

LOK SABHA DEBATES (English Version)

Second Session
(Twelfth Lok Sabha)

10
13.9.98



(Vol. III contains Nos. 11 to 20)

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI

Price : Rs. 50.00

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LOK SABHA DEBATES

LOK SABHA

Friday, July 10, 1998/Asadha 19, 1920 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock

[MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Loans to Unemployed Youths

+

*342. SHRI JAYSINHJI CHAUHAN :
SHRIMATI RANI CHITRALEKHA BHONSLE :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the number of educated unemployed youths who applied for loan under PMRY for setting up their own industries/business during each of the last three years, State-wise;

(b) the number of such applications pending for approval;

(c) the time taken by the Government to process such applications;

(d) whether unemployed youths are facing difficulties in getting such loans in time; and

(e) if so, the reasons for delay and the steps taken by the Government for speedy disposal of such applications?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) to (e) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) As per information provided by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), the number of educated unemployed youth, who applied for loans under the Prime Minister's Rozgar Yojana (PMRY) during each of the last three years i.e., 1995-96, 1996-97 and 1997-98, State-wise details and the number of such applications pending at the end of each year with banks are furnished in Annexure I, II and III attached.

(c) As per extant guidelines of RBI, applications for sanction of loans upto Rs. 25,000/- should be disposed of by the banks within a fortnight and those over Rs. 25,000/- within 8 to 9 weeks.

(d) and (e) RBI have reported that the decision to extend credit on the basis of laid down criteria and appraisal of the Scheme is taken by the bank branch processing the loan applications. The reasons for returning the loan applications by banks, inter-alia, include (i) income of borrower exceeding the prescribed limit under the scheme; (ii) borrower already having been assisted under other schemes; (iii) borrower already gainfully employed; (iv) borrower being a defaulter to other banks; and (v) project being not viable/bankable. Besides, bunching of applications towards the end of the financial year is also an important reason for pendency of applications at the branch level.

It has been provided in the PMRY guidelines that Task Force Committee (TFC) should sponsor applications equal to 150% of the target fixed to enable banks to achieve the targets allotted even after rejection of a portion of applications sponsored to them. The banks have also been advised by RBI that they should indicate specific reasons for rejection of applications sponsored to them by the TFCs.

In order to tackle the problems of delay in sanction and disbursement of loans, banks have been advised that district level coordinators of Banks should enquire into the cases to major irregularities. Reports are required to be submitted to District level PMRY Committee and Task Force Committee for review and also for recommending action at appropriate levels.

Annexure-I

Progress under PMRY for the programme year 1995-96

Name of the State/ Union Territory	Target	No. of applica- tions Received	Total No. of appli- cations Sanc- tioned	No. of appli- cations pending
1	2	3	4	5
Andhra Pradesh	31308	43181	27299	2478
Arunachal Pradesh	289	296	250	1
Assam	7628	9165	6382	991
Bihar	21297	35753	15165	3061
National Capital Territory of Delhi	5150	15165	4132	2031
Goa	620	684	481	20
Gujarat	9953	18300	9950	681

1	2	3	4	5
Haryana	7757	15109	7512	504
Himachal Pradesh	2402	4209	2362	37
Jammu & Kashmir	1695	2413	1343	103
Karnataka	16376	25492	13787	987
Kerala	13978	27550	11120	746
Madhya Pradesh	29877	59247	29398	2463
Maharashtra	44269	62977	36855	5979
Manipur	3989	2738	1024	1541
Meghalaya	497	531	477	3
Mizoram	250	350	225	-
Nagaland	284	302	272	6
Orissa	7483	19214	7287	509
Punjab	14831	26521	14137	2577
Rajasthan	10310	19653	9263	844
Sikkim	201	226	151	27
Tamil Nadu	21041	3734	16253	3064
Tripura	2030	2830	1777	683
Uttar Pradesh	34357	72199	31118	1669
West Bengal	39691	41281	17724	7251
Andaman & Nicobar	97	139	81	19
Chandigarh	142	293	155	18
Dadra & Nagar Heveli	189	276	188	14
Daman & Diu	35	81	44	-
Lakshadweep	-	-	-	-
Pondicherry	404	721	361	112
Not Specified	180	228	72	-
All India	328610	538858	266645	38419

Annexure-II

Progress under PMRY for the programme Year 1996-97

Name of the State/ Union Territory	Target	No. of applica- tions Received	Total No. of applica- tions Sanctioned	No. of applica- tions pending
1	2	3	4	5
Andhra Pradesh	31900	33574	20004	5127

1	2	3	4	5
Arunachal Pradesh	450	349	162	182
Assam	15000	8548	4857	2107
Bihar	22150	37375	14068	9249
National Capital Territory of Delhi	4550	5102	920	1075
Goa	550	675	419	47
Gujarat	8500	15895	7904	1437
Haryana	7200	12623	5871	1002
Himachal Pradesh	2100	3349	1686	524
Jammu & Kashmir	3500	1448	608	358
Karnataka	17700	25352	13512	2915
Kerala	15000	18678	9000	3214
Madhya Pradesh	27050	62137	25972	10455
Maharashtra	35900	56459	29379	10835
Manipur	3000	2268	1566	254
Meghalaya	825	407	283	105
Mizoram	375	175	35	121
Nagaland	450	235	145	83
Orissa	8250	12114	4202	5762
Punjab	8600	17127	7543	2394
Rajasthan	10400	21444	9609	1888
Sikkim	200	210	87	81
Tamil Nadu	21800	28335	1194	4175
Tripura	1950	2220	875	563
Uttar Pradesh	35813	65808	28260	7086
West Bengal	22900	20106	5438	7952
Andaman & Nicobar	100	84	34	23
Chandigarh	150	209	111	26
Dadra & Nagar Heveli	150	133	73	17
Daman & Diu	100	44	23	8
Lakshadweep	50	64	23	29
Pondicherry	500	610	250	87
Not Specified	9119	-	3630	2670
All India	307163	462282	208588	81851

Annexure-III

Progress under PMRY for the programme
Year 1997-98

Name of the State/ Union Territory	Target	No. of applica- tions Received	Total No. of applica- tions Sanc- tioned	No. of applica- tions pending
1	2	3	4	5
Andhra Pradesh	34200	36512	23610	5983
Arunachal Pradesh	300	175	122	53
Assam	13400	11772	6732	4012
Bihar	21500	33025	12514	5590
National Capital Territory of Delhi	4700	4812	981	481
Goa	600	456	311	12
Gujarat	12600	17801	9807	1253
Haryana	6300	10853	6090	198
Himachal Pradesh	2300	3756	2301	167
Jammu & Kashmir	3500	4485	2386	851
Karnataka	22000	28667	15053	5004
Kerala	16000	15780	8453	1607
Madhya Pradesh	31500	57998	28994	4643
Maharashtra	42600	65616	36243	6714
Manipur	1300	593	162	367
Meghalaya	550	455	258	81
Mizoram	400	49	11	8
Nagaland	450	273	95	173
Orissa	9250	13629	6738	3251
Punjab	9000	16993	9082	1987
Rajasthan	14300	22470	11787	2010
Sikkim	100	105	62	14
Tamil Nadu	27700	32582	15360	3744
Tripura	1300	2039	417	887
Uttar Pradesh	45200	70506	34780	4613
West Bengal	23000	13190	3851	3693
Andaman & Nicobar	100	104	48	40
Chandigarh	200	272	164	20

	1	2	3	4	5
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	50		111	75	2
Daman & Diu		50	44	31	6
Lakshadweep		50	125	75	12
Pondicherry		500	763	403	21
Not Specified			8495	3272	2986
All India		345000	474506	240268	60483

SHRI JAYSINGHJI CHAUHAN : Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you I would like to know from the hon. Prime Minister the details of the unemployed youths given loan under the Prime Minister Rojgar Yojana since its beginning, statewide and especially the details regarding Gujarat. Whether during this period any special Monitoring Committee was constituted to monitor the proper implementation of this scheme. If so, the details of the achievements of this committee and if not, the reasons therefor and steps proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

[English]

SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN : In Annexures-i, II and III, we have given year-wise and State-wise number of applicants and number of applications sanctioned . . . (Interruptions) . . . I will tell you the amount sanctioned by the Government. You want to know the position particularly about Gujarat. The target in 1997-98 is 12600. The number of applications received comes to 17,801. That is lower than 150% of the target. The number of applications received should be at least 150 per cent of the target. The number of applications sanctioned is only 9807. It is nearly 50 per cent of the applications received. The number of applications pending comes to 1253. Regarding the State-wise figures on allocation of money, I would say that a separate notice has to be given.

[Translation]

SHRI JAYSINHJI CHAUHAN : Under the Prime Minister Rojgar Yojana Bank Task Force selects the educated unemployed for providing loans and all these selected candidates are imparted training on government expense by the related District industry centres. What is the propriety and reasons for not sanctioning loan to these unemployed youths even after imparting training? Who is responsible for misusing the governmental funds and playing with the lives of the unemployed youths who have been imparted training by the Government. Whether any reformative steps have been taken in this regard? If so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor and whether any remedial measures are proposed to be taken by the Government or not?

[English]

SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN : Sir, I want to tell the hon. Member that the Government is trying to solve the unemployment problem among the youth. The Prime Minister's Rozgar Yojana is one of the schemes launched in 90s. There is a Task Force which selects the beneficiaries. It is headed by the General Manager of the District Industries Centre. The lead bank and two other banks, District Employment Officer and representatives of the District Rural Development Agency are also associated with it. They give certain training to the students like those coming from the ITIs. Such students and diploma holders apply for it. The people who are educated and are having technical qualifications are also given this loan.

Further, even students having qualifications of 10th class or ten-plus-two are also applying for that. This is a scheme for sanction of loans up to Rs. 1,00,000. . . . (Interruptions)

If the hon. Member brings forward any specific cases where the youth have been deprived of their right, even after the training, we will definitely take care of it. This will be taken up with the banks to give loans as early as possible.

SHRI MURLI DEORA : Sir, one of the reasons given by the hon. Minister is income of the borrower exceeding the prescribed limit under the scheme. There are several complaints that the ceiling, which entitled a borrower, is too low. I would like to ask the hon. Minister whether he will consider to increase that ceiling now.

SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN : Ceiling on what?

SHRI MURLI DEORA : Ceiling of the borrower, that is, the income of the borrower should be so many rupees. That is very low.

SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN : One lakh?

SHRI MURLI DEORA : Not the maximum. I am talking about the income. The income cannot be Rs. 1 lakh. . . . (Interruptions)

I am reading the reply :

"The reasons for returning the loan applications by the banks, *inter alia*, include (i) income of borrower exceeding the prescribed limit under the scheme;"

I am talking about the ceiling on the income which entitles a borrower to get this loan.

SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN : It is Rs. 24,000 per annum. It is the Department of Small Scale Industries and not the Banks which has laid down that ceiling. The feelings of the hon. Member will be conveyed to that Department.

SHRI MURLI DEORA : Will you increase that or not? . . . (Interruptions) Have you understood my question? I am not talking about the amount of loan to be given. I am saying, "What is the ceiling on the income per year?"

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) : The ceiling for the family to which the beneficiary belongs or the ceiling on his own income is Rs. 24,000 per annum. The hon. Members know it. The scheme is administered by the Department of Small Scale Industries which is looked after by my colleague. We are concerned with the banking part.

SHRI MURLI DEORA : The guidelines are given by your Ministry.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA : Shri Murli Deora has talked about the ceiling. I would only like to mention to the House that this is meant for the poorest of the poor. This is not huge enough. This is a loan amount which is limited to only Rs. 1 lakh per project. As our surveys have shown, the maximum income from the scheme is around Rs. 2,000 per month. It means that it matches with the ceiling that we have put. This is a very serious suggestion which might impinge on the nature of the scheme. We have noted the suggestion. We will refer it to the Ministry of Industry which looks after this.

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY : Because the rupee value has gone down, you might increase it.

SHRI P.S. GADHAVI : Sir, I would like to know about the targets fixed for the employment to be given. The present target is much less than the number of real unemployed youths. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether there is any scheme to increase the target.

For instance, in the State of Gujarat, the target for giving employment through this scheme for the year 1995-96 was about 8,500. But the number of unemployed youths are much more. Thus, it is an insufficient scheme. It does not serve the purpose for which it has been meant. I would like to know whether there is any plan to increase the number or not.

Secondly, the applications for loan are rejected by the banks on trivial grounds like "the proposed schemes are not viable or are not bankable". An unemployed youth comes for a loan of Rs. 20,000. Where is the question of a scheme being viable and non-bankable? The applications are rejected on such grounds. I would like to know whether the Government is going to improve upon this situation or not.

SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN : Sir, regarding the targets there is a uniformity in the sponsorship.

On the question of applications being rejected on trivial grounds, I would like to submit that this scheme is meant for the poorest of the poor. But if there are some such cases where it has been rejected on trivial grounds, it would be proper for me to inquire into such cases.

SHRI MOHAN SINGH : Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is an important question relating to solve the problem of unemployment among poor people of the country. Some new difficulties have been experienced in implementation of this scheme. I would like to suggest that hon. Minister should convene a meeting of MPs and officials to discuss these problems and orders issued and rules framed for it should be changed accordingly.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Mohan Singh, please ask your supplementary. Many Members are interested to ask their supplementaries on this question.

[Translation]

SHRI MOHAN SINGH : I would like to raise a question relating to it. The loan for educated unemployed youth is sanctioned by the District Industry Centre which also consists of the representatives of banks. But banks delay in releasing the loan when this application is referred to them. Whether the hon. Minister will issue instructions to the banks that loan amount should be released within a stipulated period like within one month or so, after selection of a candidate by the selection committee. Alongwith it, I would like to say that hon. Minister had made an announcement that farmers would not be arrested for recovery of agricultural loans. In the same way hon. Minister would give an assurance here that unemployed youths would not be arrested for recovery of loans given under PMRY.

[English]

SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN : Sir, regarding the time limit, I would like to submit that there is a definite time limit for sanctioning the loans. For a loan amount of upto Rs. 25,000, the time limit is a fortnight.

SHRI MOHAN SINGH : It does not happen like that . . . (Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI RAJO SINGH : Mr. Speaker, Sir they do not get loan without greasing the palms of officers.

[English]

SHRI SUNIL KHAN : The poor people are not getting the loan . . . (Interruptions)

SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN : I would like to request the hon. Members that if there are any cases where there has been an inordinate delay in sanctioning the loan, they could inform me about those cases.

SHRI MOHAN SINGH : There are several cases. Every day they are coming to us . . . (Interruptions)

SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN : Sir, I understand the feeling of the hon. Members . . . (Interruptions) I am not denying the claims of the hon. Members.

MR. SPEAKER : Mr. Minister, you are expected to give a reply to this.

SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN : Yes, Sir. I am giving the reply.

Sir, there is a time limit for sanctioning the loans. A loan amount of Rs. 25,000 has to be sanctioned within a fortnight. These guidelines have been prescribed by the Reserve Bank of India. If there has been an inordinate delay somewhere, that should be rectified and that will be rectified.

SHRI KONIJETI ROSAIAH : Just like PMRY, some of the States have taken up more or less similar schemes by changing the name. For instance, there is a Chief Minister Employment Youth Programme or something like that. May I know from the Minister whether the funds provided under PMRY are utilized by the States under these newly named schemes or are they separate schemes altogether? My apprehension is that the rural development funds are being diverted to a programme named as *Janma Bhoomi* in Andhra Pradesh. Similarly, PMRY funds are also being diverted to the Chief Minister Employment Assurance Scheme. May I know from the Minister, whether it is a separate scheme?

SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN : The PMRY scheme was started specifically for the unemployed youth . . . (Interruptions) The funds allocated under PMRY scheme can not be diverted to other schemes by simply changing its name. The Prime Minister Rozgar Yojana is specifically for the unemployed youths. The hon. Member is confusing . . . (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Let him complete Shri Rosaiah.

SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN : I would request the hon. Member not to confuse these schemes with PMRY. PMRY is a special scheme which has nothing to do with the State funds or the State schemes. The State schemes are primarily funded by the States whereas in the case of PMRY, it is the Government of India who makes the allocation. There is a definite distinction between the two. The PMRY funds cannot be diverted to any other scheme.

SHRI KONIJETI ROSAIAH : I did not get my answer . . . (Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRIMATI BHAVNA DEVRAJBHAI CHIKHALIA : Mr. Speaker, Sir unemployment is the biggest problem of our country. In his reply the hon. Minister has stated that district level coordinators of banks have been asked to inquire into irregularities in matters relating to sanction and disbursement of loans. I would like to know number of such cases of irregularities and the names of states where such irregularities have taken place. Whether any inquiry has been conducted in this regard. If so, the number of unemployed youths given employment under the Prime Minister Rojgar Yojana.

[English]

SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN : There is a definite time limit under these schemes. For instance for a loan up to Rs. 25,000, the time limit is fortnight and for a loan of more than Rs. 25,000 the time limit is eight to nine weeks. I do not say that there is no delay. There are 550 such cases with RBI in which there are delays or other complaints. There is a need to do the monitoring. We are monitoring it so as to improve the situation.

[Translation]

DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD : Mr. speaker, Sir, I thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak. Earlier there was a provision to select 200 persons if the Government loan was to be given to 100 persons under the PMRY. I can't say about other place but in Madhubani names of 200 persons were sent to the banks if the Government wanted to give loan to 100 persons. Then bank managers used to sanction loan to only those persons who were able to grease their palms. Now this number has been reduced to 150. Now 150 names are recommended for giving loans to just 100 persons. I would like to suggest that this provision should be withdrawn. Only 100 persons should be selected by the Government if it wants to provide loan to 100 persons. When I inquired about it, I was told that officials give additional names to achieve the target. I would suggest that a waiting-list should be prepared for it. . . . (Interruptions) I would like to know as to whether this target would be changed and 100 names would be recommended for disbursement of loan to 100 persons. I would request Sinhaji to give clear reply to this question as the reply given earlier is ambiguous.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have figures with regard to achievement of this scheme with me since its inception. According to these figures in 1995-96 target achievement was 81.14 percent in 1996-97 67.90 percent and in 1997-98 69.64 percent.

DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD : Mr. Speaker, Sir, my question is different.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA : I understand your question. Please have patience for one minute. Hon. Member has given suggestion that only 100 application should be selected for giving loan to 100 persons.

DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD : You should sanction only that much applications.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA : More applications are accepted because some applications of loans are rejected due to some reasons specified in guidelines issued in this regard.

DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD : I am talking about the procedure after the selection of applicants.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA : It is not possible to accept this suggestion at the time of receiving applications. . . . (Interruptions)

DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD : A list of 150 persons is given to banks for providing loan to just 100 persons. . . . (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : This is not a discussion.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD : Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is an important question.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA : It is essential to accept more applications because in some cases beneficiaries themselves refused to take loan.

DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD : You can prepare a waiting-list for it. . . . (Interruptions) You can leave it to discretion of the bank manager. . . . (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Dr. Shakeel Ahmad, it is not good to disturb the hon. Minister please take your seat.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA : I am not in favour of accepting this suggestion. . . . (Interruptions)

SHRI MOHAN SINGH : Mr. Speaker, Sir, Half-an-Hour discussion should be held on this issue. . . . (Interruptions)

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA : Why are you asking for a Half-an-Hour discussion on it, when I am ready to answer all the questions. . . . (Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : We want to have Half-an-Hour Discussion on this. (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER : If the time permits, I will allow Half-an-Hour Discussion. . . . (*Interruptions*)

[Translation]

Inadequate Infrastructural Facilities

+

*343. SHRI HARI KEWAL PRASAD :

SHRI DAROGA PRASAD SAROJ :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) Whether due to inadequate infrastructural facilities serious problems are coming in the way of Indian economy;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken;

(c) whether the Government have constituted any Expert Committee on infrastructural sector;

(d) if so, the recommendations of the Committee;

(e) the details of policies, schemes and programmes formulated on the recommendations of the said Committee; and

(f) the role given to the indigenous and foreign investors by the Government for the development of infrastructural facilities in the country ?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) : (a) to (f) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) The availability of adequate and high quality infrastructure facilities provides the essential enabling environment for rapid overall development. Recognizing the growing need for sound infrastructure facilities and to meet the increasing demand for quality infrastructure, the Government has striven to design policies to encourage greater private provision of infrastructure services in ports, roads, power, telecommunications, urban infrastructure etc. to supplement public investment. A series of tax incentives and other concessions have been announced and regulations and procedures have been considerably simplified to facilitate investment in infrastructure services.

(c) and (d) The Government constituted the Expert Group on the Commercialisation of Infrastructure Projects in October 1994 to review the existing legal framework in infrastructure sector, to facilitate public-private-partnerships in financing of infrastructure projects and make recommendations for development of the capital market for

intermediating long term savings to infrastructure investment. The Expert Group submitted its Report in June 1996. The Report has focussed on the need for large investments in infrastructure and called for private participation to supplement public investment. The Expert Group has suggested policy reforms in select key sectors viz. urban infrastructure, industrial parks, power, ports, roads and telecommunication.

(e) Some of the recommendations of the Expert Group have already been implemented. These include the creation of the Infrastructure Development Finance Company, abolition of tax on dividends in the hands of the shareholder, abolition of CRR and SLR on inter-bank borrowings, permission to FIs to participate in the debt market, establishment of Telecom Regulatory Authority of India and Tariff Authority for Major Ports. The President has on 2nd July 1998 given assent to the Electricity Regulatory Commission Bill.

(f) Participation of both Indian and foreign players has been encouraged by a variety of measures including permission for private participation in areas hitherto reserved for the public sector, delicensing of coal, lignite and petroleum products and permitting automatic foreign equity participation upto 74% in key infrastructure areas including mining services, electricity generation and transmission, non-conventional energy and land and water transport. Projects coming under the purview of infrastructure are being given priority clearances by FIPB and upto 100% foreign equity is permissible in power, oil exploration and road construction on a Build-Operate-Transfer basis. Besides, infrastructure projects are eligible to avail of fiscal incentives such as tax holidays and concessional duties.

