

(e) if so, the time by which those benches are operational?

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) Sir, at present, there are nine sanctioned benches of Customs, Excise and Gold (Control) Appellate Tribunal (CEGAT).

(b) All the nine sanctioned benches are functioning - five at Delhi, two at Mumbai and one each at Chennai and Calcutta.

(c) Nil.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) After detailed examination, it was found that the pendency in various benches, considered along with the rate of disposal, did not warrant creation of the two additional benches.

Administrative Control of CEGAT

2533. SHRI C. KUPPUSAMI : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any President of Customs, Excise and Gold (Control) Appellate Tribunal (CEGAT);

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the time by which the President of CEGAT is likely to be appointed;

(d) whether the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in R.K. Jain Vs. Union of India (CEGAT members Recruitment and Conditions of Services Rules, 1987) have observed that the administrative control of CEGAT should be in the hands of Law Ministry; and

(e) if so, the reaction of the Government in regard thereto?

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. JANARATHANAN) : (a) and (b) Sir, presently, Sh. S.K. Bhatnagar is holding charge as President of the Tribunal in addition to his own duties as Vice-President.

(c) A proposal is under consideration.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Transparency and Accountability in Government Functioning

2534. DR. SUSHIL INDORA :

DR. CHINTA MOHAN :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn towards the news-item captioned "P.M. advocates accountability in Government spending" appearing in Daily Business Standard, dated July 2, 1998;

(b) whether transparency and accountability in the expenditure being incurred by the Government Departments on various schemes are the basic need for clean administration; and

(c) whether the Government have taken any decision to take any action in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YESHWANT SINHA) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Constitutional and other safeguards (by way of Government decisions under the General Financial Rules etc.) already exist for ensuring transparency and accountability in Government expenditure.

[English]

Exclusive Marketing Rights of Agro Chemical Products

2535. SHRI K. PARYMOHAN : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are considering to grant exclusive marketing rights to drugs and agro chemical products;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is true that the People's Commission on Intellectual Property Rights in its report submitted had pointed out that medicines would go further out of reach of the poor under an Exclusive Marketing Rights (EMRs); and

(d) if so, the remedial steps taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT) : (a) and (b) In terms of provisions of Articles 70.8 and 70.9 of the Agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights of the World Trade Organisation Agreement, India is obliged to provide a means to receive product patent applications in the fields of pharmaceuticals and agricultural chemicals and on fulfilment of certain conditions, grant of exclusive marketing rights for a period