

ment & Regulation) Act, 1951. As such only a licence holder can manufacture cigarettes. Foreign financial and or technical collaboration is permissible in this sector subject to the provision of compulsory licensing. Any proposal for foreign investment/technical collaboration in this sector would require the prior approval of FIPB/Government.

#### Complaints from Investors

3896. SHRI AJIT JOGI : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the SEBI has been receiving a large number of complaints from the investors with regard to non-receipt of dividend of shares, interest on debentures/fixed deposits, non-receipt of maturity amount on debentures and fixed deposits;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Companies Act, 1956 contains provisions enabling Government to prosecute the companies which are in default;

(d) if so, whether the Government have launched any such prosecution;

(e) if so, the number of such prosecutions and names of such companies; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) : (a) to (f) The information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the House.

#### Pension Scheme for Bank Employees

3897. SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN:

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Ex-bank official wages lone was for pension to retired workers" appearing in 'The Hindustan Times' dated January 29,1999;

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

(c) the Government's clarification regarding the controversy over the applicability of pension scheme to the pre and post 1986 retired employees; and

(d) the steps taken to treat all employees at par to avail the pension scheme?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) It is a fact that in pursuance of a settlement signed by Workmen Unions/Officers' Associations with Indian Banks' Association (representing the bank management), Pension was introduced in the Public Sector Banks (except State Bank of India which already had a Pension Scheme) in lieu of Contributory Provident Fund(CPF) and employees who retired before 1.1.1986 are not eligible to opt for pension un-

der this Scheme and have been allowed to retain the amount of Contributory Provident Fund received by them at the time of retirement. It may be mentioned that at the time of introduction of any new benefits, the stipulation of cut off date is inevitable. The cut off date of 1.1.1986 has been upheld by Hon'ble Supreme Court in its judgement on the writ petitions filed by the pre 1986 retirees of Reserve Bank of India as well as nationalised banks.

In pursuance of the recommendations of the Fifth Central Pay Commission, the Central Government has also decided to grant ex-gratia payment to the CPF beneficiaries who retired between the period 18.11.60 to 31.12.85 and has rendered at least 20 years of continuous service prior to their superannuation. While the pre-1986 bank retirees have no right of any benefit in pursuance of the judgement given by the Hon'ble Apex Court, Government as a welfare measure agreed to provide ex-gratia to pre-1986 retirees broadly on the lines of Central Government without asking them to surrender the benefit of Contributory Provident Fund received by them at the time of retirement.

#### Production of Spices in States

3898. SHRI PRASAD BABURAO TANPURE: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) the production of different kinds of spices in each State during the Eighth Five Year Plan, year-wise;

(b) whether the Government propose to give special attention to spices production during the Ninth Plan period; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) A statement indicating production of major spices in each State during the Eighth Five Year Plan, year-wise is annexed.

(b)and (c) Yes, Sir. Against the Plan outlay of Rs. 125 crores for Integrated Development of Spices during the 8th Five Year Plan, a sum of Rs. 150 crores has been provided for the Integrated Development of Spices during the 9th Five Year Plan. Following steps are proposed to be taken under the Integrated Development of Spices during the 9th Five Year Plan period:

(i) Provide support for production and distribution of quality planting materials of high yielding varieties of spices for their large scale coverage.

(ii) Provide cultural inputs for improving production and productivity of spices.

(iii) Popularise integrated pest disease and nutrient management practices to ensure quality residue free spice products.

(iv) Provide assistance for establishment of soil and plant healthy clinics.

(v) Transfer of improved technologies for increasing production, productivity and quality of produce.