[Translation]

SHRI HARI KEWAL PRASAD : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the details which Hon. Minister have laid on Table of the House says that the Expert Group which was constituted in 1994 gave its report in June, 1996. I want to know the suggestions given on various points in that report. Are these on paper only or some action is being taken to implement them? You have conceded that those suggestions are being implemented. I want to know from the hon'ble Minister whether these are being implemented or these are still on paper only. Secondly, how many suggestions were given by the Expert Group?

Whether any time limit has been fixed by the Group so that these can be implemented within that period.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, in (e) part of the question, I have said in clear words as to what recommendations we have implemented. This is available with Hon. Member. But I would like to say that many of the suggestions given by the Group in 1996 have been

implemented by previous government as well as by this government. About external commercial borrowings we have told the companies, and to the promoters that :

[English]

There are 50 million dollars finance equity in substitute joint ventures. External commercial borrowings permitted to be utilized in rupee expenditure in infrastructure areas. Infrastructure Development Finance Company has tied up its equity capital. Telecom Regulatory Authority of India has been set up. Capital base of National Highway Authority has been improved. Policy on toll structure for national highways and other related issues has been announced. Tariff Authority for Major Ports has been set up. And the Presidential assent on the recently passed Electricity Regulatory Commission Bill has been secured.

[Translation]

Therefore, it is not that no action has been taken on the recommendations of the group. We have thought seriously on those recommendations and have taken action.

SHRI HARI KEWAL PRASAD : Hon'ble Minister has said the Government has encouraged investment on basic infrastructural facilities. I want to know as to whether you have made any arrangements to deal with the sanctions imposed by U.S.A. and many other countries after the nuclear explosions so that investment takes place?

Other countries after the nuclear explosions you have.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, as far as question of sanctions after nuclear explosion are concerned, whole House knows that only U.S.A. has imposed sanctions. No other country has imposed sanctions on this country and the House very well knows as to what is happening in regard to the sanctions. Through you, I assure the House that not even a single infrastructure project which is to be established in this country would be left due to ban and impact of ban would have no effect over them. We will ensure that every infrastructure project gets completed in this country. . . . (Interruptions)

SHRI LALU PRASAD : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am not asking any question. I am on a point of order.

MR. SPEAKER : This is Question-Hour. In this, only questions are asked.

SHRI LALU PRASAD : Three months have passed but it is not yet known as to who will sit where because till now, seat allotment has not been made. . . . (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : This is question hour. Please sit down.

SHRI DAROGA PRASAD SAROJ : Respected Sir, through you, I would like to say to the hon'ble Minister that infrastructural facilities are those which are needed for development of the country as well as are necessary for providing facilities to the citizens. Whenever infrastructural facilities are demanded from the government, answer come that sufficient resources are not available. Fact is that industrialist do not return the loans of the banks. Many business establishments are yet to pay excise duty arrears. People do not pay income tax. If the amount due is calculated that will come in crores of rupees. Due to corruption we fail to achieve our revenue targets.

Sir, I want to know as to what is the definition of infrastructural facility. You talk of removing unemployment and corruption. I want to ask you as to how these will be removed. Do you intend to remove unemployment and poverty. When banks give loans, question has just been raised. . . . (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Prasad, you put your supplementary.

[Translation]

SHRI DAROGA PRASAD SAROJ : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to know what arrangements have been made for infrastructural facilities.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, actually the problem is that today the hon'ble Member has mixed question number one and question number two and has asked one joint question. Although question number one is already over, even then I would like to inform him that government is constantly making efforts to get desired revenue through different taxes and for this as I have earlier said, necessary steps are being taken. Of course the government provides funds for different projects but we have provided facilities to private sector also to come forward to invest specially in infrastructure and may implement their projects. However, keeping in mind the infrastructure needed for this country, the resources we provide every year for this sector are not sufficient, even though constant efforts are being made to bring those resources together and use them in right manner for basic infrastructure. We are working in that direction.

SHRI DAROGA PRASAD SAROJ : What are its appropriate standards?

[English]

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM : I congratulate the Finance Minister for affirming the intention of the Government that it fully supports the infrastructure reports and that it is serious about implementing them.

I also congratulate him for taking a number of steps in the Finance Bill to implement a few more recommendations of the Committee. However, I wish to draw his attention to an amendment that he has proposed to Section 10(23g) in the Finance Bill. Has his attention been drawn to that? Is he aware of the controversy that he has kicked off by that amendment? I am sure that the consequences were unintended but the consequences are quite devastating. But he has to ask his colleagues on his right and left who will tell him how the industry is seriously opposed to the unintended consequences of the amendment which has been introduced without considerable thought. I want the Minister of Finance to assure this House as well as his colleagues to his left and right that he is aware of the controversy and that he will resolve it when the Finance Bill is moved for adoption.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA : I am grateful to him for having congratulated me for the initiatives that we have taken in this Budget especially on the infrastructure front and if I could go a little beyond the question, I would also like to say that apart from the initiatives that we have taken in the Finance Bill to promote infrastructure, we have increased the allocation for infrastructure by a whopping 35 per cent in this Budget, of which, I am sure, that the hon. Member is aware. It was 2.7 per cent in the Revised Estimates of last year which we have raised to 35.1 per cent in the Budget Estimates of this year. It has been a very depressed expenditure in the previous year.

About this 10(23)(g) to which the hon. Member has drawn my attention, my colleagues sitting on my left and right have also drawn my attention to it. Other people have also drawn my attention to it. Those representations are under my consideration and when we discuss the Finance Bill I shall come up with proper responses.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM : Amendments.

SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH : Since 1991, all the Governments have been trying to lure the private investment in infrastructure, both foreign and domestic. They are given so many legal benefits also. But still the inflow of the investment in this area is not very much encouraging. I would like to know actually for how many projects the offer has been reached to the Ministry of Finance, waiting for clearance and how much fund is involved.

Secondly, the cost escalation is a major problem in the way of fast construction of our infrastructural build up. What steps the Government wants to take so that there is a time bound programme to complete the construction work within a fixed time? Again, responsibility should also be fixed to complete the projects within the time. So, these are the two questions.

The hon. Minister has mentioned about America's sanction. But Japan has refused to pay certain funds relating to certain infrastructural projects. I would like to know whether the Government will clarify the position.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA : I will take up the last part of the question first. On Japan, we have a separate question in the list on Japan's 'OECD' and we could discuss it when we come to that question. The approval for infrastructural projects is dispersed over a range of Ministries in the Government of India, and various Ministries of the Government of India grant their own approvals. Now, recently, as the hon. Member would be aware, we have taken an important initiative and we have given this authority to the State Governments, for instance, to clear power projects including foreign participation up to Rs. 1,500 crore. So, such initiatives and such decentralisation of authority is taking place continuously so that decisions are not delayed.

This brings me to the next part of his question that often it has been our experience that we take such a long time in taking decisions that the project cost of a large project goes completely haywire even during the stage of sanction. Therefore, we are continuously streamlining the procedure in order to ensure that projects are sanctioned in time.

I will only mention, Sir, taking this House into confidence, about the so-called fast track power projects. Now, my colleague, the Minister of Power, has repeatedly said that the fast track power projects are a shame because they have been pending for five years. I would like to tell the House, Sir, through you, that recently I took a meeting where I invited the representatives of the State Governments, the IPPs, and the various other Ministries concerned. We all sat down to make sure that the pending issues were sorted out across the table and that the projects got off the ground immediately. It has already been announced that we shall give clearances, counter guarantees to all these power projects, for instance, before the end of this month. Now, this is the manner in which we are proceeding. Every time a case comes up where a large overrun has taken place either in terms of time or cost, that is something where we are insisting that responsibility must be fixed and the guilty must be taken to task so that project delays are cut to the minimum.

[Translation]

SHRI BHAJAN LAL : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the industries of our country are in a bad shape due to their policies. No large scale industry has been set up in the country during last two years and the existing industries are also on the verge of closure. They are in a bad shape. On one hand, infrastructure is in bad condition. . .(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : No please don't do that.

(Interruptions)

SHRI BHAJAN LAL : I know it and we have done it. You have brought us to ruin, whereas we have done constructive work. I would like to draw your attention to the position regarding power and roads in the country. Besides, you may take the instance of any country throughout the world whether it is U.S.A. or U.K., they impose anti-dumping duty to protect their own industries whereas such a safeguard is not available in our country. The Government keeps on raising the slogan of Swadeshi and is in favour of promoting indigenous products. Where is that spirit of promoting 'Swadeshi' now? . . . *(Interruptions)* The foreign companies are being promoted whereas the companies of our country are in a pitiable condition. Hence I would like to know from Hon'ble Minister as to whether he will impose anti-dumping duty and improve the infrastructure? Proper arrangements should be made to improve the position regarding power and roads. As you are aware that the economy of our country depends heavily on two sectors industry and agriculture. The agricultural sector will be discussed later on, however, as regards the industrial sector, I would like to ask as to whether anti-dumping duty will be imposed and infrastructure will be improved or not?

MR. SPEAKER : Bhajan Lal Ji, please put your supplementary question.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, Hon'ble Member has drawn the attention of the House towards a very serious issue and my esteemed friend and predecessor Finance Minister, Shri Chidambaram might have hesitated in saying so, because they were in power with the support of Hon'ble Member, but I do not feel slightest of hesitation in saying that so far as the state of affairs pointed out by Bhajan Lal Ji is concerned, the trend of deterioration in the industrial sector and in the infrastructure had started during the last year of Congress rule. The phase of economic recession which began due to their policies, strengthened its grip in the two year term of Shri Chidambaram. Hence, the Government has made several provisions in this year's budget so that the industrial sector and especially the infrastructure gets impetus. I would like to assure the House that we will definitely accelerate the economy.

I am a bit surprised that Bhajan Lal Ji has raised this question, because he is a very senior Member and has been a Cabinet Minister also. Although the issue of anti-dumping provisions is not linked with this question still I would like to submit that anti-dumping provisions exist in our country as well and recently, there have been many such cases in which anti-dumping duty has been imposed.

Whenever we feel that the cost of an imported item is below the cost of production, we impose anti-dumping duty on it.

SHRI LALU PRASAD : Sir, I would like to know from Hon'ble Minister. I won't make a speech but I have a question for him.

Sir, with regard to the infrastructural facilities like power, water and roads, I would like to know from the Hon'ble Minister whether the new Government has framed any such policy under which it proposes to set up power plants at the pitheads of the coalpits in the coal producing states? In this way, coal will be produced and power could be supplied to other states through National Grid. Has this point been taken into consideration or not? Second question is related to this very point that Hon'ble Minister hails from Hazaribagh.

The mines in Jharia, Dhanbad and Raniganj have been smouldering for years together. The precious property of the country i.e. coal is burning to ashes therein. Same is the case of methane, which is a pure cooking gas. When the Government is asking the State Governments to set up power plant, whether it proposes to invite foreign companies also to set up power plants there.

MR. SPEAKER : Laluji, you are giving a speech. Please put your supplementary.

SHRI LALU PRASAD : I am not giving a speech. I am simply guiding the Hon'ble Minister.

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA) : Lalu ji, this is not a public meeting, this is Lok Sabha.

SHRI LALU PRASAD : I am aware of that. I was elected to this House in 1972 much earlier than you. There is a Foreign Investment Promotion Board in the Centre, however it is very rare that a project is cleared by it. The projects are rejected outright and that is why the states are suffering. Which measures are proposed to be taken to promote the states after doing away with the Foreign Investment Promotion Board and what steps are being taken to develop infrastructure to deal with the fire smouldering in Jharia, Dhanbad and Raniganj?

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, Laluji has made a very intelligent comment in part (a) of his supplementary question. The House should accept this suggestion. He asked as to whether the Government proposes to set up power plant at coal pitheads or not. I would like to assure the Hon'ble Member that Government is considering it quite seriously and we have decided upon this policy.

[English]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : The Standing Committee on Energy has already recommended.

[Translation]

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA : All right. They have also recommended it. All wise persons think alike.

SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA : So do you believe that Laluji belongs to the same category as you?

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA : I consider Laluji to be a very intelligent person. He has given very good suggestions.

SHRI LALU PRASAD : I was not that intelligent earlier. Now I have learnt from people.

SHRIMATI BHAVNA DEVRAJBHAI CHIKHALIA : That is why Rabri Devi has been made the Chief Minister of Bihar.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA : He has also stated that he is guiding me. I have been working under his guidance and will do so in future as well. Though I won't give Chiefministership to my wife. . . . (Interruptions) I would like to submit that this is our policy and we have taken several measures to implement this policy. One of the measures relates to the amount owed by State Electricity Boards to the N.T.P.C. and Coal India, it is proposed to utilise the amount of ten thousand crore rupees and borrow from the market in order to enable these undertakings to set up such projects at the earliest. He has also mentioned that the mines in Jharia, Raniganj and Dhanbad are smouldering. So far as I can remember, this issue was discussed in detail by the Minister of State of the Ministry of coal in this House. This matter is related to the Ministry of Coal. Laluji is well aware of what is going on there. Concern has been expressed in this regard. The steps that are required to be taken, are being taken. The methane is being consumed by fire not from today, this process has been going on not for the last three months but for years rather decades. It is important to control the fire and the present Government will take necessary steps in this regard.

[English]

I.T. Exemption to Voluntary Organisations

*344. SHRI C. GOPAL : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the number of voluntary organisations which got the Income Tax exemption through the National Committee for Promotion of Social and Economic Welfare during 1997-98;

(b) the State wise details thereof;

(c) the mechanism adopted by the Government to review the utilisation of funds by such organisations;

(d) whether any official from the Social Justice and Empowerment Ministry is associated with the National Committee for Promotion of Social and Economic Welfare for the selection of voluntary organisations; and

(e) if so the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) The number of voluntary organisations approved by the Central Government on the recommendations of the National Committee for Promotion of Social and Economic Welfare during the financial year 1997-98 is 100.

(b) The State wise details thereof are as under :

States	Number
Assam	2
Andhra Pradesh	5
Bihar	1
Chandigarh	1
Delhi	4
Gujarat	30
Kerala	1
Karnataka	7
Manipur	3
Madhya Pradesh	1
Maharashtra	26
Nagaland	2
Rajasthan	2
Tamil Nadu	7
Uttar Pradesh	2
West Bengal	6
	100

(c) The approved institutions are required to maintain separate audited accounts in respect of approved projects and furnish status report every six months to the National Committee. The officials of the Secretariat also undertake on the spot verification in random cases.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

SHRI C. GOPAL : Mr. Speaker, Sir, during the year 1997-98, there were 100 voluntary organisations who have got the approval of the Central Government based on the recommendations of the National Committee for Promotion of Social and Economic Welfare. The hon. Minister has given a detailed Statewise statement. We find that in Gujarat, there are 30 voluntary organisations and in Maharashtra, there are 26 voluntary organisations. In other States, there are very few voluntary organisations which have got this approval, and in some other States there is none. These voluntary organisations are rendering service for the poor people, particularly, for those people who are below the poverty line. Therefore, I would like to know from the hon. Minister, through you, Sir, whether these organisations have been started on the recommendations of the National Committee. I would also like to know what is the National Committee, how it is appointed, how many Members are there, and whether there is a Chairman.

SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN : Sir, this Committee is appointed by the Central Government through the Finance Minister. This Committee comprises of 14 Members. They are appointed by the Central Government from amongst persons of eminence in public life and this Committee is headed by Justice Shri R.S. Pathak, former Chief Justice of India. If you want, I can read out the names of other Members also.

MR. SPEAKER : No; it is not necessary.

SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN : As far as the question as to why the number of voluntary organisations is more in Gujarat and Maharashtra is concerned, there is more money in Gujarat and Maharashtra. There are more tax payers and more volunteers who offer money. But the other States are poor. That is the answer.

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Gopal, please keep in mind that this question relates to income tax exemption to voluntary organisations.

SHRI C. GOPAL : Yes, Sir.

Sir, people have come voluntarily, and they are running these institutions. I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to how much amount these 100 voluntary organisations have deposited and how much exemption is given by way of income tax.

SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN : Sir, the total cost of the projects is Rs. 1,94,495 crore. Till 31st March, 1998, the amount of donations received was Rs. 172 crore.

[Translation]

SHRI MOTILAL VORA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would also like to know from Hon. Minister the names of such states which have been left out in the year 1997-98 and whose

applications have been turned down besides the names of the states he has already mentioned as having 100 such organisations which have been given exemption in income tax in the year 1997-98?

[English]

SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN : Sir, I need a separate notice for this. But the number recommended by the committee is 578.

SHRI MOTILAL VORA : Sir, the hon. Minister has given a list of 100 organisations mentioning the names of many States. But I wanted to know from the hon. Minister that how many other States were left out and why they were not considered.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA : Sir, in 1997-98, we received a total of 166 applications, out of which, the National Committee recommended 116 applications to the Ministry of Finance for sanction and a certain amount of money involved in that, was sanctioned. So, the number of applications which were not recommended was 50.

[Translation]

SHRI VIRENDRA SINGH : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to know from the Hon'ble Finance Minister about the services being rendered by the voluntary organisations receiving grant from the concerned committee. I think that the Ministry of Finance would surely have the relevant information. The people involved in 'save the childhood' movement in my parliamentary constituency Mirzapur Bhadohi are making false propaganda in other countries to destroy the carpet industry. They take grants from the Finance Ministry and also from other countries by constituting voluntary organisation in the name of 'save the childhood' movement . . . (Interruptions) Sir, I am stating the facts. This question is related to it. I would like to know from the government as to how much money is received by this voluntary organisation from other countries and whether the grant they get from our country is utilized properly or not?

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, Government have full information in this regard. I would like to submit through you that the Government does not provide any grant under this scheme. There are many charitable trusts and other organisations including public sector undertakings which want to do social service. They use their own money or the money offered by others for social welfare programmes. The provision under the Income Tax Act is that the money used in such type of activities is exempted from income tax. Just now, the Minister of State has given you the relevant data. A committee comprising of many eminent persons and headed by the former Chief Justice of India has been constituted.

12.00 hrs.

The objective of this committee is to scrutinise the validity of the voluntary organisations so that exemption is not given to any fake organisation. The recommendations made by this committee are considered by the Finance Ministry and a decision is taken thereafter. Hence the chances of misutilisation of the funds are negligible.

SHRI VIRENDRA SINGH : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I had asked about the money received by them from other countries. Moreover, whether the government is aware that these voluntary organisations are being run by the relatives of the members of the committee.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA : Very stringent laws have been framed regarding the members of this committee. As far as foreign money is concerned, we all know that separate laws have been framed in this regard. The Ministry of Home Affairs keeps an eye on all those voluntary organisation which are using foreign money for their activities.

SHRI VIRENDRA SINGH : What do you have to say about collective responsibility?

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA : I am not denying collective responsibility. I am saying that the Ministry of Home Affairs keeps a watch over it.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Modernisation of Textile Industry

*345. **SHRI CHAMAN LAL GUPTA :**
SHRI T. GOVINDAN :

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) whether textile industry is facing problem because of outdated technologies;

(b) if so, the extent to which it has affected the overall functioning of the textile industry and its impact on the export of Indian textiles;

(c) whether the Union Government propose to provide financial assistance to the textile mills for modernisation;

(d) if so, the name of agencies who provide the loans; and

(e) whether there is any plan under consideration of the Government to declare Kathua as textile city in J & K?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RANA) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. While the spinning sector has, by and large, taken steps to modernise itself, the

weaving and processing sectors lag behind technologically. Composite mills have not been performing well. The weaving sector and processing & finishing sectors suffer from lack of modernisation. While it is difficult to quantify the impact of lack of technological upgradation on the export of Indian textiles, it is a fact that India has not been able to increase its share in the global market for textiles and clothing beyond 3% in recent years.

(c) and (d) A proposal is under formulation to facilitate modernisation, through technological upgradation, of the textile industry. The intended objective is to improve production and productivity of the Indian textile industry to make it more competitive. It is proposed to make available loans with interest incentive to identified sectors of the textile industry. Eligible units would be able to avail of such credit from All India Financial Institutions and Commercial Banks. Details of the Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme in this regard for the textiles and jute industries are being worked out.

(e) No such plan is under the consideration with the Ministry of Textiles.

Financial Assistance for Development of Tourism

*346. **SHRI BHARTRAHARI MAHTAB :** Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) the number of proposals/projects submitted by the Eastern and North-Eastern States, particularly by the Orissa Government for financial assistance for development of tourist spots, State-wise and project-wise;

(b) the details of assistance extended, project-wise;

(c) whether the Union Government have received any proposal from the Government of Orissa seeking Japanese aid for development of tourism infrastructure in Orissa; and

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

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA) :

(a) The projects prioritised in consultation with State Governments and sanctioned by the Ministry of Tourism for the development of tourism in Eastern and North Eastern States during 1997-98 are as given below :

(Rs. in Lakhs)				
S. No.	State	No. of projects Prioritised	No. of projects sanctioned	Amount sanctioned
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Assam	14	12	288.88
2.	Arunachal Pr.	9	9	271.00

1	2	3	4	5
3.	Manipur	6	5	186.11
4.	Meghalaya	8	5	85.70
5.	Mizoram	7	6	142.45
6.	Nagaland	5	4	116.90
7.	Tripura	9	8	126.68
8.	Bihar	12	11	233.07
9.	Sikkim	19	10	65.20
10.	Orissa	32	28	557.05
11.	West Bengal	11	6	157.76
12.	Andaman & Nicobar Island	4	1	60.00

(b) The details of project-wise assistance extended to Orissa during 1997-98 were as given below :

(Rs. In Lakhs)

S. No.	Project	Amount Sanctioned
1	2	3
1.	Freedom fighter's Memorial-cum-Tourist complex at Bari in Jaipur	49.99
2.	Tourist Centre, Hari Shankar, Bolangiri, Orissa	20.00
3.	Tourist Centre at Kherigar Road	20.00
4.	Tourist Reception Centre, Balasore	40.00
5.	Tourist Centre Belshandi	20.00
6.	Tourist Reception Centre Ratnagiri	75.00
7.	Public convenience at Jaipur	13.03
8.	Public conveniences at Nandan Kanan	15.00
9.	Public conveniences at Dhoulagiri	15.00
10.	Public conveniences at Kali Jan Island	13.76
11.	Public conveniences at Gopal Pur on sea	13.12
12.	Tourist Reception Centre at Lalitagiri	25.00
13.	Tourist Reception Centre at Mahendragiri	25.00
14.	Tourist Centre at Rani Pur Jharial	20.00
15.	Tourist Reception Centre Udaigiri	25.00
16.	Tourist Reception Centre Baripada	40.00
17.	Development of Khurda Fort as Historical Park	33.33

1	2	3
18.	Refurbishment of Kichakeshwari Temple at Khiching	3.30
19.	Refurbishment of Binod Bihari Temple and beautification of Temple complex at Raghunathpur	10.00
20.	Refurbishment of Chandramouli Temple at Pattamundai of Kendrapara, Orissa	3.30
21.	Refurbishment of Grameshwar Mahadev Temple Belar, Nuagaon	3.30
22.	Refurbishment of Jagannath Temple, Derabis	16.60
23.	Refurbishment of Dadhibamana Temple and beautification of Temple complex at Aureshwar	3.30
24.	Refurbishment of Baldev Jew Temple at Kendrapara	16.66
25.	Refurbishment of Mahabinayak Temple at Chandikhol	16.66
26.	Rath Yatra	4.00
27.	Beach festival	5.00
28.	Konark dance festival	5.00
Total		557.05

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The project proposal was submitted for assistance to Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund. However, the OECF has not agreed to provide assistance to the project.

