

Stage I — Rs. 1214.97 crores (approved in September, '90)

Stage II — Rs. 2786.17 crores (submitted by the State in April, '96)

(b) No, Sir.

(c) The main reasons for delay in completion is due to constraint of funds, rehabilitation, resettlement and inter State problems.

(d) Upper Krishna project Stage-I is likely to be completed by the year 2000 and Stage-II being an unapproved project is likely to be completed beyond IX Plan.

(e) An amount of about US\$292 million of World Bank assistance has already been utilised on the project.

Haj House

3317. SHRI S.S. OWAISI : Will the MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Haj Houses built so far by Government in different States, State-wise;

(b) whether these Houses are not adequate to meet the huge rush of Haj pilgrims;

(c) if so, whether the Government propose to construct more Haj House in near future;

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;

(e) whether facilities provided in these Haj Houses are not adequate; and

(f) if so, the steps taken by the Government to improve the standard of facilities provided in these Haj Houses?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE) : (a) The Central Government have not built any Haj House anywhere in India. The Haj Committee, Mumbai, has however, built one Haj House in Mumbai. Similarly, State Haj Committees of West Bengal and Gujarat have also built their Haj Houses at Calcutta and Ahmadabad respectively, with some financial assistance from Haj Committee, Mumbai.

(b) The Haj House in Mumbai is quite adequate to meet the requirements of Haj pilgrims leaving for Saudi Arabia and from Mumbai.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) The facilities available in the three above-mentioned Haj Houses are reported to be adequate.

(f) Does not arise.

Venture Capital Fund

3318. SHRI SATNAM SINGH KAINTH : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government propose to float Rs. 1000 crore Venture Capital Fund to boost the Information Technology Industry; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

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) The Department of Electronics is setting up a venture capital fund of Rs. 100 crores. Venture capital has been an important trigger in the growth of Information Technology (IT) industry around the world. The objective for setting up this fund is to promote Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the software and IT sector in India.

Import of Milk Powder

3319. DR. ULHAS VASUDEO PATIL :

SHRI PRASAD BABURAO TANPURE :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether milk powder is being imported in the country from the foreign suppliers by the Government and private agencies;

(b) if so, the names of suppliers countries/agencies and the quantum imported during each of the last three years;

(c) the reasons therefor; and

(d) the measures taken to ensure that the imported milk powder is of requisite standard quality?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI SOMPAL) : (a) to (d) The information is being collected from the concerned Departments and will be placed on the Table of the Sabha as soon as the same is received.

Grant of Visa

3320. SHRI ARJUN SETHI : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether USA action of not to grant the visa to the top scientists of the country have been withdrawn;

(b) if not, whether this matter was discussed during the recent bilateral talks held between the two countries; and

(c) if so, the outcome of talks on this matter?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF DEPARTMENT OF ELECTRONICS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH) : (a) In July 1998, seven Indian scientists working in the US National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Gaithersburg, Maryland, USA, were asked to wind up their work and leave the US. Similar action was not taken in the case of the remaining 23 scientists from India working at NIST.

US Spokesman subsequently stated that this action was not an across the board restriction on scientists from India, but on researchers from institutions which, the US believed, were involved with India's nuclear and missile programme.

(b) and (c) GOI position is that coercive and unilateral measures whether in the economic or technology field are counter-productive. Government considers US decision to deny visa and terminate research projects of certain Indian scientists as unwarranted. We do not agree with any targeted policy of denying and revoking visas particularly those which come in the way of scientific exchange and interaction.

The matter has been taken up with the US Government, including in the recent bilateral talks. There is no change in the US position so far.

[Translation]

Setting up of a Review Committee

3321. SHRIMATI KAILASHO DEVI : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have set up any committee to analyse the reasons for non-completion of the Five Year Plan within the scheduled time and also to analyse the reasons for cost and time over-runs of several important projects;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the recommendation submitted to the Government and the decision taken by the Government on these recommendations?

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) No Committee has been set up to review non-completion of the Ninth Five Year Plan. However, there is a mechanism of Standing Committees of Central Ministries/Departments to go into cost and time overruns of important projects.

The Government have also decided that in every case in which the project cost overrun is of over 20 per cent and is accompanied by time overrun of over 10 per cent (or such other time and cost overrun norms, as may be deemed appropriate by the Planning Commission, for

different types of projects), the Revised Cost Estimates should be brought up for approval of Government only after responsibility is determined for the cost and time overruns. Accordingly, the Planning Commission have devised a mechanism for fixing the responsibility in this regard and have circulated the same to the Secretaries/Financial Advisers of all Central Ministries/Departments for compliance.

[English]

Import of Butter Oil

3322. DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to import butter oil;

(b) if so, the total quantum of butter oil imported during 1996-1997 and 1998 separately;

(c) the total quantum of butter oil proposed to be imported during 1999-2000;

(d) the countries from which the butter oil is being imported; and

(e) the steps taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI SOMPAL) : (a) to (e) The Import of butter oil is under OGL. This Department has no proposal under consideration to import butter oil.

No import of butter oil has been reported for the period April, 1996 to March, 1997. The details of butter oil imported during April, 1997-March, 1998, and April, 1998 September, 1998 are as given below in the table:

Table

Name of the Country	April, 1997-March, 98 Quantity (Kg)	April, 1998-Sept. 98 Quantity (Kg)
1. Australia	289400	211000
2. Netherland	260	—
3. Newzealand	3170200	1791120
4. USA	784	—
Total	3460644	2002120

Support to Iraq and Cuba

3323. SHRI T GOVINDAN : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has been extending support to the people of Iraq and Cuba; and

(b) if so, the details of assistance extended by India to them during the last three years?