

AUGUST 6, 1997

131 *Written Answers*

- (ii) *Accelerating the growth rate of the economy with stable prices. The stability and the sustainability of the growth process require determined efforts to cut down the revenue deficits of both the Central and State Governments and to achieve a degree of fiscal balance:*
- (iii) Ensuring food and nutritional security for all, particularly the vulnerable sections of society;
- (iv) Providing the basic minimum services of safe drinking water, primary health care facilities, universal primary education, shelter and connectivity to all in a time bound manner;
- (v) Empowerment of women and socially disadvantaged groups such as Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes and Minorities as agents of socio-economic change and development.

*[Translation]***Development of Bihar**

2335. SHRI RAVINDRA KUMAR PANDEY:
SHRI SHATRUGHAN PRASAD SINGH:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

- (a) whether a meeting with the Hon'ble Members of Parliament from Bihar was held on March 12, 1997 to discuss the issues relating to the development of State;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the performance by the Bihar Government is very low in regard to the schemes sponsored by the Union Government; and
- (d) if so, the remedial steps taken by the Union Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRIMATI RATNAMALA D. SAVANOOR) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. During the meeting, important developmental issues like irrigation infrastructure development, giving thrust to power projects, increasing employment opportunities and education sector development were discussed.

(c) and (d) Centrally Sponsored Schemes are formulated by the Central Ministries/Departments in consultation with the State Government and are implemented by the State Governments. The Planning Commission does not have any direct role in their implementation.

*[English]***Working OF T.I.F.R.**

2336. SHRI RAM NAIK : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

- (a) whether a Committee of International Researchers was ever appointed to evaluate the working of Tata Institute of Fundamental Research;
- (b) if so, the constitution of the Committee; and
- (c) the findings and recommendations made by the Committee?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI S.R. BALASUBRAMONIYAN) : (a) and (b) The Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR), the Premier Scientific Research Institution in the fields of Physics, Mathematics and allied sciences, is an Autonomous Institution supported by the Department of Atomic Energy. TIFR completed fifty years of research activities in 1995-96. As a sequel to the TIFR's Golden Jubilee, its Council of Management decided to invite a group of eminent scientists to review TIFR's achievements and make recommendations on, inter alia, international collaboration with other institutions, scope for greater purposeful interaction with industry in selected areas and the steps needed to enable the Institute to attract creative talent in the light of the increasing specialisation of research.

A committee consisting of the following experts visited and reviewed the working of TIFR during 13-18 January, 1997:-

- (i) Prof. Lord Porter, OM, FRS, Nobel Laureate Chairman, Centre for Petromolecular Sciences, Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry, Imperial College, London, UK.
- (ii) Prof. D. Mumford, President of the International Mathematical Union, Division of Applied Mathematics, Brown University, Rhode Island, USA.
- (iii) Prof. Sir Arnold Wolfendale, FRS, Formerly Astronomer Royal and President of the Royal Astronomical Society, Department of Physics, University of Durham, Science Laboratories, UK.
- (iv) Prof. B.V. Sreekantan, National Institute of Advanced Studies, Indian Institute of Science

Campus, Bangalore and Former Director, Tata Institute of Fundamental Research.

- (v) Prof. S. Brenner, FRS was prevented by illness from attending as a member of the committee but gave written evidence.

(c) The conclusions and major recommendations of the said committee are given in the attached Statement.

Statement

Conclusions and Recommendations

Our conclusions can best be formulated by answering the questions:

- (i) What would Homi Bhabha have said about the state of TIFR at present?
- (ii) What would he have recommended for the future?

Concerning (i), he would undoubtedly have been excited about many of the areas of science being pursued at present. However, he would have been disappointed by the slippage in the international league in some areas. He would have been particularly concerned at the shortage of talented people joining the Institute. However, he would have been proud of his successors in authority for their undoubted skill in maintaining the very presence of TIFR (and, indeed, enabling it to grow) in a world where 'relevance' and 'wealth-creation' have had serious repercussions for similar institutions. Homi Bhabha would, we feel, have gone along with our own recommendations.

In the preceding text we have underlined specific - and in some cases detailed - recommendations. All are important but here we indicate the major ones.

Major Recommendations

1. Fundamental work in radio astronomy, molecular biology, solid state physics and computer science should be supported and augmented.
2. The Mumbai Molecular Biology work should be maintained and augmented and the Director and Council should make their agreement with this recommendation widely known, as a matter of urgency.
3. The pure mathematics group should be strongly supported and consideration given to merging pure and applied mathematics and theoretical computer science.
4. The 'purpose of TIFR' should be widely circulated.

5. A search Committee should be formed, as a matter of urgency, to seek candidates for the post of Director. The search should start well before the termination of Professor Singh's directorship.

6. Improvements should be made to the Administrator Office.

7. A committee should be formed to examine (i) promotion norms, (ii) the balance between term and permanent appointments and (iii) possibilities of enhancing recruitment worldwide, to achieve and maintain a senior faculty of the highest possible distinction.

8. Research should be organised in three individual schools, in:

Mathematical Sciences

Physics and Astronomy

Biological and Chemical Sciences

9. Action should be taken to improve technology transfer.

10. Science education and popularisation should be given a higher profile.

Construction of Over Bridges

2337. SHRI VIJAY GOEL : Will the Minister of URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the present status of nine Railway Over Bridges in NCT of Delhi required under MRTS Project and to link these to the proposed Express Highway;

(b) the details of budget provision made during 1997-98 for the construction of these Over Bridges; and

(c) the details of time-schedule for the completion of these Bridges?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT (DR. U. VENKATESWARLU) : (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

[Translation]

Rate of Poverty

2338. PROF. OMPAL SINGH 'NIDAR' :
SHRI SATYA DEO SINGH :
KUMARI UMA BHARTI :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether India is the highest among the other