[Translation]

Withdrawal of Sanctions by World Bank

*347. SHRI PANKAJ CHOURDHRY :
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the World Bank has withdrawn the sanctions imposed earlier and decided to provide loans to India on humanitarian grounds;

(b) if so, the details thereof?

(c) the amount of loan likely to be received from World Bank as a result thereof; and

(d) the projects likely to be started by this loan?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) : (a) The World Bank has not informed Government

of India regarding imposition or withdrawal of sanctions by them. However, in response to requests from several Executive Directors, the World Bank on May 26 and June 2, 1998 postponed the consideration of five proposed operations in India.

(b) and (c) Consideration of the following projects were deferred on May 26 and June 2, 1998.

- (i) The Power Grid II Project (US\$ 450 million).
- (ii) Renewable Energy II Project (US\$ 130 million).
- (iii) Haryana State Highway Project (US\$ 275 million).
- (iv) U.P. Diversified Agriculture Support Project (US\$ 130 million).
- (v) Orissa Health Systems Development Project (US\$ 76.4 million).

Subsequently, out of the above five, Serial No. (iv) and (v) have been approved on July 1, 1998.

In addition, the World Bank has also approved following loans as per schedule :

- (i) Andhra Pradesh Economic Restructuring Project (US\$ 543.2 million) on June 25, 1998.
- (ii) Women and Child Development Project (US\$ 300 million) on July 1, 1998.

(d) The work on all the approved projects mentioned above is expected to begin in the current financial year.

Employment Generation Programmes of KVIC

*348. SHRI RAMTAHAL CHAUDHARY :
SHRI P.R. KYNDIAH :

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) the names of the districts where the Employment Generation Programmes of Khadi and Village Industries Commission are being implemented;

(b) the criteria fixed for adopting the districts under the said programme by KVIC;

(c) whether there is any proposal to include more districts under this programme during the current year;

(d) if so, the details thereof, State-wise; and

(e) the quantum of funds released by KVIC to NGOs/ Artisan Co-operatives etc. during the last year for promotion of Cottage Industry in the country, particularly in Meghalaya?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT) : (a) Details are attached as Statement.

(b) Districts for implementing the employment generation programme were selected taking into consideration the backwardness, availability of institutions and infrastructure facilities for the development of Khadi and Village Industries in the Districts.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) During the Financial year 1997-98, KVIC disbursed an amount of Rs. 348.11 crores from its budgetary resources and Rs. 71.14 crores from the line of credit sanctioned by the Consortium of Banks to the KVIC. Against this, the disbursement made to Meghalaya was Rs. 77 lakhs out of the budgetary resources of KVIC.

Statement

List of 71 Selected Districts for Coverage Under the Rural Employment Generation Programme for Khadi and Village Industries

- I. Andhra Pradesh
 - 1. Kurnool
 - 2. Adilabad
 - 3. Mehboob Nagar
 - 4. Prakasam
 - 5. Karimnagar
 - 6. East Godavari
 - 7. Srikakulam
- II. Arunachal Pradesh
 - 8. Changlang
- III. Assam
 - 9. Marigaon
 - 10. Lakhimpur
- IV. Bihar
 - 11. Saharsa
 - 12. Godda
 - 13. Madhubani
 - 14. Gaya
- V. Gujarat
 - 15. Banaskantha
 - 16. Panchmahal
 - 17. Kutch

VI. Himachal Pradesh

- 18. Chamba
- 19. Kullu & Manali

VII. Haryana

- 20. Rewari-Ambala

VIII. Jammu & Kashmir

- 21. Anant Nag
- 22. Jammu

IX. Karnataka

- 23. Kolar
- 24. Raichur
- 25. Dharwad
- 26. Chitradurga

X. Kerala

- 27. Alleppey
- 28. Pathanamthitta
- 29. Thrissur
- 30. Kozikode-Wyanad

XI. Madhya Pradesh

- 31. Sarguja
- 32. Bhind
- 33. Guna
- 34. Raipur
- 35. Jhabua-Dhar
- 36. Betul

XII. Maharashtra

- 37. Chandrapur
- 38. Yavatmal
- 39. Raigarh-Ratnagiri
- 40. Beed
- 41. Nanded

XIII. Manipur

- 42. Imphal

XIV. Meghalaya

- 43. East Garo Hills
West Garo Hills
South Garo Hills

XV. Mizoram

- 44. Lunglei & Aizwal

XVI. Nagaland

- 45. Dimapur & Kohima

XVII. Orissa

- 46. Kalahandi
- 47. Phulbani-Koraput
- 48. Dhenkanal-Kendrapada

XVIII. Punjab

- 49. Hosiarpur

XIX. Rajasthan

- 50. Dausa
- 51. Tonk
- 52. Udaipur
- 53. Jaipur

X. Tripura

- 54. Tripura (West)

XXI. Tamil Nadu

- 55. Ramanathpuram
- 56. Tirunolveli
- 57. Dharampuri
- 58. North Arcot
- 59. South Arcot

XXII. Uttar Pradesh

- 60. Mau-Belia
- 61. Almora & Pithoragarh
- 62. Chameli & Utrakashi
- 63. Mathura
- 64. Shahjahanpur
- 65. Jhansi
- 66. Jaunpur

XXIII. West Bengal

- 67. Birbhum
- 68. North 24 Parganas &
South 24 Parganas
- 69. Malda
- 70. Nadia

XXIV. Sikkim

- 71. Sikkim

[English]

Indo-Japan Cooperation

*349. SHRI S.S. OWAISI : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have undertaken comprehensive review of Indo-Japan economic and cultural cooperation;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of major projects aided by Japan and progress achieved thereunder during 1997-98, project-wise;

(d) whether recent sanctions imposed by Japan have affected these projects; and

(e) if so, to what extent and the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) During 1997-98, the Government of Japan provided Official Development Assistance to India in the form of (i) soft loan, and (ii) grant assistance for major ongoing projects as per details given in the Statement attached.

(d) and (e) The Government of Japan have recently frozen loans and grants for new projects. These measures do not affect disbursement for ongoing loans and grants. The Government is closely watching the developments in this regard.

Statement

OECF Loan

S. No.	IDP No. and Name of the Project	Centre/State	Loan Amount in Yen Mil.	Disbursement during 1997-98 in Yen Mil.
1	2	3	4	5
1.	IDP-40 Teesta Canal HEP	West Bengal	8025	467.1
2.	IDP-42 Assam Gas Turbine Project	Centre	30000	338.2
3.	IDP-43 Srisaïlam Left Bank Power Station Phase-I	Andhra Pradesh	26101	3677.5
4.	IDP-52 Raichur Thermal Power Station Expansion Project	Karnataka	23142	221.9
5.	IDP-53 Ghatghar Pumped Storage Project	Maharashtra	11414	209.7
6.	IDP-54 Tourism Infrastructure Development Project	Centre/UP/Bihar	9244	277.4
7.	IDP-56 Upper Kolab Irrigation Project	Orissa	3769	377.8
8.	IDP-57 Upper Indravati Irrigation Project	Orissa	3744	565.4
9.	IDP-59 Mysore Paper Mills Modernisation and Ren. Project	Karnataka	2381	1183.5
10.	IDP-62 Basin Bridge Gas Turbine II	Tamil Nadu	11450	577.4
11.	IDP-63 Gandhar Gas Based Combined Cycle Power Project	Centre	13046	58.3
12.	IDP-65 Anpara Power Transmission System Project	Uttar Pradesh	19318	5087.2
13.	IDP-66 Power System Improvement and Small Hydro Project	Centre	24379	901.1
14.	IDP-72 Teesta Canal HEP II	West Bengal	6222	1012.2
15.	IDP-73 Indira Gandhi Afforestation	Rajasthan	7869	584.5

1	2	3	4	5
16.	IDP-74 Quality Control of Health	Centre	7964	156.2
17.	IDP-79 Urban City Water Supply Project	Centre	6788	602.5
18.	IDP-80 Afforestation Project in Aravalli Hills	Rajasthan	8095	1213.8
19.	IDP-81 NH-2 Improvement Project	Centre	4855	984.1
20.	IDP-82 Ajanta Ellcra Conservation & Tourism Dev. Project	Centre/Maharashtra	3745	441.7
21.	IDP-84 Yamuna Action Plan Project	Centre	17773	1741.6
22.	IDP-85 Srisailem Power Transmission System	Andhra Pradesh	3806	160.7
23.	IDP-86 Gandhar Gas Based Combined Cycle Power Project	Centre	19538	602.7
24.	IDP-87 Udyogmandal Ammonia Plant Replacement Project	Centre	24482	2596
25.	IDP-88 Anpara 'B' Thermal Power Project Stage V	Uttar Pradesh	17638	2861.5
26.	IDP-89 Bakreshwar Thermal Power Project	West Bengal	27069	12646.3
27.	IDP-90 Faridabad Thermal Power Station Project	Centre	23536	2991.3
28.	IDP-91 Bridge Across River Yamuna near Naini	Centre	10037	99.6
29.	IDP-92 Four laning of NH-5	Centre	11360	0
30.	IDP-94 Srisailem Left Bank Power Project II	Andhra Pradesh	22567	4814.7
31.	IDP-95 Srisailem Power Transmission System Project II	Andhra Pradesh	9546	328.5
32.	IDP-96 Assam Gas Turbine Power Station Transmission Project II	Centre	15821	1643.5
33.	IDP-97 Bakreshwar Thermal Power Unit 3 Extension Project	West Bengal	8659	2325.5
34.	IDP-98 Purulia Pumped Storage Project	West Bengal	20520	485.4
35.	IDP-99 Kothagudem 'A' Thermal Power Station Rehabilitation Project	Andhra Pradesh	5092	1323
36.	IDP-100 NH-5 Improvement Project II	Centre	5836	0
37.	IDP-101 NH-24 Improvement Project	Centre	4827	0
38.	IDP-102 Madras Sewerage Renovation & Functional Imp. Project	Tamilnadu	17098	214.8
39.	IDP-103 Lake Bhopal Conservation & Management Project	Madhya Pradesh	7055	340.8
40.	IDP-104 Rajasthan Forestry Development Project	Rajasthan	4219	866.8
41.	IDP-105 Industrial Pollution Control Project	West Bengal	1525	113
42.	IDP-106 ICICI-Industrial Pollution Control Programme	Centre	3000	177.8
43.	IDP-107 NHPC-Dhauliganga HEP	Centre	5665	838.4

1	2	3	4	5
44.	IDP-108 Anpara Power Transmission Project	Uttar Pradesh	12020	3416.5
45.	IDP-109 Bangalore Water Supply	Karnataka	28452	239.5
46.	IDP-110 Urban Water Supply & Sanitation Improvement Programme	Centre	8670	406
47.	IDP-111 Attapaddy Wasteland Development	Kerala	5112	21.9
48.	IDP-112 Gujarat Forestry Project	Gujarat	15760	3454.6
49.	IDP-113 Kurnool Cuddapah Canal Modernization Project	Andhra Pradesh	16049	0
50.	IDP-115 Pipavav Ship-breaking Development Project	Gujarat	7046	1771
51.	IDP-116 Northern India Transmission System Project	Centre	8497	0
52.	IDP-117 West Bengal Transmission System Project	West Bengal	11087	63.3
53.	IDP-118 Umiam Hydro Power Station Renovation Project	Meghalaya	1700	0
54.	IDP-119 Tuirial Hydro Electric Power Station Project	Centre	11695	0
55.	IDP-120 Simhadri Thermal Power Station Project	Centre	19817	0
56.	IDP-121 Delhi Mass Rapid Transport System Project	Centre	14760	0
57.	IDP-122 Calcutta Transport Infrastructure Development Project	West Bengal	10679	221.3
58.	IDP-123 Kerala Water Supply Project	Kerala	11997	0
59.	IDP-124 Eastern Karnataka Afforestation Project	Karnataka	15968	899.2
60.	IDP-125 Tamil Nadu Afforestation Project	Tamilnadu	13324	1072
61.	IDP-126 Rajghat Canal Irrigation Project	Madhya Pradesh	13222	0
62.	IDP-127 Simhadri & Vizag Transmission System Project	Andhra Pradesh	10629	0
63.	IDP-128 Srisaïlam Left Bank Power Station III Project	Andhra Pradesh	14499	688.9
64.	IDP-129 Dhauliganga Hydro Electric II Project	MoP	16316	0
65.	IDP-130 Bakreshwar Thermal Power Station Project II	West Bengal	34151	4.4
66.	IDP-131 Tuticorin Port Dredging Project	MoST	7003	0
67.	IDP-132 Punjab Afforestation Project	Punjab	6193	63.3
68.	IDP-133 Madhya Pradesh Sericulture Project	Madhya Pradesh	2212	0
69.	IDP-134 Manipur Sericulture Project	Manipur	3962	0
70.	IDP-135 Rengali Irrigation Project	Orissa	7760	141.5
71.	IDP-136 SIDBI Small Industries Development Programme	Centre	30000	20020

1	2	3	4	5
<i>Grant-in-Aid</i>				
1.	Construction of Nizamuddin Bridge	Centre	2778	1682.7
2.	Kalawati Saran Children's Hospital	Centre	1217	333.7
3.	Eradication of Poliomyelities	Centre	768	554.1
4.	Establishment of Planatorium	Tamil Nadu	50	50
5.	Increase of food production	Centre	500	498.8
6.	Institute of Child Health & Hospital for Children, Madras	Tamil Nadu	667	652.2
7.	Construction of Dredger for Fishing Ports	Centre	1248	0
8.	Indian Museum Calcutta	West Bengal	50	0
9.	Increase of Food Production	Andhra Pradesh	300	0

Anti-Dumping Duty by EU

*350. SHRI PRITHVIRAJ D. CHAVAN : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the European Union has aggressively targetted certain Indian Companies and industrial sectors for imposition of anti-dumping duties;

(b) if so, the details of anti-dumping duties imposed on Indian products and companies during 1997-98; and

(c) the action taken by the Government to strengthen the defence of the legal cases filed in EU?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) and (b) The European Union (EU) has initiated anti-dumping investigations into alleged dumping of Stainless Steel Bright Bars, Stainless Steel Fasteners, Unbleached Cotton Fabrics, Synthetic Fibre Ropes, Potassium Permanganate, Cotton Type Bed Linen and Polyolefin Sacks & Bags. Position of these cases with regard to imposition of anti dumping duty is given in the statement attached.

(c) The Government is fully aware of the investigation being conducted by the EU and is taking all possible steps to strengthen the defence of these legal cases, including appointment of legal experts, guidance to the affected Indian industry and proper follow up through the Embassy of India, Brussels.

Statement

Anti Dumping Duty by EU

S. No.	Products Concerned	Date of Initiation	Present Status
1	2	3	4
1.	Stainless Steel Bright Bars	30.8.97	Provisional anti-dumping duty ranging from 10.4% to 17.9% pro-

1	2	3	4
			posed to be imposed against Indian exporters.
2.	Unbleached Cotton Fabrics	11.7.97	Provisional Anti-Dumping duty ranging from 2.9% to 16.9% are being imposed against various exporters from India.
3.	Synthetic Fibre Ropes	01.07.97	Provisional Anti-Dumping duty @ 53% imposed against export from M/s Garware Wall Ropes and 82% against other exporters.
4.	Potassium Permanganate	26.4.97	European Union has imposed a condition of a minimum import price of ECU 1475 per tonne on import from India.
5.	Stainless Steel Fasteners	3.12.96	Definitive duties ranging from 47.9% to 133.5% imposed on Indian exporters w.e.f. 4.9.1997.
6.	Cotton Type Bed Linen	13.9.96	After terminating the earlier case on 9.7.96 fresh case initiated. Definitive anti-dumping duty ranging from 2.7% to 24.7% imposed on Indian exporters from November, 1997.
7.	Polyolefin Sacks and Bags	April, 95	Definitive duty ranging from zero to 3.6% imposed on Indian exporters w.e.f. 10.10.97.

Share Capital to Spinning Mills

*351. DR. ULHAS VASUDEO PATIL : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) Whether there is any provision to provide share capital from Central Government to the Spinning Mills in the Co-operative Sector; and

(b) if so, the details of proposals received in this regard by the Union Government and Share Capital provided?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RANA) : (a) Government of India provides loan assistance to the State Governments through National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) for contribution to the share capital of the Cooperative Spinning Mills organised by the Handloom Weavers and Cotton Growers for modernisation, expansion and setting up of new Cooperative Spinning Mills. The Scheme for loan assistance to handloom weavers cooperative spinning mills has been discontinued with effect from 1st April, 1998.

(b) On the basis of viable proposals received till 31st March, 1998, the Government of India through NCDC have provided about Rs. 85 crores and Rs. 134 crores as loan to the State Governments for share capital participation in 50 Handloom Cooperative Spinning Mills and 46 cotton Growers Cooperative Spinning Mills respectively.

Decline in Growth Rate

*352. SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE :
SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

	Budget Estimates			Revised Estimates			%increase in R.E. over B.E.	Actual			%increase in actuals over B.E.
	Plan	Non-Plan	Total	Plan	Non-Plan	Total		Plan	Non-Plan	Total	
1995-96	48500	123652	172152	48684	134320	183004	6.30	46374	131901	178275	3.56
1996-97	54685	149975	204660	54894	147404	202298	-1.15	53534	147473	201007	-1.78
1997-98	62852	169324	232176	60630	174615	235245	1.32

*Under compilation

The department-wise details of the Budget Estimates and Revised Estimates of expenditure and variation between them have been given in Statement No. 2 of Expenditure Budget Vol. 1 for Budget 1996-97 and Budget 1997-98.

Investment by GIC

*353. SHRI RAMA CHANDRA MALLICK :
SHRI BHERU LAL MEENA :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether poor budgeting and financial mismanagement by most of the Government Departments for years, have been responsible for the sharp decline in growth rate;

(b) if so, the percentage of over-spending or savings by different Government departments, over the initial estimates of expenditure during each year since 1995-96 in respect of planned and non-planned expenditure, separately; and

(c) the specific steps taken/being taken by the Government to improve the budgeting and fiscal management system.

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) : (a) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) to (c) After achieving an average growth rate of 7.5 percent per annum in terms of real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) during 1994-95 to 1996-97 the growth rate decelerated to 5 percent in 1997-98. The deceleration in the growth rate is mainly due to a fall of agricultural value added by 2 percent in 1997-98 and a sharp slowdown in industrial growth.

There is no quantifiable direct relationship between Government expenditure and the growth rate of the Gross Domestic Product. The following table below shows the variation between Budget Estimates & Revised Estimate of Plan and Non-Plan expenditure during the years 1995-96 to 1997-98. The improvement in budgeting and fiscal expenditure management is a continuing exercise.

(Rs. in Crore)

	Budget Estimates			Revised Estimates			%increase in R.E. over B.E.	Actual			%increase in actuals over B.E.
	Plan	Non-Plan	Total	Plan	Non-Plan	Total		Plan	Non-Plan	Total	
1995-96	48500	123652	172152	48684	134320	183004	6.30	46374	131901	178275	3.56
1996-97	54685	149975	204660	54894	147404	202298	-1.15	53534	147473	201007	-1.78
1997-98	62852	169324	232176	60630	174615	235245	1.32

(a) the quantum of investment made by the General Insurance Corporation of India in the private sector industry; and

(b) the names of top ten companies in terms of the total investment made by the GIC and subsidiaries, company-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF

FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) Out of total investment of Rs. 17,594.22 crore made by GIC and its subsidiaries an amount of Rs. 6120.06 Crore has been invested in private sector industry upto 31.5.1998.

(b) List of top ten companies in terms of total investment made by GIC and its subsidiaries is given in enclosed Statement.

Statement

List of the top ten companies in which GIC and its subsidiaries have made investment as on 31.5.1998.

S. No.	Name of the Company	Aggregate of Investment (Rs. In Crores)
1.	Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation of India	408.02
2.	Industrial Development Bank of India	296.67
3.	Reliance Industries Ltd.	292.05
4.	Industrial Finance Corporation of India	261.42
5.	GIC Housing Finance Limited	208.33
6.	Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd.	192.09
7.	Tata Iron and Steel Company Ltd.	186.40
8.	Reliance Petroleum Ltd.	173.00
9.	Malvika Steel Ltd.	142.06
10.	Essar Steel Ltd.	101.83

New Industrial Policy

*354. SHRI ASHOK NAMDEORAO MOHOL :
SHRI VITHAL TUPE :

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the new Industrial Policy of the Government has failed to achieve the anticipated industrial development;

(b) if so, the facts thereof;

(c) whether the Government have ascertained the reasons for slow progress in implementing the new policy;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the corrective measures proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT) : (a) to (e) Government is committed to a policy of promoting investment and industrial growth. The Industrial Policy of the Government is aimed towards

building on the gains already made, and maintaining a sustained growth in production and gainful employment.

