the fact that 8 out of 9 subsidiaries of NTC were referred to the BIFR and the financial institutions were reluctant to release

*funds for implementation of the strategy, the 1992 Turn Around Strategy could not be implemented. Subsequently, Government approved a revised Turn Around Plan for NTC in May 1995 which also could not be implemented due to non-approval of the same by BIFR and non-availability of funds by sale of surplus lands and assets required to finance the plan. Since the entire question of revival /rehabilitation of NTC mills was under re-examination, the question of release of production incentives by locating funds from the NRF after evaluation of the schemes implemented by the workers by Monitoring Committee could not be finalised. Presently, the rehabilitation scheme is dormant and the question of deciding the pending claims is being examined separately.*

[English]

#### **New Variety of Tobacco Seedling**

3761. DR. SANJAY SINH :

SHRI SATNAM SINGH KAINTH :

SHRI SODE RAMAIAH :

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Tobacco Board has scrutinised the application of US tobacco Multi-National Philip Morris/FTR for entry into India to make tobacco products ;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Tobacco Board has given permission to Philip Morris to introduce new varieties of tobacco seedlings;

(d) if so, whether these new varieties of seedling have been tested by our experts;

(e) if so, the details of the proposal of Philip Morris on such aspects;

(f) whether the company has also sought mandatory membership with Tobacco Board; and

(g) if so, the details thereof and reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) and (b) Tobacco Board has not received any application from the US tobacco Multi National Philip Morris/ FTR for entry into India to make tobacco products. However, an application for Foreign Direct Investment in manufacture of cut tobacco, Research and Development of tobacco in India has been received from M/s FTR Holding, S.A. Switzerland, a holding company of M/s Philip Morris, USA.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) and (e) Do not arise.

(f) No, Sir.

(g) Does not arise.

#### **Debt Recovery Tribunals**

3762. SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR :

SHRI ABHAYSINH S. BHONSLE :

SHRI MOTILAL VORA :

SHRI SANDIPAN THORAT :

SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN :

SHRI P.S. GADHAVI :

SHRI AJAY CHAKRABORTY :

SHRI ASHOK NAMDEORAO MOHOL :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of Debt Recovery Tribunals established so far, State-wise;

(b) the total number of cases pending with each Tribunal ;

(c) whether the Government propose to set up more such tribunals in the near future ;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken for speedy and efficient disposal of cases by these tribunals?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) : (a) and (b) Details of Debts Recovery Tribunals (DRTs) established so far, States/Union Territories covered by them and total number of cases pending with each Tribunal as on 31.3.1999 is given in statement.

(c) to (e) Government have decided to set up five more DRTs as under :

Sl No.	Place of Tribunal	Jurisdiction
1.	Chandigarh	Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana and Union Territory of Chandigarh.
2.	Hyderabad	Andhra Pradesh
3.	Ernakulam	Kerala and Lakshadweep
4.	Cuttack	Orissa
5.	Allahabad	Uttar Pradesh