

OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH) : (a) There is no formal scheme to import Light Water Reactors. However, negotiations are currently underway with the Russian Federation for import of two VVER-1000 MWe Light Water Reactors as well as assistance in construction and installation of the above reactors and associated equipment for the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Project in Tamil Nadu. The Government is prepared to consider concrete proposals for enhancing investments in the nuclear power sector.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

[English]

Family Planning Programme

100. SHRI ANANTH KUMAR : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the total grant-in-aid provided for family planning programme during the year 1996-97 to Karnataka;

(b) whether the State Government has utilised the given grant-in-aid in full;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) An amount of Rs. 9384.68 Lakhs was released to Karnataka in cash and kind.

(b) to (d) The grant-in-aid to States is both in cash and kind. The assistance in kind includes drug kits, dispensary kits, contraceptives etc. It is given on the basis of utilisation/requirements and so there is no surplus. The assistance in cash is initially given on the basis of assessed requirement for salaries etc. and is thereafter finally settled on the basis of audited accounts.

E.P.F. Scheme

101. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the number of cases of payment of provident fund under the Employees Provident Fund Scheme 1952 pending at present, zone-wise;

(b) if so, the reasons for delay and the steps being taken to expedite the payment of dues; and

(c) the action being initiated against the concerned authorities for delay in making payments?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR) : (a) The information about pending cases of payment of provident fund, region-wise is as under:—

(As on 30.09.97)

Name of Region	Number of pending PF cases
Andhra Pradesh	3012
Bihar	1778
Delhi	3745
Gujarat	19045
Haryana	1189
Karnataka	9891
Kerala	3884
Maharashtra	24900
Madhya Pradesh	2541
N.E. Region	1112
Orissa	531
Punjab	3561
Rajasthan	4380
Tamil Nadu	14867
Uttar Pradesh	3940
West Bengal	19436

(b) and (c) The Provident Fund (PF) claims complete in all respects are required to be settled within 30 days. However, sometime settlement of the PF claims is delayed for various reasons including defects in application forms, differences in signatures, non-submission of returns by the employers etc. In order to provide prompt service to the subscribers a massive computerisation programme has been launched in the EPF Organisation. The Public Grievances Redressal Machinery has been strengthened and work norms/procedures are being reviewed/simplified so as to decentralise the process of decision making for facilitating expeditious disposal of claims. The vigilance machinery has also been strengthened for elimination of delay in settlement

of claims. As per the prescribed procedure, the PF authorities are liable for disciplinary action for delay in settlement of PF Claims. Recently, through an amendment in the Scheme, Commissioners have been made personally accountable for delay, beyond the prescribed limit, in the disposal of the claims.

Nuclear Power Projects

102. SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the delay on the part of the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) in giving clearance to two nuclear power projects has resulted in heavy cost escalation of about Rs. 3,000 crore;

(b) if so, the reasons for delay in according clearance; and

(c) the steps being taken to expedite the matter by the AERB?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH) : (a) to (c) There has been no delay on the part of the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) in giving clearance to the nuclear power projects. All safety related matters involve many detailed calculations and analyses which have to be inevitably gone through. All such matters are given priority by those concerned, including the Nuclear Power Corporation and the AERB.

Standards for Soft Drinks

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

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned "soft drink norms lack

punch-study" appearing in 'The Times of India,' dated August 27, 1997;

(b) whether the statutory standards for soft drinks in India as laid down by the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) and the Prevention of Food and Adulteration Act (PFA) are very lenient as compared to those in developed countries;

(c) if so, the comparison between our norms and norms prescribed by the developed countries; and

(d) the action taken/proposed to be taken to make our norms more stringent?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY) : (a) to (d) Yes Sir.

The press report refers to the study carried out by Consumer Education & Research Centre (CERC), Ahmedabad on ten different brands of carbonated water available in Indian market.

A comparative chart on limits of metallic contaminants prescribed under prevention of Food Adulteration Rules and specified by the Bureau of Indian Standards and the Limits specified by Newzealand, Australia, U.K. & Canada for carbonated water as brought out by the CERC, Ahmadabad is given in the Statement attached. The report has also quoted findings of caffeine content in two brands of carbonated water as marketed in India, Australia, U.K. & USA. Caffeine content in beverages marketed in India has been found to be well within the max. limit prescribed under PFA Rules, 1955.

According to the report, the limit for copper is more stringent in India while it is the same as in other countries for Zinc. However, in the case of lead & arsenic, the limit is lower in India.

STATEMENT

Comparative Statement of Metallic Contaminants in Carbonated Water as reported by C.E.R.C.

	P.F.A.	B.I.S.	U.K.	Canada	Australia	New Zealand
Lead (max. in ppm*)	0.5	0.5	0.1	0.2	1.2	0.2
Zinc (max. in ppm)	5.0	—	5.0	5.0	—	5.0
Copper (max. in ppm)	1.5	1.5	2.0	2.0	—	2.0
Arsenic (max. in ppm)	0.25	0.25	0.2	0.1	0.15	0.2

*ppm = Parts per million (mg/kg)