Industrial investment intentions recorded between 1991 and May, 1998 exceed 36 thousand with proposed investment of Rs. 718 thousand crores. The amount of foreign direct investment (FDI) approved since 1991 till May, 1998 is Rs. 1,62,741 Crores. Per annum industrial growth was 5.6% in 1996-97 and 6.6% in 1997-98.

In order to encourage industrial growth, a number of steps have been taken. The recent measures include providing access to Corporates to Global Depository Receipts/External Commercial Borrowing Window to obtain credit at globally competitive rates, reduction in interest on the rupee export credit from 11% to 6.5%, raising the limit of investment of non-Resident Indians, rationalization of the tariff structure to remove the dis-advantages faced by the domestic industry and restore level playing field, further delicensing of industries from the purview of compulsory licensing under the Industries (Development & Regulation) Act, 1951, permitting Foreign Direct Investment upto 100% for power projects provided foreign Direct Investment is upto Rs. 1500 Crores, other measures to simplify procedures, etc.

Purchase of Cotton by CCI

*355. SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the cotton growers in Andhra and other States have suffered loss due to the attack of pest;

(b) if so, the names of districts in those States which have been affected;

(c) whether the Union Government have issued instructions to the Cotton Corporation of India to commence purchases of cotton to help the farmers affected by pest; and

(d) if so, the progress made in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RANA) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

The names of the districts affected are as under :

Sl.No.	Name of State	Names of districts
1	2	3
1.	Punjab	1. Ferozepur 2. Bhatinda 3. Mansa 4. Muktsar 5. Faridkot

1	2	3
2.	Rajasthan	1. Sriganganagar 2. Hanumangarh 3. Bikaner
3.	Karnataka	1. Tumkur 2. Shimoga 3. Bidar 4. Gulbarga 5. Bijapur 6. Dharwar 7. Bellary 8. Mandya
4.	Maharashtra	1. Parbhani 2. Akola 3. Amaravati 4. Yeotmal 5. Wardha 6. Nagpur 7. Chandrapur
5.	Andhra Pradesh	1. Warangal 2. Karimnagar 3. Khammam 4. Adilabad 5. Nizamabad 6. Medak 7. Nalgonda 8. Rangareddy 9. Mehboobnagar 10. Cuddapah
6.	Haryana	1. Hissar 2. Sirsa

(c) and (d) The Cotton Corporation of India (CCI) purchases cotton in all the cotton growing States except Maharashtra. Government closely monitors the procurement activities of the CCI to fully protect the interests of farmers particularly in affected areas. During the current cotton year 1997-98 as on 3.7.1998, the CCI has purchased 8,01,019 bales of cotton.

Industrial Growth

*356. SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE :
SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN :

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether industrial growth of Capital Goods Sector was in recession during April to December, 1997;

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

(c) whether industrial growth improved in automobile, cement and construction sector in the month of April, 1998;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) the details of the sectors which were adversely affected during the said period; and

(f) the steps taken by the Government to improve the growth rate?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT) : (a) and (b) The growth of the capital goods sector during April to December, 1997 was (-) 0.1% compared to 8.6% during the corresponding period of the previous year. Subdued export performance and sluggish capital investment in industry contributed to slow-down of growth in the capital goods sector.

(c) and (d) Industrial growth has improved in April, 1998. The automobile sector showed a growth rate of 5.4% in April, 1998 as compared to April, 1997. The growth in production of cement during April, 1998 was 11.3% compared to (-) 5.3% during April, 1997. The production of steel during April, 1998 grew by 8.4% compared to (-) 3.0% in April, 1997.

(e) The sectors which recorded negative growth during 1997-98 are Steel (-) 0.8%, Commercial Vehicles (-) 28.5% Auto ancillary (-) 7.0%, Newsprint (-) 5.8%, Cars (-) 1.4%, Sewing Machines (-) 9.8%, Sugar (-) 14.0%, Cloth Mill Sector (-) 0.5%, Leather & Fur products (-) 0.8%. The industry groups which recorded negative growth during April, 98 are Wood & wood products (-) 9.0%, Cotton textiles (-) 5.5%, Food products (-) 5.1%, Jute manufactures (-) 2.8%.

(f) Several initiatives spelt out in the budget 1998-99 are expected to improve the industrial growth.

The new credit policy announced by the Government on 29th April, 1998 is expected to impart depth and maturity to the money market. The new credit policy also aims at reducing the cost of funds. Financial intermediaries including the commercial banks and term lending institutions have reduced their prime lending rates by 50 to 100 basis points.

[Translation]

Allocation of Coins to States

*357. SHRI DADA BABURAO PARANJPE :
SHRI A.F. GOLAM OSMANI :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the details of coins of different denominations and their value allocated 17X to the banks situated in North-Eastern States and Madhya Pradesh by the Reserve Bank of India during 1991-92 to 1997-98, till date, State-wise and year-wise;

(b) the purpose for which new coins were allocated;

(c) whether the Government are aware about the misappropriation prevailing in the distribution of such new coins by the banks in some States, particularly in Jabalpur Madhya Pradesh;

(d) if so, whether the Government have conducted any inquiry in this regard;

(e) if so, the outcome thereof; and

(f) the action being taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) : (a) The information is being compiled and will be laid on the Table of the House.

(b) Coins are issued to facilitate day-to-day transactions of the public.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) to (f) Does not arise.

Demand of HMT Products

*358. SHRI BHAGWAN SHANKAR RAWAT : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is decline in demand of goods being manufactured by Hindustan Machine Tools Limited;

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

(c) the steps taken by the Government to remedy the situation?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT) : (a) and (b) There is a decline in the demand of HMT machine tools and industrial machinery products due to slow down in the growth of auto sector, stagnation in the investment by Railways; import of second-hand machine tools & increased competition.

(c) HMT has taken a number of steps to increase the demand for its products. These include monitoring and follow up with major customers, focus on marketing, efforts to develop business in small/medium scale industries and procurement of orders from Defence and Railways.

[English]

Recession in Textile Industry

*359. SHRI KALLAPPA AWADE :
DR. SAROJA V. :

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is recession in textiles industry for the last five years, particularly in decentralised powerloom sector;

(b) if so, whether Government have constituted any Committee to ascertain the problems of powerloom industry prior to this;

(c) if so, the details of points made in the report by the said Committee;

(d) whether any quota has been resumed for decentralised powerloom sector for export of cloths;

(e) if so, the extent thereof; and

(f) the percentage of India's participation in the international textile market and percentage of fabrics production shared by the powerlooms?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RANA) : (a) There is no apparent recession in the textile industry during the last five years including in the cloth production in the decentralised powerloom sector. In this connection, the data on total cloth production vis-a-vis the cloth production in the decentralised powerloom sector for the last five years is reproduced below :

Year	Total Cloth Production (Mn. Sq. Mtrs.)	Annual Growth Rate	Powerloom Cloth Production (Mn. Sq. Mtrs.)	Percentage of Powerloom fabrics in total cloth Production (%)
1993-94	27898	8.68	15994	57.3
1994-95	28606	2.48	15976	55.8
1995-96	31891	10.30	17201	53.9
1996-97	34813	8.39	19352	55.6
1997-98	36701	5.14	20303	55.3

- (b) No, Sir.
 (c) Does not arise.

(d) Yes, Sir. The Government has earmarked a separate export quota called Powerloom Exporters' Entitlement (PEE) quota for the decentralised powerloom sector for export of cloth since 1992 in addition to their entitlements under any other quota category such as PPE and NQE.

(e) The Government has fixed 10% of the annual levels of textile export quota for the decentralised powerloom sector.

(f) The percentage of India's participation in international textile market is around 3.1% as of 1996. The percentage of fabric production share of the powerloom sector is mentioned in the answer to (a) above.

[Translation]

Voluntary Retirement Scheme in PSUs

*360. PROF. PREM SINGH CHANDUMAJRA :
 SHRI VIJAY GOEL :

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

- (a) the number of surplus staff in the Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) during each of the last three years;
 (b) the number of employees of PSUs who opted for Voluntary Retirement under Voluntary Retirement Scheme during the above period;
 (c) the result achieved and amount released so far by the Government in this regard;
 (d) whether the Government are rethinking over this scheme; and
 (e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT) : (a) The number of surplus staff in the Public Undertakings during each of the last three years is not readily available.

(b) The number of employees of Central Public Sector Undertakings who opted for voluntary retirement under National Renewal Fund during the years 1995-96, 1996-97 and 1997-98 were 11,541; 4,074; and 4,822 respectively.

(c) Upto the end of 1997-98 a total number of 1,10,104 persons have availed the voluntary retirement scheme under NRF. As per provisional figures the amount released so far are Rs. 2020 crores.

(d) and (e) Government have decided to liberalise the voluntary retirement package in respect of units which are

facing closure. Workers will be allowed 45 days of wages for each completed year of service subject to the maximum wage or salary accruable on the basis of years of service left by way of compensation on Voluntary Retirement. As further improvement to the package the workers of these units will also be eligible upto a maximum of 60 months salary or wages in the case of all those who have completed not less than 30 years of service.

Export of Agricultural Products

*361. SHRI RAMPAL SINGH :
 SHRI PRABHU DAYAL KATHERIA :

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

- (a) whether Government have formulated any plan to give top priority to the export of agricultural products;
 (b) if so, the details thereof; and
 (c) the time by which it is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) to (c) The policy of the Government to permit exports of agricultural products is governed principally by the concerns of India's food security, maximising farm incomes and earning foreign exchange. Export policy is being constantly updated and export regime in respect of agricultural products has been liberalised. Very few items are now either prohibited for exports or their exports restricted or are subject to quantitative ceilings. Major items for which the exports are banned include wheat and wheat products and sugar except under preferential quota to EU/USA.

Some of the steps taken/proposed to be taken to enhance exports of these products include :

1. Providing assistance for raising small and large nurseries for production of good quality planting material, upgradation of technical knowhow of farmers through demonstrations, trainings and publicity, rejuvenation of old orchards, area expansion, supply of minikits for vegetables, improving productivity and training of farmers.
2. Provision of soft loans for setting up of grading/ procession centres, auction platforms, ripening/ curing chambers and quality testing equipment.
3. Providing financial assistance to exporters/ growers/Cooperative Societies for development of infrastructural facilities such as purchase of specialised transport units, establishment of pre-cooling/cold storage facilities, integrated post-harvest handling systems (pack houses).
4. Grant of financial assistance for improved packaging and strengthening of quality control.

5. Establishment of vapour heat treatment facilities for improving the acceptability of the product especially the mangoes in overseas markets.
6. Grant of Air-Frieght Subsidy for exports of selected fresh vegetables and fruits.
7. Arranging promotional campaigns such as buyer-seller meets and participation in important international fairs and exhibitions.
8. Setting up of integrated cargo handling and cold storage facilities/at various international Airports for handling export of perishable items such as fresh fruits and vegetables.
9. Reorientation of the domestic production of tobacco to meet changing international needs and aligning grading to international standards.
10. Abolition of cess on export of pepper (except green pepper in brine), cardamom, saffron and spice oils and oleoresins to make them price competitive in the overseas markets; setting up of laboratories for testing of products to ensure quality; technology transfer; process upgradation and product development.

[English]

Trade Fair Held in Dubai

3450. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

- (a) whether India participated in the Trade Fair held at Dubai during the month of March, 1998;
- (b) if so, the details of the sale and purchase of Indian artistic and other goods at the fair; and
- (c) the overall performance of Indian goods at the fair?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI AMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) No Sir, India Trade Promotion Organisation has not participated in any Trade fair held at Dubai in the Month of March, 1998.

- (b) and (c) Does not arise.

Funds to Nagaland

3451. SHRI K.A. SANGTAM : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

- (a) whether the Government are aware that Nagaland Forest Products Ltd., Tizit, Nagaland Sugar Mills, Dimapur, Nagaland Paper and Pulp Mills, Tuli and various other corporations in the State of Nagaland are incurring heavy losses;

- (b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether these corporations are forced to pay heavy/panel interests on the loans taken from various financial institutions/private bodies to run these corporations;

(d) if so, whether the Government propose to clear the huge liabilities created by the State Government due to paucity of funds and due to the insurgency problems;

(e) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(f) the funds likely to be allocated thereof from the consolidated Fund of India under the 16 point agreement?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) : (a) to (f) The information is being collected and will be furnished.

I.T. Act

3452. SHRI ARIF MOHAMMED KHAN : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to State the number of cases in which the units working under the Director of Income Tax (Investigation) for Delhi, have asked for furnishing information in respect of Income Tax matters under section 131 (1A) of the I.T. Act, 1961 during 1994-95 and 1995-96 and 1996-97 and out of these cases, the number of cases on which action was taken under clauses (i) to (v) sub-section (1) of section 132 of the I.T. Act, 1961?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : Notices under section 131 (1A) of the Income-Tax Act, 1961 have been issued by the units working under Director of Income Tax (Investigation) Delhi during F.Y. 94-95, 95-96 and 96-97 in order to verify the genuineness of certain information and or to elicit information for the purpose of carrying out pre-search investigation. Since these notices have been issued in connection with matters of investigation from different files which are numerous, it is not possible to furnish the number of cases, both in which such notices have been issued for the above-mentioned years and further action taken thereupon, solely on the basis of the notices issued under section 131 (1A) of the Act.

Rural Cooperative Banks

3453. SHRI D.S. AHIRE : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

- (a) whether the Government propose to introduce a comprehensive scheme for the revitalisation of rural cooperative banks;

- (b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the performance of the rural cooperative banks in the country has not been found satisfactory; and

(d) if so, the steps being taken by the Government to tone up the functioning of these banks?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) to (d) Information is being collected and, to the extent available, will be laid on the Table of the House.

Instrumentation Ltd. Palghat, Kerala

3454. SHRI N.N. KRISHNADAS : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether Instrumentation Limited, Palghat in Kerala is earning profit;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether this company was given subsidiary status at the 222nd meeting of the Board of Directors in December, 1996;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the Government propose to disinvest the Instrumentation Limited at Palghat; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SUKHBIR SINGH BADAL) : (a) and (b) Instrumentation Limited, Palghat in Kerala, one of the units of IL, has been earning profits as given below :

Year	Rs. in Crores
1993-94	4.82
1994-95	3.79
1995-96	0.28
1996-97	2.18
1997-98	5.00

(c) and (d) In the 222nd meeting of the Board of Directors of IL, it was decided that pending approval of the revival plan by BIFR, steps should be taken to give Palghat unit the status of an independent profit centre and a subsidiary.

(e) and (f) The revival plan formulated by the company envisages that Palghat unit would be converted into a joint-venture company. Final decision would be taken by BIFR, which is a quasi-judicial body.

[Translation]

Categories of Financial Companies

3455. DR. MAHADEEPAK SINGH SHAKYA : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have announced any new policy for financial companies;

(b) if so, the number of categories in which the financial companies have been classified;

(c) whether the companies of all categories are likely to be benefited by the said new policy; and

(d) the advantages of categorisation to the financial companies under the new policy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) In January, 1998 RBI had announced a new regulatory framework for NBFCs. A few changes therein have been made subsequently.

(b) For the purpose of new regulations, NBFCs have been divided into three broad categories as indicated below:

(i) NBFCs accepting public deposits;

(ii) NBFCs which are not accepting public deposit and are engaged in loan, investment, hire purchase finance and equipment leasing activities; and

(iii) NBFCs which are not accepting public deposit and have acquired shares/securities in their own group/holding/subsidiary companies of not less than 90 per cent of their total assets and are not trading in these shares/securities;

(c) The new NBFC policy has been formulated with a view to protecting the interest of the depositors and providing more effective supervision over NBFCs, particularly, those accepting public deposits. Protection of public deposits has been a major consideration in formulation of the new policy.

(d) (i) The following advantages accrue to NBFCs accepting Public Deposits :

(i) Under the new policy only public deposits are regulated leaving all other types of deposits out of the purview of regulations.

(ii) Overall ceilings on the borrowings have been dispensed with.

(iii) Liquid assets have to be maintained only on public deposits.

The companies which accept public deposits are however required to comply with all the norms on income recognition, accounting standards, asset classification, provisioning for bad and doubtful debts, capital adequacy, credit/investment concentration norms etc.

(2) The companies not accepting public deposits are regulated in a limited manner. These companies have been exempted from the 21X regulations on interest rates, period, ceiling on quantum of borrowings. However, prudential norms which have a bearing on the disclosure of true and fair picture of their financial health in their Balance Sheets, have been made applicable to these companies except those relating to capital adequacy and credit concentration norms. The responsibilities of ensuring compliance of these regulations has been entrusted to the Statutory Auditors of these Companies. Reserve Bank of India has issued Directions to the Statutory Auditors for the purpose. The auditors are required to report to RBI only by exception.

The NBFCs not accepting/holding public deposits are not required to submit to RBI their Statutory RS turns in the First Schedule or the Balance Sheet or the Quarterly Liquid Asset Return or the Half-yearly Prudential Norm Return.

[English]

Export of MICA

3456. SHRI MOINUL HASSAN : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) the production consumption and export of mica during the last ten years, year-wise;

(b) whether there is any slump in the World Trade of Mica during the above period;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the contribution of Mica Trading Corporation in production, trade and providing employment during the above period?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) Sir, the details regarding production of Mica Crude, Waste & Scrap, and consumption is given in the enclosed statement. The exports during the last ten years. Year-wise, is as under :

Year	Exports (Incl. Power, Waste & Scrap) (Quantity in tonnes)
1	2
1987-88	38095

1	2
1988-89	47788
1989-90	39253
1990-91	42591
1991-92	34882
1992-93	27743
1993-94	33751
1994-95	30074
1995-96	33776
1996-97	29360
1997-98*	30001

*Provisional

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Sir, the major factors responsible for slump in the world trade of Mica include technological advancement and newly developed synthetic products which have replaced traditional Mica products in addition to collapse of demands from erstwhile USSR and East European countries.

(d) Sir, erstwhile MITCO, now Mica Division of Minerals and Metals Trading Corporation (MMTC), set up in June 1973 is the canalising agency for export of Mica scrap, Mica blocks, splittings and films. However, processed mica was decanalised in October 1990 but Mica scrap and factory cuttings/waste continue to be canalised.

MITCO had started incurring losses since 1987-88 and was referred to BIFR during 1991-92. BIFR sanctioned Rehabilitation-cum-Amalgamation/Merger Scheme for revival of the company. In terms of scheme MITCO has been merged with MMTC and is functioning as the Mica Division with 425 employees.

Statement

(Quantity in tonnes)

Year	Production		Consumption (Incl. Ground/ Scrap Mica)
	Mica Crude	Waste & Scrap	
1	2	3	4
1987-88	4251	5518	9150*
1988-89	3886	3469	8750*
1989-90	4140	3557	9050
1990-91	4062	3366	8850
1991-92	3593	2364	8500

1	2	3	4
1992-93	2560	1758	8300
1993-94	2126	913	8300
1994-95	1988	1465	7850
1995-96	1832	1240	8150
1996-97	1954	1109	7950
1997-98(P)	1678	1088	N.A.

(p) Provisional

N.A.—Not Available

*Pertains to calendar years 1987 & 1988.

Corruption in New India Assurance Company

3457. SHRI RAMPAL UPADHYAY : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether a number of complaints received from various employees' Unions against corruption in New India Assurance Co. Ltd. at Delhi during the last three years;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether a number of senior officers have either been charge-sheeted, transferred or resigned for their involvement in corruption cases;

(d) if so, the details thereof alongwith the details of officers whose resignation has not been accepted but allowed to join in some other organisation along with reasons therefor;

(e) the details of officials who have been chargesheeted during the current year but chargesheets yet to be served on them; and

(f) the reasons for not following the company's rules in the service matters for certain section of officials?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A total of 38 complaints relating to various allegations involving irregularities and corruption charges against officials of different cadres, were received during the last three years.

(c) and (d) General Insurance Corp. of India have reported that New India Assurance Co. Ltd. has stated that during the three years in question, chargesheets were issued to nine senior officials of the rank of Branch Incharge and above. Resignation of one junior official has not been accepted by the Management in view of pending

investigation by Vigilance Department on charges against him. The concerned official was advised to report for duty immediately as his resignation was not accepted. In the absence of vigilance clearance, the question of the company allowing him to join some other organisation does not arise.

(e) Nil.

(f) General Insurance Corp. of India have reported that the rules in service matters are being followed uniformly for all sections of officials.

Opening of New Hotels in North Eastern States

3458. SHRI BHIM DAHAL : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government proposes to set up some luxury hotels at important tourist spots in the North-Eastern States and Sikkim in the near future;

(b) if so, the details thereof, location-wise;

(c) whether the Government also propose to construct some hotels and guest houses for the middle class tourists visiting these places in these States; and

(d) if so, the details thereof, location-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI OMAK APANG) : (a) and (b) No, Sir. Construction of hotels is primarily a private sector activity. However, the Ministry of Tourism provides incentives etc. as a catalyst for such investment in the hotel industry.

(c) The Ministry of Tourism has provided financial assistance to the States in the North-Eastern region including Sikkim for setting up of tourist reception centres, yatri niwas, tourist bungalows, tourist lodges and tourist cottages for the benefit of the middle class tourists visiting these places.

(d) The location where budget accommodation has been sanctioned during 1997-98 are : Passighat, Gibbonsland, Mio, Glow Lake, Ghanglung and Tipi in Arunachal Pradesh. Barpeta, Mangaldoi, Bhuban Hills, Bokakhat, Bhalukpong, Batadrava in Assam; Morch, Singda and Sekta in Manipur; Norgstoin in Meghalaya; Reiek and Vachibuk in Mizoram; Dzouku in Nagaland; Kasba, Matabari and Ambassa in Tripura.

Directors of RRBs

3459. SHRI AJAY MUKHOPADHYAY : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :-

(a) the present policy of the Government for appointment of non-official Director in the Regional Rural Banks (RRBs);

(b) the term of such non-official Directors and in how many cases this term has been extended;

(c) when the Government issued the revised order for appointment of non-political/non-official Director in the RRBs;

(d) when the National Bank for Agriculture & Rural Development submitted such list of proposed Director to Government; and

(e) the time by which a final decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) In terms of Section 9(1)(a) of the Regional Rural Banks Act, 1976, Central Government is required to nominate two non-official directors on the Board of Regional Rural Banks (RRBs). Further, in terms of the Government's instructions issued in October, 1994, National Bank for Agriculture & Rural Development (NABARD) was asked to recommend to the Government the names of suitable persons for being nominated as non-official directors on the Boards of RRBs.

