

(ii) OP towers by BSF have been erected.

(iii) Binoculars, Goggles, Twin, telescopes, PNV binoculars and hand held search lights have been provided to Patrolling parties for enhanced vigilance on the border.

(iv) Jeeps, tractors and camels have been provided for intensified patrolling on the border.

(v) Border fencing and flood lighting has been done/ is being done at a fast pace.

(vi) Border road/tracks are being constructed/developed for vehicular patrolling.

(vii) Instructions have been issued to all the enforcement agencies to maintain utmost vigil along the border areas.

(viii) Training is being imparted to officers to improve effectiveness.

(ix) Reward schemes for informers and enforcement officers are being implemented.

(x) Quarterly coordination meetings are being held which are attended by all enforcement agencies involved in curbing drug trafficking, under a bilateral agreement with Pakistan periodic meetings are taking place at Secretary and D.G. Level.

In addition, contact points have been designated by the two countries for direct operation communication.

#### **Research Contract with USA**

601. SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Wild Life Institute of India, Dehradun has signed a research contract with the United States Department of Agriculture;

(b) if so, the date of its signing and the details of the contract;

(c) the rationale behind signing this contract and the likely benefits to be accrued therefrom to India;

(d) whether the Government have examined the impact of such contract to the extent of its affecting India's invaluable bio-diversity being patented and used in the United States; and

(e) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ) : (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The Director, Wild Life Institute of India (WII) Dehradun, had signed an agreement with the

United States Department of Agriculture on 24th November 1995. The agreement contained 17 clauses of general provisions applicable to Foreign Agricultural Research Grants. The signing of agreement was required to indicate the acceptance of a grant of Rs. 96,90,000 to WII for the research project entitled, "Management of Forests in India for Biological Diversity and Forest Productivity—an Ecosystem Perspective". The main objective of the project is to evaluate the impacts of forestry practices and the use of forest products by people, the methods of harvesting and collection on forest diversity and documentation of conservation problems.

(d) and (e) The United States Department of Agriculture have conveyed that the kind of product expected out of this Project, guides and planning documents, would not be subject to licences or patents and, therefore, Patent and Licence Rights Clause does not apply to the agreement.

#### **Official Secret Act, 1923**

602. DR. M. JAGANNATH :

SHRI RAM SAGAR :

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Fifth Pay Commission has made a recommendation to the effect that the citizens should have a right to information and the work of the Government should not be shrouded in mystery and the Official Secrets Act;

(b) whether British rules, the framers of the Act have already amended this Act in 1989 making way for a more open Government;

(c) whether Government of India also propose to amend the Official Secrets Act;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the Supreme Court had taken any view on the writ petition filed against the Union Government challenging among other things Section 5 of the Official Secrets Act, 1923; and

(f) if not, the action taken by the Government to expedite the matter in the Supreme Court ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR) : (a) The Fifth Pay Commission have recommended the passing of a Right to information Act with built-in safeguards to ensure the privacy of national interests as also the privacy of the individual citizen.

(b) The Official Secrets Act of U.K. has been

amended in 1989 restricting its scope.

(c) and (d) A Working Group has been set up by the Government to examine the possibility of introducing a legislation on Right to Information at the levels of Central and State Government as well as consideration of amendment to various relevant legislations including the Official Secrets Act.

(e) and (f) In the Supreme Court a writ petition has been filed by one Dr. George Mathew challenging among other things Section 5 of the Official Secrets Act. The writ petition is pending in the Supreme Court.

#### **Illegal Mining of Limestone**

603. SHRI MANGAL RAM PREMI : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Supreme Court had imposed a ban on the illegal mining of limestone in the foothills of Mussorie;

(b) if so, whether illegal mining of limestone in the foothills of Mussoorie along the Sone river is still continuing unabatedly; and

(c) if so, the action the Government propose to take in the matter ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[Translation]

#### **PDS Quota to Uttar Pradesh**

604. SHRI D.P. YADAV : Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state :

(a) whether wheat, rice, sugar, edible oil and kerosene, are not being supplied in the rural areas of Uttar Pradesh as per the demand;

(b) if so, the reasons for not meeting the demand of these areas;

(c) whether the Government of Uttar Pradesh have requested to increase the quota of these items; and

(d) if so, the action taken by the Government in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV) : (a) and (b) No, Sir. The allocation of Public Distribution System

(PDS) items are made for the State as a whole and distribution amongst various regions/districts, including rural areas, is done by the State Government itself and the Central Government have no role to play in it.

(c) and (d) The Government of Uttar Pradesh have not demanded any increase in the monthly PDS quota of rice and edible oil (imported palmolein). Demand for fixation of monthly wheat quota at 1,09,205 MT as against 1,03,800 MT allotted for March, 1997 has been received. The allocation of foodgrains are made on month to month basis taking into consideration *interalia* the demand received from various states/UTs, their relative needs, offtake trend, stock position in the Central Pool, seasonal availability etc.

Request received from Government of Uttar Pradesh for increase in the monthly levy sugar quota of the State could not be acceded to, despite improvement in the level of production during 1994-95 and 1995-96 sugar seasons, because availability of levy sugar in the country has yet to attain stability.

Requests were received from State of Uttat Pradesh for additional allocation of Kerosene. However, on account of constraints of product availability, foreign exchange and heavy subsidy involved, it is not possible to meet the demand in full. Nevertheless, a 3% increase was given in the allocation for the years 1993-94, 1994-95, 1995-96 and 1996-97 over the previous years for the country as a whole. The allocation to the State of Uttar Pradesh for 1997-98 has been increased by 50,015 MTs over the last year representing a 4.4% increase over 1996-97.

[English]

#### **Illicit Liquor Trade**

605. SHRI AJAY CHAKRABORTY : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the newsitem captioned "Wining and Dining under Watchful Eyes of Police" appearing in the 'Hindustan Times' dated December, 12, 1996;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Government in regard to the involvement of the police personnel in this thriving illegal liquor trade ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR) : (a) and (b) The Government have seen the news item in question which appeared in the "Hindustan Times" in its issue of December 26, 1996. It has been alleged in the report that the illicit trade in liquor is being carried out at some places in Delhi (Majnu ka tila and Yamuna Pusta) with the