

(b) if so, the action taken by the Government thereon so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) and (b) Few representations were received regarding settlement of claims as a result of cyclone in Andhra Pradesh. For speedy settlement of these claims, GIC had set up an Inter Company Machinery. Press advertisements were given and special booths were set up for speedy processing and settlement of claims. As a result of these measures out of 165 claims filed by the fishermen whose boats sank into the sea, 96 claims have been settled. Out of pending 69 claims, 41 claims are under process and for remaining 28 claims, investigation/survey reports and other related documents by claimants are awaited. The matter is being continuously followed up by insurance companies.

Expenditure Management and Reform Commission

2679. SHRI LINGARAJ VALYAL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether high level expenditure management and reform Commission has submitted its report;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the highlights of the report?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) to (c) The Expenditure Management and Reforms Commission has not yet been set up.

[Translation]

Hurdles in Industrial Growth

2680. SHRI JAYSINH CHAUHAN: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are some hurdles in the way of industrial growth in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the steps proposed to be taken by the Government to remove those hurdles;

(d) the reasons for low rate of capital formation in the country;

(e) whether the Government propose to improve in capital formation for Industrial growth;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) if not, reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) to (c) The growth rate of industrial production in 1996-97 witnessed deceleration mainly due to under performance of crude petroleum, electricity, fertilizers, consumer durables and capital goods sectors and also the high cost of capital. Some Sector specific policies had

already been initiated in under performing sectors. The credit policy announced by RBI has improved availability of credit at softer terms to industry. Initiatives have also been taken in Union Budget for further improving the investment climate and for accelerated overall industrial growth.

(d) to (g) the overall Gross Domestic Capital Formation was 27.4% of Gross Domestic Product in 1995-96 as compared to 26.0% in 1994-95 and 23.6% in 1993-94. Reduction in corporate and personal income tax and incentives to investment introduced in the Union Budget is expected to further improve the capital formation in the country.

[English]

Court Cases Relating to Women

2681. SHRI CHAMAN LAL GUPTA: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of court cases relating to women pending in Jammu and Kashmir as on date; and

(b) the specific efforts being made by the Government for speedy disposal of pending cases and provide complete justice to women?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP): (a) and (b) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Council of Medical Research

2682. SHRI YELLAIAH NANDI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the assessment scheme with regards to promotion for technical staff of Indian Council of Medical Research is pending with the Government (Ministry of Finance) for its approval;

(b) if so, the details thereof and reasons for delay; and

(c) the time by which the final decision is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) to (c) A proposal for introduction of an assessment scheme for technical staff of ICMR was considered and returned to the Administrative Ministry pending decision of the Government on the recommendations of the Fifth Central Pay Commission.

Post Harvest Operation Scheme

2683. SHRI RAMAKANT YADAY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have taken a decision to discontinue the Post harvest operation scheme under the food ministry;

(b) if so, the reasons and details thereof;

(c) whether any review was made of the works undertaken under this scheme;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the manner in which the Government propose to utilize the expertise of the 700 Scientists/employees working under this scheme after scrapping of this scheme and the measures taken at the national level to monitor the quality of the foodgrains?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) to (e) The post harvest operation scheme is one of the schemes identified for being weeded out by the Committee constituted in the Ministry of Finance to identify schemes which are redundant and non-essential. Such schemes have been conveyed to the concerned Ministry/Departments for further action. Food Ministry is to take appropriate follow-up action as far as this scheme is concerned.

Trade with Saudi Arabia

2684. SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a huge imbalance of trade between India and Saudi Arabia;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether a two day meeting of Indo-Saudi joint commission was held recently in New Delhi;

(d) if so, the areas so identified to reduce this huge imbalance of trade; and

(e) the steps taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (DR. BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) and (b) The bilateral trade between India and Saudi Arabia was Rs.11933.43 crores in 1996-97. While Imports from Saudi Arabia were Rs. 9931.35 crores, Exports were Rs. 2002.08 crores, leaving a huge trade balance in favour of Saudi Arabia. It is mainly on account of oil imports of India from that country.

(c) to (e) Yes, Sir. A Two day meeting of Indo-Saudi Joint Commission was held recently in New Delhi on 11-12th June, 1997. For further expanding the existing level of bilateral trade, the two sides identified possibilities for cooperation in the fields of transport, agricultural equipment, software, construction materials, food and agricultural products, drugs and pharmaceuticals, petro-chemicals and pharmaceuticals. Both sides agreed to encourage participation of private sector in bilateral trade and joint ventures, exchange of commercial information, exchange of commercial delegations, and participation in trade fairs, to boost the bilateral trade.

PMRY Schemes in North-east (Assam)

2685. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Lead Bank are reluctant to finance the PMRY Schemes in the North-East, particularly Assam, because of non-recovery of loan sanctioned earlier;

(b) if so, the number of schemes pending with different banks, in Assam since last three years and the steps initiated by the Ministry for its clearance;

(c) whether the entire 15 Nos. PMRY Schemes taken up for implementation during last financial year in Lakhimpur District of Assam were rejected by UBI on similar ground; and

(d) if so, the measures proposed to be taken in future so that entrepreneurs can avail this opportunity of self-employment and the required financial support of ensured through alternative arrangement?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) The performance of banks in the North Eastern Region including Assam State during the last three years as furnished by Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is given in the attached statement-I, II and III. RBI has further reported that in a review meeting held recently, banks inter alia pointed out lack of adequate infrastructure facilities and poor recovery performance in the State of Assam. However, the banks have sanctioned loans under PMRY at around 55% of the target in Assam State and 60% in North Eastern Region as a whole during 1996-97

(b) RBI has reported that the cases pending with the banks in the North Eastern Region including Assam State as on 31st March during the last three years are as under:

Year	No.
1994-95	1254
1995-96	3252
1996-97	3014

Bank have been advised by RBI to take up the cases pending at the close of programme year i.e. 31st March for sanction in the next programme year.

(c) and (d) United Bank of India has reported that out of 208 sponsored proposals in Lakhimpur District in 1996-97, 55 proposals were rejected, inter-alia on account of the following reasons:

- (i) Non Viability
- (ii) Delayed sponsoring
- (iii) Eligibility criteria (income/educational qualification) not fulfilled