(b) The terms of existing non-official directors appointed by the Government on the Boards of various RRBs have already expired. However, in terms of Section 10 of Regional Rural Banks Act, 1976, a director (other than the Chairman) shall hold office for such period not exceeding two years from the date when he assumes office, and may, on the expiry of the said period continue to hold office until his successor has been nominated.

(c) to (e) In terms of recent circular instructions issued by Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in November, 1997 giving enlarged role to the sponsor banks in the management of RRBs, sponsor banks have been asked to prepare suitable panels for their respective RRBs and transmit the same to the Government for appropriate consideration. The sponsor banks have been asked to ensure that while preparing such panels due weightage is given to professionals like economists, agricultural economists, scientists, chartered accountants, financial analysts, lawyers or persons drawn from specialized subject areas such as small scale industries, Animal Husbandry, Horticulture. Further, retired senior bank officers from the area could also be considered. Accordingly, the Government will exercise its jurisdiction under Section 9(1) (a) of the Regional Rural Banks Act, 1976, in the light of the recommendations made by the sponsor banks.

It would be difficult to lay down any specific time frame by which the entire exercise of finalising nominations will be completed.

Promotion in the Grade of Income Tax Officer

3460. SHRI KISHAN SINGH SANGWAN : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware of the recent decision of CAT regarding promotion from Income Tax Inspector to the post of Income Tax Officer which mandates adoption of two-pronged policy;

(b) if so, whether the decision of the CAT has been implemented;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) The CAT, Jabalpur bench dismissed certain petitions filed questioning validity of Recruitment Rules for promotion to the post of Income Tax Officer.

(b) to (d) does not arise.

Procurement of Cotton by CCI in Karnataka

3461. SHRI VIJAY SANKESHWAR : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Cotton Corporation of India has procured cotton from the farmers of Karnataka during 1996-97 and 1997-98;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the action proposed by the Government for the procurement of cotton from the farmers of the State?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RANA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The quantity of cotton purchased by CCI in Karnataka during the years 1996-97 (Oct.-Sept.) and 1997-98 (is on 3.7.98) is 52,123 bales and 22,632 bales, respectively.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

Export of Iron Ore to Japan

3462. DR. SUGUNA KUMARI CHELLAMELLA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the export of iron ore to Japan from Visakhapatnam port has come to a standstill since June, 1988;

- (b) if so, the reasons therefore; and
 (c) the impact thereof on MMTC who are exporting the iron ore?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

Export of Marine Products

3463. SHRI GEORGE EDEN : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

- (a) whether the export of marine products got setback after the Pokhran nuclear explosion;
 (b) if so, the details thereof; and
 (c) the action taken to boost the export of marine products?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Following steps have been taken by the Government to give a boost to the exports of marine products:

- (i) Implementation of various subsidy schemes through Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA) for helping the fishery product processing units to produce quality fish and fishery products for exports namely schemes for the establishment of captive peeling sheds, cold storages, mini laboratories, generator sets, flake/chip/tube ice making machines, individual quick freezing (IQF) units and procurement of refrigerated trucks, equipment and machinery for modernisation and for export of value added products etc.
- (ii) A scheme has been sanctioned for subsidising a portion of interest charged by the banks/ financial institutions on loans taken by the fishery product processing units for upgradation of their facilities.
- (iii) The threshold limit for zero import duty under Export Promotion Capital Goods (EPCG) scheme has been reduced from the earlier Rs. 20.00 crore to Rs. 1 crore for the import of essential machinery and equipment by the fishery product processing units.
- (iv) Fishery product processing units having Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) system have been made eligible for grant of an additional 5 percent Special Import Licence (SIL).

(v) The Duty Entitlement Pass Book (DEPB) rates for the export of fish and fishery products have been notified.

(vi) Production of Shrimps through aquaculture has been encouraged by MPEDA by extending subsidies for the development of new aquaculture farms and shrimp hatcheries.

(vii) Necessary guidance and training is also being provided to aquaculture farmers on scientific methods for sustainable eco-friendly aquaculture for increased production of shrimps.

(viii) Various training programmes have been conducted by the MPEDA and Export Inspection Council for the various officials connected with fishery product processing units and for the Seafood Industry, on the implementation of HACCP system and for maintaining high standards of food hygiene and safety.

Visakhapatnam Power Project

3464. SHRI K.S. RAO : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) whether the finalisation of the Fuel Supply Agreement (FSA) of Hinduja's 1040 MW Visakhapatnam Power Projects is lying pending for a long time;

(b) if so, the details of the project and the hitches coming out in finalisation of the FSA;

(c) whether any concrete measures have been taken to remove the hurdles;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the time by which Fuel Supply Agreement is likely to be finalised and the construction work of the Visakhapatnam Power Project would commence?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI DILIP RAY) : (a) and (b) A Coal Supply and Transportation Agreement between Mahanadi Coalfields Ltd. (MCL) and Hinduja National Thermal Power Co. Ltd. (HNPCL) has been initialled between the two parties in April, 1998, with a few outstanding issues. Inter-alia these issues relate to the bearing of the consequential risks on the transportation part of the contract as well as issues relating to termination costs. These are under discussion.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. On several occasions issues have been considered and the decisions arrived at, at the High Power Board constituted by the Government to consider matters relating to IPPs. Where necessary, decisions of the Cabinet have also been obtained.

(e) The outstanding issues are expected to be resolved within a month. As per the Agreement, the Vizag

Power Project is to commission its first unit 36 months after attainment of financial closure.

Fodder Scam

3465. SHRI SANJAY SINH : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have carried out country-wide raids in connection with the 1000 crore fodder scam and Rs. 300 crore bitumen scam;

(b) if so, the details thereof indicating the names of the persons and incriminating documents and unaccounted money seized from the residences of each person;

(c) whether the Government have taken any action against such persons;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor and the time by which the action is likely to be taken against them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) The Income-tax Department has carried out searches on persons referred to in part (a) of the Question.

(b) The names of the persons searched are as under:

BITUMAN SCAM GROUP :

- (a) Shri Md. Ilyas Hussain
- (b) Smt. Salma Khatoon, W/o Md. Ilyas Hussain
- (c) Shri Md. Manawar Hussain
- (d) Shri Md. Sahabuddin Beg alias Saheb Beg
- (e) Smt. Shobha Sinha
- (f) Capt. Suresh Chandra Verma

- (g) Major Yogendra Narayan Yadav
- (h) Shri Janardan Sharma
- (i) Shri Awadheshwar Pd. Sinha
- (j) Shri Kedar Paswan
- (k) Shri Satya Narayan Paswan
- (l) Shri Ram Nath Singh
- (m) Shri Dudheshwar Nath Singh
- (n) M/s Nath & Co.
- (o) Shri R.A. Khetan
- (p) M/s Pawan Carriers
- (q) Shri R.A. Khetan
- (r) Shri Janardan Aggarwal
- (s) Shri Binay Kumar Sinha
- (t) M/s Ansari Transport
- (u) Shri Nafis Ansari
- (v) Shri Narendra Kumar Prasad
- (w) Shri Ram Autar

ANIMAL HUSBANDRY SCAM GROUP

- (a) Dr. Ravindra Kumar Rana
- (b) Shri Tarkeshwar Viadya
- (c) Shri Prem Chand Gupta
- (d) Shri Shiv Kumar Gupta
- (e) Smt. Shalini Aggrawal & Shri Ashish Aggrawal
- (f) Shri S.N. Aggrawal
- (g) Corporate Office of M/s IST Ltd. & Others
- (h) Factory premises of M/s IST Ltd.
- (i) Branch Office of IST Ltd.

Details of seizures made of cash, valuables and incriminating documents.

- | | |
|---|--|
| (a) Shri Md. Ilyas Hussain | Cash Rs. 35,000/-. Other Assets; Rs. 50,000/-. Two Bank accounts in the name of the relatives of Shri Md. Hussain as well as photocopies of the official records pertaining to the Bitumen Scam have also been seized. |
| (b) Shri Md. Sahabuddin Beg alias Saheb Beg | Cash : Rs. 23,80,000/-. Other assets : Rs. 60,000/-. |
| (c) Smt. Shobha Sinha | Papers relating to the acquisition of the residential flat at Patna have been found and seized. |
| (d) Capt. Suresh Chandra Verma | Cash : Rs. 1,24,000/-. Other Assets : Rs. 2,38,812/-. Papers relating to acquisition of movable and immovable properties have been found and seized. |

- (e) Major Yogendra, Narayan Yadav Papers relating to acquisition of substantial immovable and movable properties have been found and seized in the course of the search operation.
- (f) Shri Janardan Sharma Other assets : Rs. 1,65,000/-. Papers relating to acquisition of immovable and movable properties have been found and seized in the course of the search operation.
- (g) Shri Awadheshwar Pd. Sinha Cash : Rs. 50,000/-. Papers relating to acquisition of immovable and movable properties have been found and seized in the course of the search operation.
- (h) Shri Satya Narayan Paswan Other assets : Rs. 11,68,417/-. Papers relating to acquisition of substantial immovable and movable property have been found and seized in the course of the search operation.
- (i) Shri Ram Nath Singh Cash : Rs. 96,400/-, Other Assets : Rs. 50,698/-. Papers relating to acquisition of substantial immovable and movable properties have been found and seized in the course of the search operation.
- (j) Shri Dudheshwar Nath Singh Blank signed consignment receipt by the Engineers of the RCD acknowledging the receipt of the Bitumen has been found and seized.
- (k) M/s Nath & Co. Papers relating to receipt of payments from the IOC have been found and seized.
- (l) Shri R.A. Khetan Cash : Rs. 45,000/-. Papers relating to acquisition of substantial immovable and movable properties have been found and seized in the course of the search operation.
- (m) Shri Natis Ansari Papers relating to transportation of Bitumen have been found along with various blank consignee receipts of Bitumen supply which are duly signed by Engineer of Public Works Department, Government of Bihar. A Diary containing entries regarding payment of commission to various persons against transportation and sale of Bitumen in open market have also been seized.
- (n) Shri Narendra Kumar Prasad Cash : Rs. 1,05,000/-. Other assets : Rs. 68,200/-. A Diary was seized indicating collection of sums from Engineers of Road Construction Department.
- (o) Shri Ram Autar Cash : Rs. 75,000/-. Other assets; Rs. 5,78,680/-. Papers relating to acquisition of substantial immovable and movable properties have been found and seized in the course of the search operation.
- (p) Corporate Office of M/s IST Ltd. & Others Documents indicating large scale dealing in Foreign Exchange. Receipts of Commission and incorporation of numerous front companies have been found and seized.
- (q) Branch office of M/s IST Ltd. Documents pertaining to transfer of funds to the tune of US \$65,000 from Hongkong based company of Shri Prem Chand Gupta to another Company in India were found and seized.
- Details of Inter-corporate Deposits made with the companies of Sri Prem Chand Gupta have also been gathered.
- Photocopies of the Sale Deeds pertaining to sale & purchase of plots of land at Mchrauli & Gurgaon have been found and seized.
- Details of investment in shares of the companies incorporated in India as well as in U.K. by Hongkong based company of Sri Prem Chand Gupta. M/s Gupta International Investment Company Ltd. have also been found and seized.

(c) to (e) Under Chapter XIV B of the Income-tax Act, 1961, search action is followed up by making block assessments for a period of ten years to arrive at the undisclosed income. The tax is levied at a higher rate of 60 per cent of such undisclosed income. Initiation of prosecution proceedings for willfully attempting to evade tax is provided for in the Income-tax Act. The action under the law will be considered at the appropriate time after coming to a finding regarding the concealment of income.

Clearance of Backlog of Patent

3466. SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned "efforts on to enhance manpower of patent offices to clear backlog" appearing in the Hindustan Times dated April 15, 1998;

(b) if so, the facts of the matter reported therein and reaction of the Government thereto and action taken/proposed to be taken in this regard;

(c) the present status regarding the nature of reforms and legislation proposed to be brought about during the current year;

(d) the pendency, position of patent received/processed/cleared and pending as on April 30, 1998;

(e) whether there is a proposal to shift Apex Patent Office from Calcutta; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (f) In the absence of any significant modernisation or restructuring of the patent administration system since its establishment, over 29,000 patent applications were awaiting examination as in April, 1998. This has led to delays in grant of patents. During the period 1997-98, 1844 patents were granted.

The Government has been taking steps from time to time to modernise the system including the preparation of a plan to provide required qualified personnel, infrastructural facilities, optimisation of available resources through reorientation of functions between offices and elimination of backlog of patent applications.

Eleventh Finance Commission

3467. SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have received any proposal from various States to convene a meeting of Chief

Ministers to discuss the terms of references of the Eleventh Finance Commission; and

(b) if so, details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir, such proposals were received from the States of Andhra Pradesh, Assam, J & K, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tripura & West Bengal.

Government of India had invited suggestions from all the States regarding the Terms of Reference of the 11th Finance Commission. Almost all the States except Bihar, Maharashtra, Himachal Pradesh and Sikkim had sent their suggestions which were taken into consideration by the Government while finalising the Terms of Reference. The 11th Finance Commission has since been constituted on July 3, 1998. Both the Houses of Parliament were informed of this development on July 6, 1998 through a Statement made by the Finance Minister.

Export of Orange and Kinnu

3468. SHRI SHANKAR PANNU : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) the value of export of orange and Kinnu made from Ganganagar, Hanumangarh and Jhalawar districts of Rajasthan during the last two years, country-wise;

(b) whether the Government propose to export kinnu during the current year;

(c) if so, the quantum thereof alongwith the countries to which the export is proposed to be made;

(d) whether the Government propose to establish a waxing plant in Ganganagar for export of Kinnu; and

(e) if so, by when?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) Data on State-wise/district-wise exports of these products is not maintained. However, the exports of Oranges, mandarins and other citrus fruits during 1995-96 and 1996-97 for which detailed figures are available are as follows :

(Qty: Mts;	Value : Rs. Lakhs.)	
Year	Qty	Value
1995-96	18367	1426
1996-97	24608	1887

These fruits are exported mainly to Bangladesh, UAE, Malaysia, U.K., Mauritius, Singapore, USA, Netherlands, etc.

(b) and (c) Government is not directly involved in the export of these fruits. However, it encourages exports of

fruits including oranges and Kinnu by providing various support measures.

(d) and (e) Proposals for establishment of waxing plant in Ganganagar will be considered when received.

Incentives to NRIs

3469. SHRI P.S. GADHAVI :
SHRI RAMPAL SINGH :
SHRI CHETAN CHAUHAN :
SHRI ANAND RATNA MAURYA :

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) the total investment expected to be made during 1998 by the Non-Resident Indians in the country, particularly in Gujarat;

(b) the salient features of the incentives being given to NRIs for investment in the country;

(c) whether the incentives/concessions given to NRIs in the past produced good result; and

(d) if so, the details thereof alongwith reaction of the NRIs thereto?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT) : (a) During the calendar year 1998, upto 30.4.98, NRI investment worth about Rs. 29655.90 lakhs, including NRI investment of about Rs. 260.60 Lakhs for Gujarat, has been approved by the Government. The actual investment to be made during 1998 would, however, depend on the response of NRIs to the investment opportunities.

(b) to (d) Government constantly reviews the policy relating to NRI investments to make it competitive and provide adequate incentives and facilities to NRIs. With this end in view, the Government has taken a number of steps to boost NRI investment. In certain selected sectors, 100% NRI equity is permissible with full repatriation benefits.

As a result of these measures, the investment from NRIs/OCBs has increased from about Rs. 1970.00 lakhs in 1991 to about Rs. 181717.90 lakhs in 1997.

[Translation]

Prime Minister Rozgar Yojana

3470. SHRI JAGAT VIR SINGH DRONA : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that the number of applications of loan under Prime Minister Rozgar Yojana are pending in District Industry Centre, Kanpur;

(b) if so, the reasons for not providing loans to these unemployed youths so far;

(c) whether any enquiry has been conducted in this regard;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps being taken by the Government for proper implementation of the above scheme?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT) : (a) Sponsoring of applications to banks after screening by the Task Forces is an ongoing activity of the District Industry Centres under Prime Minister's Rozgar Yojana. Out of 1486 applications received in District Industry Centres Kanpur (both Nagar & Dehat), 1030 fresh applications have been screened during the current year. 456 applications are pending with District Industry Centre Kanpur (Nagar) for screening as on 30.6.98, as reported by the State Government.

(b) The pending applications are scheduled to be screened by the end of July, 1998 for sponsoring to the banks. Banks shall thereafter undertake their own scrutiny.

(c) and (d) No, Sir.

(e) The scheme is monitored at the district, State and the Central Government levels. The State Governments has reported that the implementation of the scheme in Kanpur is proceeding as per schedule.

[English]

Import of Soyabean

3471. SHRI AMAR PAL SINGH : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to import soyabean;

(b) if so, the names of countries from which it is likely to be imported; and

(c) the quantity proposed to be imported and the import price of each country, separately?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) to (c) The Government have decided to allow the import of one million tonnes of soyabean by oilmeal exporting units either in split form or the beans are to be split at the port of entry under supervision of Plant Quarantine Authorities. The countries from which the soyabean would be imported would depend upon availability and prices prevailing in the international markets.

[Translation]

Export of Minerals

3472. SHRIMATI SURYA KANTA PATIL : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have recently finalised any Action Plan for the export of minerals;

(b) if so, the salient features of the said Action Plan and the policy adopted while preparing it;

(c) the names of minerals which have been given top priority in exports; and

(d) the names of the countries from which the Government have received demand for these minerals?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government has finalised an Action Plan for export of important minerals, such as, iron ore, manganese ore. Chrome ore, mica etc. For 1998-99, the target has been placed at about 20 per cent of the actual export achieved during the last year, The salient features of the Action Plan include :

(i) identification of new markets viz; Middle East, East Europe, CIS etc. in addition to expansion of existing markets, such as China, Japan, South Korea etc.

(ii) Conclusion of long term contracts for assured exports;

(iii) Improved handling, facilities at ports for iron ore etc.

(c) The following minerals have been given top priority in exports :

(i) Iron Ore

(ii) Chrome Ore

(iii) Manganese Ore

(iv) Mica Scrap

(d) Given the trade practices, demands are not placed on the Government. However, some of the major importing countries are Japan, South Korea, Pakistan, China, Romania etc.

[English]

Export of Iron Ore

3473. SHRI FRANCISCO SARDINHA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) the Iron Ore exported to different countries during the last three years;

(b) the quantity exported, country wise and year, wise; and

(c) the share of Goa in this export?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) and (b) Sir, total Ore exported in the last three years is as follows :

(Qty. in Lakh tonnes)

	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98 (Prov.)
Total	317.2	276.3	276.6

Iron Ore exported to different countries in each of the last three years is given in the statement.

(c) Share of Goa in total exports of India during the last three years is as follows :

	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98 (Prov.)
	47.8%	50.1%	53.4%

Statement

(Quantity in Lakh tonnes)

Countries	1995-96 Quantity	1996-97 Quantity	1997-98 (Prov.) Quantity
Australia	3.2	1.2	6.5
Bangladesh	-	1.1	
Belgium	2.8	1.9	3.3
Chad	-	0.6	-
Chinese Tipei	4.0	7.0	14.2
China (Rep.)	39.1	32.4	55.7
France	-	2.2	3.7
Germany	-	-	1.2
Indonesia	2.7	5.3	0.4
Iran	18.4	13.1	14.8
Italy	11.5	0.2	4.7
Japan	174.7	141.4	143.3
Korea (Rep.)	27.7	34.5	7.1
Netherland	7.3	7.2	7.6
Pakistan	3.6	2.2	4.4

[Translation]

Workshops to SCs/STs by DSSIDC

3474. PROF. JOGENDRA KAWADE : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the persons belonging to Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe have been allotted workshops by Delhi Small Scale Industries Development Corporation according to the quota laid down for them;

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

(c) the total number of workshops allotted so far and the number of workshops allotted to the persons belonging to the Scheduled Tribes out of it?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT) : (a) and (b) The Corporation is providing a combined reservation of 15% of the total sheds/plots/workspaces allotted by it to SC/ST applicants since 1990.

(c) Total number of sheds/plots/work-space allotted by the Corporation so far and the combined allotment made to SC/ST applicants are given in the enclosed statement.

Statement showing the position of sheds/plots work spaces allotted by the Delhi State Industrial Development Corporation Ltd. Since 1990.

S. No.	Industrial Complex	No. of Sheds/Plots/Workspaces allotted	No. of sheds Allotted to SC/ST
1.	Narela Industrial Complex-plots	1800	270
2.	Okhla Computer Complex	31	-
3.	Mangolpuri Engg. Complex	94	3
4.	Kirtinagar Packing Complex	216	7
5.	Community Work Centres	2531	694

All India Conference on Official Language of Banks

3475. SHRI JAGDAMBI PRASAD YADAV : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether three All India Conferences on Official Language of Banks have been organised but even after the lapse of the several years the Fourth Conference has not yet been commenced; and

(b) if so, the time by which the Fourth Conference on Official Language of Banks is likely to be organised?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) and (b) Three All India Conferences on Official Language of Banks were organised at Calcutta, Mumbai and Jaipur on 20-21 May, 1988, 15-16 September, 1990 and 14-15 December, 1991 respectively.

An All India Level Official Language Conference of Banks is organised every year by Reserve Bank of India

(RBI) where discussions are held on different subjects pertaining to the implementation of the Official Language Policy of the Government and resolutions are passed. Representatives from all public Sector Banks and Financial Institutions participate in this All India Conference. The objectives of the Official Language Conference proposed in the question are already being achieved by the Official Language Conference organised by RBI every year. However, if required the scope of the Official Language Conference being organised by RBI every year can further be broadened.

[English]

Lignite Reserves in Rajasthan

3476. COL. SONA RAM CHOUDHARY : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that heavy and rich deposits of Lignite have been found near village Caral of Barmer district in Rajasthan;

(b) whether the Government did not take much interest in it and give it to Lignite Corporation;

(c) whether the Government are contemplating to take over it and explore on priority; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI DILIP RAY) : (a) Yes, Sir. Government is aware of the lignite deposits near village Giral of Barmer District, Rajasthan.

(b) No, Sir. The Central Government took interest in these deposits and advised Neyveli Lignite Corporation Ltd. (NLC) to carry out detailed exploration between March, 1990 and July, 1992.

(c) and (d) Since exploration has already been completed, the Central Government has no plan to further explore it or to take it over.

Transport Subsidy

3477. SHRI TH. CHAOBA SINGH : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware of massive bogus transport subsidy claims being preferred by the industrialists in the States of Manipur and Nagaland;

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

(c) the total subsidy claimed and released to the North-Eastern States during the last three years;

(d) the reasons for delay in releasing the subsidy; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government to remedy the situation?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT) : (a) No case of bogus transport subsidy claim being preferred by the industrialists has been brought to the notice of Central Government by the States of Manipur and Nagaland.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Subsidy amounting to Rs. 125.54 crores has been released to the North-Eastern States during the last three years.

(d) and (e) The Scheme works on disbursement/reimbursement basis i.e. the subsidy claims are first scrutinised and disbursed by the State Government to the eligible units and reimbursement claimed thereafter from the Central Government. To expedite payments, North-East Development Financial Corporation (NEDFI) has been designated as a nodal agency for release of transport subsidy for the North-Eastern States on the basis of recommendations of the State Level Committee.

World Bank Loan to Coal India Limited

3478. SHRI KAMAL NATH : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) the amount of loan sanctioned recently by the World Bank to Coal India Limited;

(b) the details of purchases already finalised against this loan;

(c) whether there is proposal to purchase a large quantity of equipments from both Indian as well as foreign suppliers;

(d) if so, the steps taken to ensure transparency in the matter of purchase; and

(e) the authorities through whom these are going to be channelised?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI DILIP RAY) : (a) World Bank loan sanctioned to Coal India Limited (CIL) comprises of US\$ 530 million from IBRD and US\$ 530 million from Japan EXIM Bank.

(b) The details of purchases already finalised against this loan are as under :

PKG No.	Package	Name of the successful bidder	Remarks
004	14 Nos. Hydraulic Excavator 2.5 M3/3.5 M3	BEML, India	Notification of award of contract has been issued to BEML. Formal contract will be concluded with BEML shortly.
006	8 Nos. Hydraulic Excavator 4.0 M3/5.0 M3	BEML, India	Notification of award of contract has been issued to BEML. Formal contract will be concluded with BEML shortly.
018	2 Nos. Crane (30 T) Wheel mounted	TIL Ltd., India	Notification of award of contract has been issued to TIL Ltd. Formal contract will be concluded with TIL Ltd. shortly.
019	3 Nos. Crane (70 T) Wheel mounted	TIL Ltd., India	Notification of award of contract has been issued to TIL Ltd. Formal contract will be concluded with TIL Ltd. shortly.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Procurement of equipment is being made strictly as per World Bank's guidelines for International Competitive Bidding. World Bank approved standard bidding documents, which are also endorsed by Govt. of India, are used for bid evaluation and to finalise recommendation on award of contract. In order to ensure transparency in matter of purchase, methodology to be adopted for bid evaluation is clearly spelt out in the tender document issued to the prospective bidders.

(e) World Bank Project Division of Coal India Limited (CIL) is dealing with this procurement of

equipment for Coal Sector Rehabilitation Project. Each case will also require prior review and no objection by the World Bank. Either the competent authorities of CIL or the CIL Board of Directors, depending on the value of the purchase, will finally approve each case.

[Translation]

Import of Oilseeds

3479. SHRI JANARDAN PRASAD MISRA :
SHRI MANIBHAI RAMJIBHAI CHAUDHARI :

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the demand for the import of oil seeds in place of edible oil is being made;

(b) if so, whether the Government have taken any decision in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the time by which the decision is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) Yes, Sir. The Soyabean Processors Association of India (SOPA). The Solvent Extractors' Association of India (SEA) and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) have made request for allowing import of soyabean seed and other oilseeds.

(b) to (d) A proposal for allowing import of a limited quantity of soyabean to augment domestic availability subject to certain conditions and procedural requirements is presently under examination.

[English]

Industrial Data Collection System

3480. SHRI BHUBANESWAR KALITA : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are contemplating for compiling industrial growth rate from 18th to 6 weeks with the norms prescribed by the International Monetary Fund;

(b) if so, whether the Government propose to set up an independent source of agency for data collection;

(c) if so, whether growing liberalization and market orientation of the Indian Economy has let greater domestic competition; and

(d) if so, the time by which the independent source agency for data collection is likely to be set up?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT) : (a) As per Special Data Dissemination Standards (SDDS) norms prescribed by IMF, the Quick Estimate of Index of Industrial Production (IIP) has to be released by the Government within 6 weeks time. The various data source agencies are required to provide the monthly production data within 4 weeks time to enable the Government to release the index within 6 weeks. Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion (IPP), Ministry of Industry is the main source agency for providing monthly data for industrial production. This data is being provided within 4 weeks and the IIP is being released in the required 6 weeks.

(b) to (d) The SDDS requirement of release of index of industrial production, is being met and the Government has decided that the existing source agencies for collection of data would continue.

India's International Trade

3481. SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have prepared a status paper on India's International Trade in the context of obligations under the W.T.O.;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government propose to lay the "status paper" on the Table of the House; and

(d) if so, by when?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) and (b) The implementation of obligations arising out of the various Agreements entered into under the Uruguay Round is being constantly monitored by the Ministry of Commerce and the concerned administrative Ministries. Parliament is apprised of all significant developments on multilateral trade issues, from time to time. Since the Agreements span a wide range of commercial activities, administered by various Ministries, there is no single status paper covering all obligations.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Import of Wheat from Australia

3482. SHRI P. UPENDRA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have recently imported wheat from Australia through the State Trading Corporation of India;

(b) if so, the quantity and the price at which the wheat was imported;

(c) whether quotations were received from other countries also; and

(d) if so, the rates quoted by them?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. State Trading Corporation has contracted for import of 15 lakhs tonnes of wheat from Australia at FOB price of US\$ 142.50 per tonne.

(c) and (d) A statement is enclosed.

Statement*Comparison of C&F Cost of Whet of Various Origins*

US\$ PMT.

Sr. No.	Party	Variety	FOB Price	Freight Rate as indicated by Trans-charts	Landed Price (FOB+ freight)	Whether Bid-Bond condition complied	Terms of Offer	Remarks
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1.	Australian Wheat Board	Australian Standard White	142.50@	18.00	160.50	Yes*	@Originally quoted at US\$ 1460.50 PMT FOB *Being Govt. Supported organisation, Bid-Bond not insisted this time as well as in 1996 & 1997.	Business finalised for 1.5 million MTs at US\$ 142.50 PMT FOB Australian ports.
2.	Canadian Wheat Board	2CWSWS/ 2CWAD 1CWSWS/ 1CWAD/ 2 CWRS 1 CWRS	142.90@ 146.40@ 149.90@	27.00 27.00 27.00	169.90 173.40 176.90	Yes*	@CWB's original offer was for 150,000 MT for shipment during April'98 and was valid upto 25.2.98, 0900 Hrs. Winnipeg time on 25.2.98. In their subsequent fresh offer dt. 27.2.98 CWB had revised their price upwards by US\$ 0.60 PMT for 200,000 MT for shipment during April & May, 1998 *Being a Government supported organisation, Bid-Bond not insisted this time as during 1996 and 1997.	Offer found in-competitive.
		Shpt; April 1998						
3.	Continental Grains USA	US#2 or better Soft White	137.25	27.00	164.25	No	1. Mycotoxin, <i>not including Vomitoxin 30 PPB max.</i> Vomitoxin 1000 PPB. Also mentioned that Toxin levels not to exceed US laws and Standards. All other factors as per USDA (United States Deptt. of Agriculture) No. 2 grade standards and/ or independent Laboratory final at load port. 2. Bid Bond not received	1. Offer not conforming to Indian Health Regulations i.e. PFA, PFS Acts. 2. Offer does not meet the maximum mycotoxin limits prescribed by PFA 1955. 3. No Bid-Bond received. Hence offer rejected.
4.	Cargill, Geneva	US No. 2 O/B Soft White Wheat	132.46 (16-31 March'98) 133.95 (1-15 April'98)	27.00 27.00	159.46 160.95	No	1. No Guaranteeing max 30ppb mycotoxin level Instead Guaranteeing Aflatoxin 30 ppb and Vomitoxin max 2 parts per million per Independent lab.	1. Does not meet Indian Govt. Health regulations as per PFA act. 2. Certification of dwarf bunt not as

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
			134.70 (16-30 April'98)	27.00	161.70		2. Dwarf Bunt max 0.005%, based on the weight of the Dwarf Bunt spores per Independent lab. 3. Grades to be strictly final at load port per USDA, FGIS or one of the independent labs. at sellers choice and cost. 4. The party also sent a fresh offer on 27.2.98 enhancing the prices by US\$ 2.91 to US\$ 4.04 for various grades/ shipment periods. 5. No Bid Bond.	per PFS order and hence, not acceptable. 3. Bid bond not offered.
		US No.2 O/B Hard Red Winter wheat (FOB US Gulf Port)	139.28 (1-15 March'98) 139.28 (16.31 March'98) 139.74 (1-15 April'98) 140.47 (16-30 April'98)	31.00	170.28			
		No.2 Argentine Wheat (FOB Argentine Ports)	127.00 (March'98)	31.00	171.47		6. Offer is for wheat of Argentine origin.	4. Argentine wheat not asked for in tender. Hence offer rejected.
7.	Glencore Grain Ltd. Bermuda	USA/Canada/ Australia/ Europe/ EU/Turkish/ Argentine origin at Seller's option	C&F F.O.		149.00	Yes	1. Origin of wheat as per seller's option and offered wheat of Turkish, EU and Argentine origins which were not acceptable. 2. Subsequently informed that they could not offer Australian & Canadian origin wheat as AWB/CWB are quoting to STC directly. They confirmed their ability to supply only Turkey/EU wheat.	1. Tenderer expressed inability to give wheat of Australian and Canadian origins. For US origin, unable to give as per STC's specification i.e. PFA, PFS order 2. Argentine origin wheat offers were not invited Turkish origin wheat was not acceptable to FCI. Hence offer rejected.
8.	Holbud Limited, London	Argentine Wheat No.2	C&F F.O.		149.85	No	Offered only Argentine origin wheat	This origin offer not asked for as FCI did not want Argentine origin wheat. Hence offer rejected.
9.	Toepfer International, USA	-	-	-	-	-	Conveyed inability to participate and no reason given. Thanked for the tender documents	No offer, no consideration and hence rejection.

[Translation]

Competency of Indian Industry

3483. SHRI RAM NARAIN MEENA : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether Indian industries are not proving to be viable in the international industrial competitions;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by the Government in this regard?

(c) whether the Government have formulated any plan to revive the closed industries and to increase the industrial production, particularly in Rajasthan; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) Government has taken a number of steps for revival of sick industrial units, including those in Rajasthan, which, inter alia, include guidelines of Reserve Bank of India, amalgamation of sick units with healthy units, setting up of Board for Industrial & Financial Reconstruction under Sick Industrial Companies (Special Provision) Act, National Renewal Fund, National Equity Fund, etc.

[English]

Scam in Coal Mines

3484. PROF. AJIT KUMAR MEHTA :
SHRI SURENDRA PRASAD YADAV
(JHANJIHARPUR) :

Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) whether the ex-servicemen employed in the mining of coal in Bihar have been alleged in scam involving crores of rupees;

(b) if so, whether the Government have set up any Enquiry Committee to look into this affairs;

(c) if so, the details thereof indicating its findings; and

(d) the action taken or proposed to be taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI DILIP RAY) : (a) As per information received from the Coal India Limited (CIL), in none of the coal mines of the three subsidiary companies of CIL operating in the State of Bihar namely the Central Coalfields Limited, Bharat Coking Coal Limited and Eastern Coalfields Limited, the ex-servicemen are deployed in coal mining.

(b) to (d) Do not arise in view of the answer to par (a) of the question.

Reduction in Excise Duty

3485. SHRI RAVI SITARAM NAIK : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have reduced the excise duty by 4% in the budget on a large number of items of mass consumption including soft drink;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have taken any steps to ensure that the benefit of excise duty reduction is passed on to the consumers;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the Government have received any complaints against several companies including MNC's engaged in production of soft drinks and which have not passed on the concessions to consumers; and

(f) if, so the action taken by the Government against these companies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) The Government have not reduced excise duty by 4% on a large number of items of mass consumption in the Budget for 1998-99. There has also been no change in this year's budget in the excise duty applicable to aerated waters popularly known as soft drinks.

(b) to (f) Do not arise in view of (a) above.

Import of Textile Products From China etc.

3486. SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) whether there has been a steep rise in the imports of textile products from China, Nepal and some other countries;

(b) if so, the reasons therefore and its impact on handloom and powerloom sectors of the country;

(c) the textile items which are being increasingly imported from China, Nepal, Bangladesh and other countries and since which year; and

(d) the steps taken to reduce the import of these items from those countries to safeguard the interests of the handloom/powerloom sectors?

THE MINISTER FOR TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RANA) : (a) to (d) The imports of textiles yarn, fabrics and

madeups products from China, Bangladesh and Nepal during the last three years have been as follows :

(Value in Rs. Lakhs)

Year	Bangladesh	Nepal	China
1995-96	153.77	3820.11	11427.62
1996-97	424.43	5236.24	14587.63
1997-98	2952.15	8949.29	21950.04

It was due to reasons including market prices, import policies, like items kept under OGL or restricted list etc., depending upon purposes of domestic consumption or re-exports etc.

There has not been adverse impact on our handloom and powerloom sectors on this account. Government is generally monitoring the situation. Any representations from the industry could be examined under the available provisions of the W.T.O. agreements.

[Translation]

International Level Tourist Places in Himachal Pradesh

3487. SHRI SURESH CHANDEL : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) the total number of tourist centres of International level in Himachal Pradesh;

(b) the number of foreign tourists visited there during each of the last three years; and

(c) the efforts made by the Union Government to attract more National and International tourists there?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI OMAK APANG) : The main tourist centres in Himachal Pradesh include Shimla, Kullu-Manali, Chail, Lahoul, Spiti, Saharar, Hatkoti, Chintpurani, Keylong, Dharamshala, Sarchu, Swarghat, Kangra, Jawalamukhi, Manikaran, Paonta Sahib, Barog, Rampur, Kharapathar, Solan, Kufri, Chindi, Palampur, Saravari, Nahan, Chansal. The tourist centres are visited both by domestic and international tourists.

(b) The number of foreign tourists who visited Himachal Pradesh during the last three years is as follows :

1995	47903
1996	51360
1997	52901

(c) The Union Ministry of Tourism sanctioned financial assistance of Rs. 1611.21 lakhs for the

implementation of 75 projects in Himachal Pradesh during Eighth Plan. The assistance sanctioned during 1997-98 was Rs. 119.00 lakhs for 5 projects. In addition, Publicity brochures on Himachal Circuits have been brought out by the Ministry of Tourism.

[English]

Recommendations of Finance Commission

3488. SHRI ARJUN SETHI : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the recommendations made by the last Financial Commission in favour of States and not as per their required demands against the losses suffered due to natural calamities and economic backwardness;

(b) if so, whether the State like Orissa have suffered the most and hence requested the Centre for special consideration; and

(c) if so, the specific steps taken by the Union Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) : (a) Every Finance Commission evolves certain objective criteria for distribution of Central taxes and duties among the States. The Tenth Finance Commission (TFC) adopted the criteria of population, distance of per capita income, area adjusted, index of infrastructure, and tax effort. For working out the size of the calamity relief fund the Commission took into account the average of aggregate of ceilings of expenditure for the years 1983-84 to 1989-90 and the amount of calamity relief fund for the years 1990-91 to 1992-93. The amount so worked out for all the States was adjusted for inflation upto 1994-95, and thereafter at graduated rates upto 1999-2000.

(b) and (c) The TFC adopted objective criteria which were fair to all States. The award of the TFC was accepted by the Government of India. Although the Government of Orissa had made a request for special dispensation to write off Rs. 2100 crores from the outstanding debt of the State Government, the same could not be agreed to.

Recovery of Loans

3489. SHRI NAKLI SINGH :
DR. BIZAY SONKAR SHASTRI :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item appearing in the "Hindustan Times" dated June 3, 1998 captioned "Bank fails to recover loans worth 700 crores";

(b) if so, the facts of matter reported therein and the Government's reaction thereto;

(c) whether the non-performing accounts included a loan of Rs. 7 crores was given to Arnica International and Arco Exports for benefiting the then Chairman's son; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken to recover the loans?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The NPAs of the Punjab and Sind Bank for the last three years are as under :

(Rs. Crore)

1994-95	619.32
1995-96	957.53
1996-97	1089.70
1997-98*	645.00

*Provisional

(c) and (d) As per the records of the Punjab and Sind Bank, no proprietor/Partner/guarantor in the accounts of Arnica International & Arco Exports is a son of a former CMD of the bank. These accounts have been classified as NPA as on 31.3.1998. The bank has filed a civil suit against the proprietor/guarantor, besides a criminal complaint. The bank has also filed Exports Credit and Guarantee Corporation claim relating to pre-shipment and post-shipment advances granted in the account of Arnica International. The outstanding in both the accounts without interest suspense amounts to Rs. 6.87 crores against which a provision of Rs. 5.62 crores is reported to have been made.

Scheme for Development of Handicrafts Sector

3490. SHRI MANIKRAO HODLYA GAVIT :
SHRI D.S. AHIRE :

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to formulate/launch any Scheme for development of handicrafts sector and welfare of handicrafts craftsmen in tribal areas of the country;

(b) if so, the salient features of the Schemes;

(c) the funds provided under each Plan/Scheme during the last three years, year-wise, State-wise; and

(d) the number of craftsmen engaged in the handicrafts sector, state-wise, particularly in Maharashtra?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RANA) : (a) and (b) The development of the handicrafts sector and welfare of handicrafts craftsmen in the country, including the tribal areas of the country, the schemes under implementation include areas of training, marketing and marketing development support; setting up of craft development centre/emporium; exhibition and publicity; pension; workshed-cum-housing; group insurance etc.

(c) Statement showing the details of funds provided under each Plan Scheme during the last three years, year-wise and State-wise is enclosed.

(d) While a census of craftsmen engaged in the handicrafts sector is under progress, Statement-II showing the estimated number of craftsmen state-wise including in the state of Maharashtra is enclosed.

Statement-I

For the year 1995-96

Name of the Plan Schemes

(Rs. in Lakhs)

Sl. No.	State	Exhibition	Publicity	Design	Training	Marketing	Marketing Dev. Support	Survey Study	Welfare	Craft Dev. Centre	Revival of Languishing Crafts	Total all of Schemes
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1.	Andhra Pradesh	17.46	1.89	3.60	7.39	17.14	1.97	5.49	-	1.87	6.37	63.18
2.	A & N Islands	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.50	-	-	-	1.50
3.	Arunachal Pd.	-	-	-	1.75	-	-	1.98	-	-	-	3.71
4.	Assam	16.15	1.39	-	6.08	6.50	54.77	4.85	41.00	-	-	130.74
5.	Bihar	1.43	0.07	2.11	16.00	1.13	-	5.70	-	-	-	26.44

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
6.	Delhi	38.25	40.24	11.79	13.64	62.94	—	33.57	—	1.88	—	202.31
7.	Goa	3.50	—	—	1.58	—	—	—	—	—	—	5.08
8.	Gujarat	28.66	2.50	0.80	19.21	—	10.00	13.62	—	5.63	—	80.42
9.	Haryana	10.24	—	3.60	6.04	5.00	1.93	4.79	—	1.87	—	33.47
10.	Himachal Pd.	38.32	1.66	4.20	5.12	—	45.00	3.08	—	1.87	0.30	99.55
11.	Jammu & Kashmir	26.00	1.66	—	7.44	—	2.50	3.01	—	—	—	40.61
12.	Karnataka	10.67	1.93	0.43	2.94	—	2.50	3.42	—	—	—	21.89
13.	Kerala	38.47	—	—	9.56	1.51	12.42	2.05	—	6.01	—	70.02
14.	Madhya Pradesh	18.85	—	11.62	16.75	19.36	28.42	8.21	6.20	17.80	0.30	127.51
15.	Maharashtra	10.45	1.80	6.00	8.07	3.04	—	7.87	—	3.56	—	40.79
16.	Manipur	—	0.28	—	8.06	—	—	6.79	—	—	0.30	15.43
17.	Meghalaya	—	—	—	0.53	—	—	5.88	—	—	—	6.41
18.	Mizoram	—	—	—	—	—	—	1.70	—	—	—	1.70
19.	Nagaland	3.00	3.00	—	2.02	—	—	3.88	—	—	—	11.90
20.	Orissa	37.39	1.27	2.79	23.75	2.11	28.56	5.82	—	8.81	—	110.50
21.	Punjab	3.39	—	—	9.60	0.56	—	4.20	—	—	—	23.75
22.	Pondicherry	3.56	—	—	—	—	—	0.30	—	—	—	3.86
23.	Rajasthan	13.61	1.93	9.92	6.42	0.81	1.62	8.21	8.00	—	—	50.52
24.	Sikkim	—	—	—	1.17	—	—	0.97	—	—	—	2.14
25.	Tamil Nadu	30.14	—	—	20.19	1.12	10.00	6.16	7.30	7.12	0.30	82.23
26.	Tripura	2.47	4.03	—	2.56	—	—	3.88	—	—	—	12.94
27.	Uttar Pradesh	109.38	23.52	97.20	138.92	16.76	54.04	21.57	94.81	50.00	—	606.20
28.	West Bengal	16.85	4.65	0.31	13.54	5.50	12.06	9.25	—	1.87	—	64.03
Total		484.24	91.82	154.37	348.33	143.48	265.79	177.73	157.31	108.29	7.57	1938.93

Note : Figures do not include grants released for multi-state activities. This does not also include plan funds spent directly by the department on promotional and developmental activities.

For the year 1996-97

		Name of the Plan Schemes										(Rs. in Lakhs)
Sl. No.	State	Exhibition	Publicity	Design	Training	Marketing	Marketing Dev. Support	Survey Study	Welfare	Craft Dev. Centre	Revival of Language Crafts	Total all of Schemes
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1.	Andhra Pradesh	6.94	—	0.79	5.20	18.30	5.38	—	—	—	—	36.61
2.	A & N Islands	—	—	—	—	1.00	—	0.38	—	—	—	1.38
3.	Arunachal Pradesh	—	—	—	—	1.00	—	0.34	—	—	—	1.34
4.	Assam	5.37	—	3.00	2.65	12.52	35.34	2.10	31.60	14.25	—	106.83

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
5.	Bihar	0.80	—	—	20.97	5.23	—	1.43	—	—	—	28.43
6.	Delhi	21.58	6.82	4.19	4.63	21.95	—	6.74	—	3.56	—	69.47
7.	Goa	—	—	—	0.69	7.95	—	—	—	—	—	8.64
8.	Gujarat	11.93	—	3.00	0.52	7.55	6.97	9.80	4.00	1.88	—	45.65
9.	Haryana	3.11	—	1.80	0.61	15.03	38.05	1.20	—	3.00	—	62.80
10.	Himachal Pradesh	18.04	0.30	20.11	1.10	1.50	22.50	0.77	—	—	—	64.32
11.	Jammu & Kashmir	9.45	—	1.00	1.56	4.96	—	4.52	—	—	—	21.49
12.	Karnataka	4.49	—	—	3.18	9.55	34.88	6.84	10.80	1.38	—	71.12
13.	Kerala	3.40	—	—	3.84	10.48	7.76	2.05	32.61	7.41	—	67.55
14.	Madhya Pradesh	5.81	—	—	15.77	33.19	15.50	—	—	—	—	70.27
15.	Maharashtra	5.62	—	—	2.51	20.02	0.38	2.21	—	7.12	—	37.86
16.	Manipur	0.90	—	—	2.41	1.80	—	—	1.00	3.19	—	9.30
17.	Meghalaya	—	—	—	0.50	1.20	—	1.03	—	—	—	2.73
18.	Mizoram	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.30	—	2.71	—	3.01
19.	Nagaland	1.90	—	—	0.78	1.00	2.50	—	—	—	—	6.18
20.	Orissa	16.36	—	1.60	21.57	17.19	14.97	6.75	4.50	1.68	0.60	85.22
21.	Punjab	1.65	—	—	—	9.26	—	—	—	5.50	—	16.41
22.	Pondicherry	1.80	—	—	—	1.20	—	—	—	—	—	3.00
23.	Rajasthan	4.10	—	0.60	1.10	8.59	3.80	—	—	—	—	18.19
24.	Sikkim	—	—	—	—	1.00	—	0.17	—	—	—	1.17
25.	Tamil Nadu	8.71	—	3.21	15.43	10.28	32.13	0.95	9.56	3.88	—	84.15
26.	Tripura	1.09	2.74	—	1.00	1.20	6.00	0.68	—	3.56	—	16.27
27.	Uttar Pradesh	43.69	—	15.94	111.74	32.62	25.00	14.73	34.45	19.63	—	297.78
28.	West Bengal	10.53	—	5.46	8.21	23.06	20.13	6.72	—	8.99	—	83.10
Total		187.27	9.86	60.70	225.97	278.61	271.29	69.71	128.52	87.74	0.60	1320.27

Note : Figures do not include grants released for multi-state activities. This does not also include plan funds spent directly by the department on promotional and developmental activities.

For the year 1997-98

		<i>Name of the Plan Schemes</i>										<i>(Rs. in Lakhs)</i>
Sl. No.	State	Exhibition	Publicity	Design	Training	Market- ing	Marke- ting Dev. Support	Survey Study	Welfare	Craft Dev. Centre	Revival of Lan- guishing Crafts	Total all of Sc- hemes
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1.	Andhra Pradesh	12.14	1.89	—	6.28	16.78	2.12	—	10.35	—	—	49.56
2.	A & N Islands	—	—	—	0.70	0.20	—	1.36	—	—	—	2.26

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
3.	Arunachal Pradesh	4.00	—	—	0.21	0.69	—	0.35	—	0.93	—	6.18
4.	Assam	13.83	10.21	8.00	6.27	20.93	18.03	4.95	38.00	22.65	—	142.87
5.	Bihar	7.46	—	2.00	6.86	2.60	—	0.21	—	—	—	19.13
6.	Delhi	17.53	2.35	13.27	5.11	52.43	9.43	—	—	5.11	0.30	105.53
7.	Goa	0.94	0.75	—	2.26	2.25	3.97	37.48	—	—	—	47.65
8.	Gujarat	13.50	4.11	12.94	7.70	22.66	9.00	0.06	4.00	5.68	—	79.65
9.	Haryana	5.59	2.02	0.80	3.61	25.08	14.58	1.81	1.03	—	—	54.52
10.	Himachal Pradesh	21.49	—	0.50	1.20	1.45	38.79	0.08	—	3.42	—	66.93
11.	Jammu & Kashmir	14.79	0.82	0.50	3.13	6.68	9.44	—	3.56	—	—	38.92
12.	Karnataka	3.92	1.14	3.94	1.94	9.46	6.13	1.05	8.64	10.07	—	46.29
13.	Kerala	2.59	—	—	0.83	13.53	10.92	—	—	4.70	—	32.57
14.	Madhya Pradesh	8.28	8.53	—	13.00	13.63	15.45	—	—	—	—	58.89
15.	Maharashtra	7.90	—	—	1.78	25.23	—	0.45	14.35	3.56	—	53.27
16.	Manipur	1.64	1.30	1.00	5.96	7.28	5.65	0.44	—	3.19	1.30	27.76
17.	Meghalaya	—	0.69	—	0.30	—	—	0.03	—	—	—	1.02
18.	Mizoram	—	1.53	—	—	0.51	5.00	0.01	—	—	—	7.05
19.	Nagaland	5.75	2.36	1.20	3.14	1.26	5.00	—	—	3.56	—	22.27
20.	Orissa	28.62	1.85	6.00	15.96	11.14	13.15	7.10	8.00	14.27	2.92	109.01
21.	Punjab	2.66	—	0.51	3.30	2.45	5.00	0.25	—	6.60	—	20.77
22.	Pondicherry	1.38	—	—	0.77	0.65	—	—	—	—	—	2.80
23.	Rajasthan	9.74	3.45	—	1.03	4.40	—	3.63	5.31	3.75	—	31.31
24.	Sikkim	—	—	—	1.10	0.90	—	0.01	—	—	—	2.01
25.	Tamil Nadu	9.87	—	1.87	7.84	6.62	3.13	0.16	—	6.96	—	36.45
26.	Tripura	1.90	3.37	5.30	1.52	1.00	18.36	0.23	19.29	3.56	—	54.53
27.	Uttar Pradesh	32.80	0.97	3.30	75.75	33.54	32.06	1.74	—	25.68	0.60	206.44
28.	West Bengal	19.39	4.02	—	5.58	13.47	12.54	3.70	20.98	3.56	—	83.24
Total		247.71	51.36	61.13	183.13	296.82	238.21	65.10	128.26	127.25	5.12	1404.57

Note : Figures do not include grants released for multi-state activities. This does not also include plan funds spent directly by the department on promotional and developmental activities.

Statement-II			(Number in lakhs)		
Sl.No.	State	Estimated Number of Craftpersons	1	2	3
1	2	3	3.	Arunachal Pradesh	0.11
1.	Andhra Pradesh	1.68	4.	Assam	1.58
2.	A & N Islands	0.02	5.	Bihar	2.36
			6.	Delhi	1.77
			7.	Goa	0.10

1	2	3
8.	Gujarat	5.25
9.	Haryana	2.24
10.	Himachal Pradesh	0.92
11.	Jammu & Kashmir	8.19
12.	Karnataka	4.57
13.	Kerala	0.15
14.	Madhya Pradesh	1.61
15.	Maharashtra	5.14
16.	Manipur	4.25
17.	Meghalaya	1.10
18.	Mizoram	0.08
19.	Nagaland	1.38
20.	Orissa	1.19
21.	Punjab	0.97
22.	Pondicherry	0.02
23.	Rajasthan	5.73
24.	Sikkim	0.15
25.	Tamil Nadu	1.39
26.	Tripura	2.78
27.	Uttar Pradesh	15.57
28.	West Bengal	6.20
Total		76.50

Violation of Rules by Banks

3491. SHRI JANG BAHADUR SINGH PATEL : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is mandatory for the private and public sector banks to maintain certain amount of Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) and Statutory Liquidity Ratio (SLR) with the Reserve Bank of India;

(b) if so, the details of the banks which have violated these mandatory clauses during the last three years, year-wise and bank-wise; and

(c) the action taken by RBI against such banks?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The details of defaults in maintenance of Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) by scheduled commercial banks, bank group-wise and recovery of penal interest from them during the period April 1995 to March 1998, as furnished by Reserve Bank of India (RBI) are given below :

Type of the banks	No. of banks defaulted during			Action taken by RBI
	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	
Public Sector Banks	-	-	-	-
Private Sector Banks	-	2	2	Penal interest for the period of default in terms of RBI Act, 1934 has been recovered/being recovered.
Foreign Banks	2	5	1	

Details of defaults in the maintenance of Statutory Liquidity Ratio (SLR) and recovery of penal interest during the period April 1995 to March 1998 are as given below :

Public Sector Banks	-	-	-	-
Private Sector Banks	4	-	1	Penal interest for the period of defaults in terms of Banking Regulation Act, 1949 has been recovered.
Foreign Banks	5	5	4	

[Translation]

FDI in Infrastructure Sector

3492. SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO :
SHRI RAMPAL SINGH :
SHRI ANAND RATNA MAURYA :

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to evolve any Transparent Policy for inviting Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in infrastructure sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT) : (a) to (c) A comprehensive set of guidelines for the consideration of FDI proposals by the FIPB is already in place, which provides for a time-bound, transparent and non-discriminatory mechanism for their disposal. The present guidelines provide for a liberalized regime for

foreign investment in the infrastructure sector. FDI policy relating to infrastructure sector inter alia provides for FDI up to 100% in power projects (generation, transmission and distribution) under the automatic approval route subject to a foreign equity cap of Rs. 1500 crore; in basic and value added telecom services, FDI is limited to 49% subject to grant of licence by the Deptt. of Telecommunications (no limit on foreign equity in the manufacturing sector); foreign equity up to 100% allowed for ports on build, operate and transfer basis; and FDI upto 49% in petroleum refining, up to 51% in petroleum product pipeline sector and up to 74% in infrastructure related to marketing of petroleum products.

[English]

Bee Keeping by KVIC

3493. SHRI RAMCHANDRA BAINDA :
SHRI PRABHU DAYAL KATHERIA :

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) the amount spent on bee keeping by the Khadi and Village Industries Commission and other such agencies during the years 1996 and 1997;

(b) whether any survey has been carried out on the protection of bee keeping industry in the country; and

(c) if so, the details thereof, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT) : (a) The disbursements made by the Khadi and Village Industries Commission on bee keeping activities during 1996 and 1997 are given below :

(Rs. in lakhs)			
Year	Grant	Loan	Total
1996-97	40.02	47.20	87.22
1997-98	6.66	4.26	10.92

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Surveys have been undertaken by Central Bee Research and Training Institute, Pune in Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra to identify Bee diseases and to combat them. Studies were also undertaken in Kerala and Tamil Nadu to ascertain the adaptability of 'Apis Mellifera' Bee Colonies which are not natives of India.

Development of Tourism in Karnataka

3494. SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state.

(a) whether the Union Government have received any proposal from the Government of Karnataka regarding financial assistance for the development of Mulabagilli and Chikkaturupati as tourist spots in the State to attract tourists; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI OMAK APANG) : (a) No proposal has been received from the State Government regarding financial assistance for the development of Mulabagilli and Chikkaturupati as tourist spots.

(b) Does not arise.

Growth of Export to EU

3495. SHRI P.C. THOMAS : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Ministry is aiming for a 20% growth in exports to the nations of European Union;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government propose to hold talks with these countries at ministerial and official levels including commerce representatives attached with Indian diplomatic missions; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. Government is aiming for a 20% growth in exports.

Government regularly holds bilateral interaction both at ministerial and at official levels. A meeting of the Commercial representatives attached with select Indian diplomatic Missions in Europe was held in May 1998 in London and it was identified that the 20% export growth was within the realms of possibility, given the inherent strengths of Indian products in certain established areas and the potential that exists in non-traditional areas.

A suitable promotional campaign with special emphasis on thrust commodities is being undertaken with the active involvement of the Indian commercial representatives located in European Union countries and Indian exporters Joint Commission meeting and working consultation at bilateral level are also proposed to pursue greater market access in these countries.

Decline in Export of Hosiery Products

3496. SHRI C. KUPPUSAMI : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) the target fixed and the achievements made in the export of hosiery products during the last three years, year-wise;

(b) the reasons for sharp decline in the export of hosiery products during the last year and the first quarter of current year; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to cover the shortfall?

THE MINISTER FOR TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RANA) : (a) to (c) No separate export targets are fixed for hosiery products. The exports of hosiery products (knitted garments) during the last three years and the first quarter of the current year have been as follows :

	Value in US Million dollars
1995-96	1223.2
1996-97	1488.2
1997-98	1605.3
1998-99 (April-June 98)	390.7

There has been no decline in the export of hosiery products during the above period.

Market Development Assistance Programme

3497. SHRI K.P.- NAIDU : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) whether some State Governments have requested for the continuance of the Market Development Assistance Programme and Handloom Development Centres for Weavers; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and reaction of the Union Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RANA) : (a) and (b) The Market Development Assistance Scheme stands discontinued from April 1, 1998. On the basis of requests received from some State Governments for continuation of this scheme, the matter is being reviewed.

The Handloom Development Centre Scheme was in operation upto 1997-98. Proposals for sanctions under the Scheme have been received from some State Governments in the current year also. Further continuation of the Scheme would depend upon the outcome of an overall assessment of the Scheme being done in consultation with the State Governments & NABARD.

Surplus Land of NTC

3498 SHRI HARIN PATHAK : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) the total area of surplus land owned by the closed NTC mills in Gujarat, as on date;

(b) the market value of this surplus land and whether any complaints regarding encroachments of this land have been noticed;

(c) if so, whether the Government propose to sell this surplus land with a view to earn revenue;

(d) whether Government have any discussion with the State Government in this regard; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RANA) : (a) and (b) The NTC have a total surplus area of 107.88 acres valued at Rs. 37.74 crores in Gujarat. No mill under NTC has been closed in Gujarat. Some encroachment on the lands of NTC mills has been reported and appropriate action is being taken.

(c) to (e) The surplus lands of NTC are proposed to be sold with a view to raising funds for revival of NTC mills. The matter has been taken up with the State Governments, including the Government of Gujarat.

[Translation]

Ban on Taking Profit Abroad

3499. DR. MADAN PRASAD JAISWAL :
SHRI DAROGA PRASAD SAROJ :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have imposed any restrictions on foreign investors to take capital flow and profit on investment to their country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether foreign investor can withdraw his amount at any time or he has to wait for the block year; and

(d) the total foreign investment made alongwith investment made by Non-Resident Indians, till date country-wise?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) : (a) to (c) There are no restrictions on the repatriation or capital and dividends in respect of foreign investment except that a condition of dividend balancing is imposed for foreign investment in 22 specified industries in the consumer goods sector. Under the condition of dividend balancing out flows of foreign exchange on account of dividend payments are to be balanced by export earnings.

(d) Country-wise inflow of foreign direct investments (including NRI's) from 1-7-1991 to 31-12-1997 is given in the statement attached.

Statement*Countrywise Inflow of Foreign Investment (Including NRIs) from 1.7.1991 to 31.12.1997*

Sl.No.	Country Name	Inflow Amt. (Rs. in Crores)
1	2	3
1.	Argentina	00.03
2.	Australia	110.53
3.	Austria	56.22
4.	Bahamas	25.61
5.	Baharain	03.18
6.	Belgium	186.88
7.	Belorussia	01.68
8.	Bhutan	04.69
9.	Bolivia	01.74
10.	Brazil	01.16
11.	Bermuda	55.60
12.	British Virginia	11.49
13.	British West Indies	00.70
14.	Canada	60.15
15.	Channel Island	02.15
16.	Caymen Islands	03.00
17.	China	01.69
18.	Cyprus	36.86
19.	Czech Republic	01.06
20.	Denmark	172.19
21.	Egypt	00.60
22.	Estonia	03.10
23.	Finland	58.11
24.	France	503.67
25.	Germany	1574.40
26.	Greece	00.50
27.	Hongkong	554.03
28.	Hungary	01.10
29.	Indonesia	11.24
30.	Isle of Man	01.73
31.	Iran	34.60

1	2	3
32.	Ireland	16.80
33.	Israel	64.77
34.	Italy	238.18
35.	Japan	1521.52
36.	Jordon	00.0088
37.	South Korea	1504.25
38.	Kuwait	03.88
39.	Leichtenstein	06.13
40.	Luxembourg	23.78
41.	Malaysia	92.32
42.	Mauritius	7690.50
43.	Malta	00.12
44.	Mexico	00.006
45.	Muscat	00.89
46.	Netherlands	1549.18
47.	Nevis	00.10
48.	Norway	11.26
49.	NRI	566.52
50.	Oman	07.91
51.	Panama	07.94
52.	Philippines	173.12
53.	Poland	00.35
54.	Qatar	00.0025
55.	Romania	00.07
56.	Russia	13.93
57.	Saudi Arabia	04.20
58.	Sigapore	498.44
59.	Slovakia	00.02
60.	South Africa	00.0006
61.	Spain	15.78
62.	Sri Lanka	01.40
63.	Sweden	325.12
64.	Switzerland	612.37
65.	Taiwan	28.13
66.	Tanzania	00.19

1	2	3
67.	Thailand	226.93
68.	UAE	20.87
69.	Ukraine	00.54
70.	United Kingdom	1828.75
71.	USA	5223.83
72.	USSR	02.53
73.	Virgin Islands	58.32
74.	West Indies	02.38

Saving Bank Account

3500. SHRI CHANDRASHEKHAR SAHU : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether keeping minimum big balance continuously in the saving accounts in the banks has been made compulsory;

(b) whether this amount somehow takes the form of fixed deposit and less salaried persons are exploited due to the less interest in their saving balance as a result thereof;

(c) whether it is also mandatory to keep a large amount in current account and interest is also not paid thereon and instead some charges are charged;

(d) whether the Government propose to consider this amount as Fixed Term Deposit for one year, so that the account holder can earn more interest in order to end such exploitation; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) to (c) Reserve Bank of India has not stipulated any minimum balance in Saving Bank/Current Account. Such stipulations are made by individual banks taking into account the cost of maintaining/servicing the accounts. The minimum balance stipulated by the banks for Saving Bank Account cannot be considered as or on par with Fixed Deposits. Less salaried persons cannot be considered as exploited as the present rate of interest of 4.5% p.a. on Saving Bank Account is reasonable taking into account that a significant proportion of Saving Bank Account are utilised essentially in the same manner as Current Accounts. No interest is payable on credit balances in Current Account whether large or small, as the funds are withdrawable on demand.

The banks are unable to profitably deploy the funds in current account.

It is understood that some banks levy certain service charges on the accounts if the minimum balance goes below the stipulated levels (amounts) till the accounts are regularised by the depositors.

(d) and (e) It would not be appropriate to consider minimum balance stipulated by banks either in Saving Bank Accounts or in Current Accounts as Fixed Deposits for one year. Saving Bank Deposits are flexible with negligible stipulations regarding transactions in the accounts. The account holders are provided with Cheque Book facilities and Cheque collection facilities. Moreover, the minimum period of domestic term deposits was reduced from 46 days to 30 days from July 2, 1996 and from 30 days to 15 days from April, 29, 1998 so that depositors may earn interest on their short term deposits which will be fairly liquid and could be utilised in case of contingency.

[English]

Writing off of Loans by Banks

3501. SHRI MOHAN RAWALE : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the amount of bad debts written off by each public sector banks during the last three years;

(b) the reasons for which such huge amounts are written off by public sector banks every year;

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(d) the measures taken by the Government to streamline the working of public sector banks and fix responsibility for bad debts?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) The amount of bad debts written off by the public sector banks during the last three years is given in the statement.

(b) The introduction of Financial Sector Reforms and revised guidelines have necessitated banks to desist from the practice of taking unrealised income in their books and also to provide against possible loan losses. Due to their increased sensitivity to credit risk, banks are laying emphasis on reduction of NPAs. The banks have broadly two alternatives for recovery of bad loans :

1. File suit which may take years to settle and even if banks get decree in their favour, recovery of the dues may be time assuming. The recovery of dues after efflux of much time may not be

commensurate with legal and other expenditure incurred on recoveries;

2. Negotiate with the borrowers to realise maximum possible amount even if they have to sacrifice certain dues such as interests debited to account after it has become NPA etc. by entering into a compromise and write-off the amount sacrificed. Except in very rare cases, banks do not permit write-off of the principal loan amount.

Banks have been writing off bad debts generally for the following reasons :

- (i) The prospects for recovery are remote.
- (ii) No tangible/realisable securities are available to cover the debts.
- (iii) Legal action takes unduly long period.
- (iv) The loans are outstanding for a considerably long period.
- (v) Bringing down the Non performing Assets (NPAs).
- (vi) Recovered amount will be gainfully recycled.

Reserve Bank of India has advised the banks to follow the following criteria while approving write-off and compromise proposals :

- (a) The authority approving the write-off proposal should not have sanctioned the advance in question in his individual capacity.
- (b) The loan sanctioning authority had exercised his powers judiciously, and adhered to the guidelines issued by the bank in the matter of grant of advances and that normal terms and conditions were stipulated.
- (c) There was no laxity in the conduct and post-disbursement supervision of the advances.
- (d) There was no act of commission or omission on the part of the staff leading to the debt proving irrecoverable.
- (e) The staff accountability aspect should be examined by the banks expeditiously.

Banks have also been advised that in their attempts to reduce NPAs through negotiated settlement they should ensure to recover the dues to the maximum extent possible at minimum expenses.

(c) and (d) In order to improve the recovery RBI has advised the banks to lay down the loan recovery policy duly vetted by their Board of Directors. 'Recovery of Debts due to Banks and Financial Institutions Act' was enacted

on 27th August, 1993 to provide for establishment of Tribunals for expeditious adjudication and recovery of debts due to banks and financial institutions. Under the Act 9 Debts Recovery Tribunals have been established at Calcutta, Delhi, Bangalore, Ahmedabad, Chennai, Guwahati, Jaipur, Patna and Jabalpur and an Appellate Tribunal has been set up in Mumbai. Action has been initiated to strengthen the system of Debts Recovery Tribunals. The performance of the banks having large NPAs have been reviewed by the Government periodically and banks have been advised to vigorously follow up the cases filed in the Tribunal for early decision. As regards staff accountability Board of Directors of the bank review top 100 accounts of each category of NPAs viz substandard, doubtful and loss category (Total 300 accounts) While reviewing these accounts the Board of Directors also looks into the system prevailing in the bank to fix staff accountability.

Statement

Bad debts Written off by the Public Sector Banks during the last three years

Name of the Bank	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	
	1	2	3	4
State Bank Group				
1. State Bank of India	363.72	398.69	293.67	
2. State Bank of Bikaner & Jaipur	39.25	24.98	26.45	
3. State Bank of Hyderabad	27.89	15.85	136.69	
4. State Bank of Indore	32.93	6.04	26.02	
5. State Bank of Mysore	50.61	5.72	12.09	
6. State Bank of Patiala	19.74	4.93	19.62	
7. State Bank of Saurashtra	18.95	4.02	2.38	
8. State Bank of Travancore	4.17	28.96	36.29	
Nationalised Banks				
1. Allahabad Bank	55.73	6.71	21.39	
2. Andhra Bank	38.78	1.95	37.42	
3. Bank of Baroda	270.27	46.42	70.17	
4. Bank of India	260.38	307.08	217.15	
5. Bank of Maharashtra	81.12	56.52	47.30	
6. Canara Bank	200.00	169.49	18.20	
7. Central Bank of India	144.12	138.44	156.83	
8. Corporation Bank	18.64	19.13	0.94	
9. Dena Bank	27.34	51.92	58.76	

1	2	3	4
10. Indian Bank	42.51	115.94	10.28
11. Indian Overseas Bank	5.94	75.01	375.73
12. Oriental Bank of Commerce	2.13	0.82	46.22
13. Punjab National Bank	220.77	53.14	150.34
14. Punjab & Sind Bank	1.70	2.86	9.93
15. Syndicate Bank	24.84	8.03	58.79
16. Union Bank of India	27.86	38.81	30.57
17. UCO Bank	165.07	110.98	220.57
18. United Bank of India	119.00	36.51	65.48
19. Vijaya Bank	4.19	13.26	12.72
Total	2267.65	1742.21	2162.00

[Translation]

Export/Trading Houses

3502. SHRI PRABHASH CHANDRA TIWARI : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

- whether the State corporations are being given the status of export/trading houses;
- if so, the details thereof, State-wise; and
- the increase in percentage of export after changing the status of these corporations and foreign exchange earned, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) Yes Sir. One State Corporation nominated by the respective State Government/Union Territories can be recognized as an Export House even though the criterion for such recognition is not fulfilled by them. Other state corporations can be granted Export House/Trading House status if they fulfill the requisite eligibility criterion.

(b) and (c) Information is being collected.

[English]

Loans For Export Promotion

3503. SHRI VAIKO :

SHRI RANJIT BISWAL :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

- whether RBI propose to extend funds to commercial banks at 4% interest for Export Promotion;
- if so, the details thereof and the sources identified by Reserve Bank of India to generate these funds;

(c) whether the RBI also propose to extend these concessions to FII under forward cover;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) by when it is likely to be done?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a), (b) and (e) Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has reported that in order to provide support to exporters, as a special case, interest rate charged by scheduled commercial banks to exporters on rupee export credit granted in respect of 'incremental exports' over and above the base-year level of exports in 1997-98 will be '6.5 per cent per annum.' The above facility will be available upto December 31, 1999. Banks will be provided refinance by RBI at '4.0 per cent per annum' for the rupee credit extended by them in respect of 'incremental exports' under the new scheme.

(c) and (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House to the extent available.

Non-Payment of Loans by Banks

3504. SHRI NRIPEN GOSWAMY : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the number of complaints received from the North Eastern States, particularly from Assam regarding non-payment of loan by the Nationalised Banks sanctioned under the Prime Minister Rozgar Yojana and other schemes;

(b) whether any instructions have been issued to provide loans to the unemployed persons on the basis of such complaints; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has reported that no complaint has been received by them from Assam.

(b) and (c) RBI has reported that instructions have been issued to all banks to advance loans under the schemes. In terms of the extant guidelines for advances under Government sponsored schemes (which are treated as advances under priority sector) all loans applications should be disposed off within a prescribed time frame. Whenever complaints are received by RBI, these are forwarded to the respective Regional Offices/concerned

bank for enquiring into the same. After completion of the investigations complainants are suitably advised in the matter.

Financial Assistance to Kerala

3505. SHRI SURESH KURUP : Will the Minister of FINANCE pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government of Kerala has sought financial assistance of Rs. 105 crore for the "Kudumbashree" programme from the Union Government; and

(b) if so, the decision of the Union Government in regard thereto?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The request of the State Government is under consideration.

Foreign Direct Investment

3506. SHRI AJAY KUMAR S. SARNAIK : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the toughening stance of the G-8 countries is feared to affect foreign direct investment to India;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith investment made by G-8 countries during each of the last three years;

(c) whether the Government are confident that FDI from USA is likely to be continued despite sanctions;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether FDI from German, Japan and United Kingdom has declined sharply;

(f) if so, the details thereof and the extent to which this investment has declined; and

(g) the reaction of the Government thereto and the remedial measures taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT) : (a) Communique on Nuclear Test issued on June, 12 by G-8 countries does not impose any restriction on Foreign Direct Investment into India.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) US has been the largest source of FDI into India with its share ranging between 25 to 26% of total foreign investment in India. US sanctions imposed under the Glenn Amendment do not put any restriction on private investment flows into India except that certain financial institutions are dis-allowed from lending to both

public and private sector in India. This would specifically cover the Overseas Private Investment Corporations and the US Exim Bank, which have been playing an important role in guaranteeing and supporting US investments into India. However, it is understood that in many cases, alternate financial arrangements are being secured by the US investors. Going by the post Nuclear Test trends, as far as US investment in India is concerned, so far there does not seem to be any negative impact, as the amount of US origin FDI approved has gone up more than three fold in June '98 as compared to May '98.

(e) No, Sir.

(f) and (g) Does not arise.

Assurance Regarding New India Assurance Company Ltd.

3507. DR. RAMESH CHAND TOMAR : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether some assurances relating to New India Assurance Company Limited are pending before the Parliament;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the period of their pendency and the reasons for delay; and

(c) the time by which these assurances are likely to be fulfilled?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

SBI Branches

3508. SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN :
SHRI ASHOK ARGAL :
SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH CHAUHAN :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the SBI propose to open new branches in various States during the current financial year; and

(b) if so, the State-wise location of these branches?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) and (b) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

New HMT Watches

3509. SHRI H.G. RAMULU : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Hindustan Machine Tools has brought out a new model of wrist watch called "Kayakave Kailasa" in memory of Jagajyothi Basaveshwara;

(b) if so, when it was released;

(c) the number of watches produced/sold so far; and

(d) the action taken by the company to boost the sale of these watches?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SUKHBIR SINGH BADAL) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. 'Kayakave Kailasa' a new model of wrist watch was released by HMT on 12th December, 1997.

(c) The number of watches produced/sold is 5200/3500 respectively.

(d) These watches were produced against the specific request of Shri Basava Samithi, Bangalore. The watches were sold to the Samithi and various other related organisations.

Exim Policy

3510. SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Export & Import Policy announced by the Government, places agricultural commodities at par with industrial items;

(b) if so, whether there is still any gap in the treatment of agricultural commodities vis-a-vis industrial items for the purpose of Import-Export Policy;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the Government have taken any steps to ensure that the benefits of Export of agricultural commodities reach the agricultural producers;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) to (c) The Current Export and Import Policy lays down general criteria for import and export of agricultural, industrial or other items. However, most of the agricultural products are in the Negative List of Imports at present. There are also restriction on export of certain items. In respect of certain export-promotion schemes, special treatment has been extended to the agriculture sector to boost agricultural exports as under :

(a) Under Zero Duty Export Promotion Capital Goods (EPCG) Scheme, the threshold limit for zero duty capital goods imports has been reduced from Rs. 5 crores to Rs. 1 crore for agricultural and allied sectors.

(b) Double weightage has been given for export of fruits and vegetables, floriculture and horticulture produce/products for calculating eligibility of Export House/Trading House/Super Star Trading House. 1% additional Special Import Licence as been provided for export of fruits, vegetables floriculture and horticulture products provided the export of these products constitute 10% or more of the total exports made.

(c) EOU/EPZ units in agriculture and allied sectors have been permitted to sell 50% of their production in value terms in the DTA subject to positive net foreign exchange earnings.

(d) to (f) Export of agricultural commodities take place through merchant exporters or by manufacturers. Export of agricultural products helps in employment generation and enhancing farm incomes which either directly or indirectly helps the agricultural producers.

[Translation]

Supply of Dumper/Dozer to Bihar by BCCL

3511. PROF. RITA VERMA : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) whether dumper, dozer etc. have been sent to Patna from Bharat Coking Coal Ltd. (BCCL), a subsidiary of Coal India Ltd. for sanitation purposes on the demand by the Government of Bihar;

(b) if so, the details of other items sent to Patna by BCCL;

(c) whether Government of Bihar has been asked to make payment for such items;

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

(e) whether there is a loss of coal production of BCCL due to sending of these items to Patna; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI DILIP RAY) : (a) and (b) Yes, Madam. Following equipments of BCCL have been sent to Patna on the request of Government of Bihar :

Sl.No.	Name of Equipment	Numbers
1.	Payloader	6*
2.	Dumpers	15
3.	Shovel (Poclairn)	2

*One belonging to contractor operating in BCCL.

(c) and (d) It has been reported by BCCL that bills are being prepared for claiming payment from Patna Municipal Corporation for use of these equipments. The details of the amount will be known after finalisation of the bills.

(e) and (f) BCCL has reported that due to transfer of these equipments to Government of Bihar the company has suffered a loss both in production and despatches as under :

Details	Quantum
Production Loss	1000 tonnes per day
Loss in despatches	10000 tonnes per day

Quantitative Restriction

3512. SHRI MOTILAL VORA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have received suggestion from Indian Commerce and Industrial Board to take up the matter of quantitative restrictions again in W.T.O.;

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto;

(c) the time by which the Government propose to take up the matter with W.T.O.;

(d) the number of products exempted from import restrictions;

(e) whether 'Bindi', 'Kumkum' and vermilion are included in it; and

(f) the percentage of export rate during the last five years?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

(d) As on 1.4.1998 a total of 6781 items can be imported freely.

(e) Yes, Sir. Sindur, Bindi and Kumkum are in the Free List.

(f) Export growth rate in Rupee terms for the last 5 years is as follows :

1993-94	29.9%
1994-95	18.5%
1995-96	28.6%
1996-97	11.7%
1997-98	6.3%

[English]

Foreign Exchange Limit

3513. DR. RAMKRISHNA KUSMARIA : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the amount of foreign exchange allowed to a person going abroad;

(b) the maximum limit prescribed for higher officers and political leaders etc. in this regard;

(c) whether with a view to save foreign exchange, Government propose to reduce this limit; and

(d) if so, the extent thereof?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) : (a) and (b) As per the Statement enclosed.

(c) and (d) No Sir.

Statement

The details of amount of foreign exchange allowed to residents for various types of visits abroad are as under :

Purpose	Quantum of foreign exchange towards maintenance expenses		Other expenses
	Special Scale (for chief/senior executives like Chairman, Managing/ Executive Director etc.	General Scale (for others)	
1	2	3	4
(i) Business visits sponsored by firms/ COS./ organisations in India self employed professionals, delegations sponsored by Trade Bodies, officials of Public and Private Sector banks,	US\$ 500 per day for a period not exceeding 45 days	US\$ 350 per day for a period not exceeding 45 days	

	1	2	3	4
	branches of foreign banks in India, State/Urban co-op. banks which are authorised dealers, financial institutions like IDBI/UTI/NABARD/NHB/EXIM Bank/ICICI etc.			
(ii) Participation in International conferences/seminars of scientific, technical or educational nature		US\$ 500 per day for duration of the conference/seminar plus 2 days	US\$ 350 per day for duration of the conference/seminar plus 2 days	Registration fee as per brochure
(iii) Specialised training/study tour sponsored by institutions or by professionals		-	Upto US\$ 300 per day for a period not exceeding 30 days	Course fee upto US\$ 5000 (for training only)
(iv) Employment abroad		Upto US\$ 2500 per person		
(v) Emigration		Upto US\$ 3000 per person per member of the family or the amount required by the country emigration.		
(vi) Medical treatment abroad		US\$ 150 per day for a maximum period of 2 months		Hospitalisation expenses per the estimate of the overseas doctor/hospital
(vii) Studies abroad		Upto US\$ 30,000 per annum towards tuition fees, maintenance, books, etc.		
(viii) Basic Travel Quota		US\$ 3000 per person per calender year		

Exchange in excess of the prescribed scales and/or duration of the visit abroad as indicated above can be released by authorised dealer on merits. (except Basic Travel Quota)

As regards visits abroad by member of Parliament/ State legislatures (except when travelling abroad on account of their private business or for medical treatment), officials of Central/State Governments (except when travelling at their own expense) members of official/non-official delegations financed out of funds from Central/any State Government, foreign exchange is released as per the Government's prescribed scales.

In addition, MPs and MLAs/MLCs are entitled to a Study Tour Quota of Rs. 1 lakh and Rs. 50,000/- respectively, during their tenure as a MP/MLA/MLC.

[Translation]

Development of Tea Gardens of Uttar Pradesh

3514. SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT 'BACHDA' : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Tea Board under the Union Government is implementing special schemes for development of tea gardens in the hilly regions of Uttar Pradesh;

(b) if so, the names of places where such schemes are being implemented in Uttraanchal areas of Uttar Pradesh during the last three years;

(c) whether the Government propose to start such schemes in the entire Uttranchal area for the development of tea gardens during 1998-99; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) and (b) Yes Sir. Based on the report of a Techno-Economic Survey conducted during 1989-90, 14 districts spread over Garhwal, Kumaon and Terai regions of Uttar Pradesh have been found suitable for growing tea. Tea Board has declared Kumaon and Garhwal regions of Uttar Pradesh as non-traditional areas for extending the benefit of special schemes earmarked for development of tea plantations. Two nucleus tea projects one each at Kausani in Kumaon region and Nauti in Garhwal region have been initiated by the State Govt.

of Uttar Pradesh for the development of tea plantations with financial assistance from the Tea Board.

(c) and (d) The expansion of tea plantation in the entire State of Uttar Pradesh would depend on the success of the above stated two projects.

[English]

Import of Gold by MMTC

3515. DR. BIZAY SONKAR SHASTRI : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned "MMTC ki swarn aayat yojana main ghaple hi ghaple", appearing in the Dainik Jagaran dated June 13, 1998;

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

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) MMTC started importing gold as an authorised agency for supply to the Export Oriented Units (EOUs) and Export Processing Zones (EPZs) since 1988 and to the jewellery manufacturers in the Domestic Tariff Area (DTA) in 1992. It has been reported by the MMTC that out of the total quantity of 85,325 kgs of gold released during the period between 1988-89 to 1996-97, the exporters in EOU/EPZ complexes had defaulted exports of 265 kgs which also included 172 kgs of gold unauthorisedly removed by the exporters. MMTC has filed criminal complaints for unauthorised removal of gold by exporters from the bonded area. Legal/arbitration proceedings have also been initiated against defaulting exporters. These cases have also been referred to investigating agencies including CBI, DRI, Enforcement Directorate and DGFT for enquiry. All four cases of default in DTA have also been referred to CBI for investigation. The Associate scheme operated by MMTC has since been discontinued from August, 1995 and appropriate action has been initiated against defaulters under the scheme. With regard to supply of gold by United Bank of Switzerland, MMTC had appraised CAG that the offer of the Bank of Nova Scotia, on consignment basis, was not competitive vis-a-vis UBS. Regarding the operation of foreign buyer scheme by MMTC against supply of gold, MMTC has reported that only one of the leading exporters from India, who had the manufacturing capability, had shown interest and MMTC had made profit out of the operation after recovery of full expenses.

Credit Policy

3516. SHRI N.K. PREMCHANDRAN : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government consider to evolve a new Credit Policy to encourage financing in infrastructure sector; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) and (b) Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has reported that the monetary and credit policy is so framed as to ensure that genuine credit needs of the economy, which include infrastructure, are adequately met. Banks were given the discretion in September, 1997 by RBI to sanction term loans to all projects including infrastructure projects within the overall ceiling of the prudential exposure norms prescribed by RBI viz. 25 per cent of the capital funds in the case of an individual borrower and 50 per cent in the case of a borrower group. The Group exposure norm of 50 per cent has also been permitted to be exceeded to the extent of 10 per cent provided the additional exposure is for the purpose of financing infrastructure projects viz. projects in areas of power, telecommunications, roads and ports.

Import of Used Tyres

3517. SHRI MULLAPALLY RAMACHANDRAN : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the used tyres are being imported to our country;

(b) if so, the details regarding the import and the countries from which these imports were made during the last two years;

(c) whether the Government are aware that these import had adversely affected the price of raw rubber in the country;

(d) if so, whether the Government have received any representations from some organisations to ban the import of used tyres; and

(e) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) to (e) The import of used tyres was permitted freely in the Exim Policy w.e.f. 1.4.1997. However, on representation from various quarters the Government has prescribed a minimum c.i.f. value per tyre to restrict indiscriminate import of such tyres w.e.f. 8.8.1997.

Used tyres at present can be imported freely only if per tyre c.i.f. value is US\$ 175 and above for buses, lorries, bigger size vehicles and light commercial vehicles and US\$ 25 and above for passenger automobile vehicles etc. The import of used/retreaded tyres during April, 1997-February,

1998 was 12676 pieces only. Looking to the low volume of import of used/retreaded tyres there would have been no significant impact of the same on the price of natural rubber in the country.

Export/Import of Foodgrains

3518. SHRI MADHAV RAO PATIL : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) the quantity of foodgrains imported and exported with its price during the last three years, country-wise;

(b) the foreign exchange earned/incurred therein;

(c) whether the price of foodgrains exported is less than the cost fixed by the Food Corporation of India in the country; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) and (b) The total quantity and value of foodgrains imported and exported during the last three years are as under:

IMPORTS

Qty : MT

Value (V) : Rs. Crores

Unit Cost (UC) : Rs./KG

	1995-96			1996-97			1997-98(P)		
	Qty.	Value	UC	Qty.	Value	UC	Qty.	Value	UC
Wheat	8240	10.39	12.60	612676	403.76	6.59	1344546	970.96	7.22
Non Basmati Rice	80	0.05	6.25	2	0.02	100	77	0.07	9.00
Coarse Grams	1041	0.24	2.30	1955	0.50	2.56	965	0.37	3.83
Pulses	490754	685.57	13.97	654908	890.34	13.59	659396	833.64	12.64

EXPORTS

Qty. : MT

Value (V) : Rs. Crores

Unit Realisation (UR) : Rs./KG

	1995-96			1996-97			1997-98(P)		
	Qty.	Value	UR	Qty.	Value	UR	Qty.	Value	UR
Wheat	632468	366.76	5.80	1145898	698.45	6.10	1561	0.42	2.69
Basmati Rice	373314	850.67	22.79	523157	1247.64	23.85	581891	1674.35	28.78
Non-Basmati Rice	4540699	3717.41	8.19	1989040	1924.72	9.68	17221798	1600.38	9.29
Coarse Grain	28097	16.97	6.04	71042	48.65	8.85	14916	13.24	8.88
Pulses	61355	131.81	21.48	55216	131.58	23.83	160183	354.74	22.15

(P) : Provisional

Country-wise details of exports are given in the monthly bulletin/annual numbers of Foreign Trade Statistics of India published by the Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics, Calcutta, copies of which are available in the Parliament Library.

(c) and (d) It is not possible to accurately compare the prices prevailing in the international markets and the cost fixed by Food Corporation of India/domestic markets on account of the different varieties traded, variations in grading and packaging for exports.

[Translation]

Industrial Development

3519. SHRI MOHAMMAD ALI ASHRAF FATMI :
SHRI SURENDRA PRASAD YADAV
(JAHANABAD) :

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) the details of progress made by the country in the field of industrial development during the last three years;

(b) the contribution of Indian companies and companies with the foreign collaboration in the total industrial production; and

(c) the sectors in which the Indian companies registered the maximum rate of development during the period after liberalisation?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT) : (a) The growth rate as per the Index of Industrial Production (base 1993-94 = 100) for the years 1995-96, 1996-97 and 1997-98 was 12.7, 5.6, and 6.6 percent respectively. The Industrial production at 6.6% during 1997-98 was an improvement over 1996-97 wherein it recorded a growth rate of 5.6%.

(b) The Index of industrial Production includes the contribution of Indian companies and companies with foreign collaboration. However, separate details are not centrally maintained.

(c) The sectors which on an average have recorded a high growth rate (over 8%) since 1992-93 are motor cycles, cars, earth moving equipment, ship building, commercial vehicles, electric fans and machine tools.

[English]

Open Cast Coal Mines of WCL

3520. SHRI NARESH PUGLIA : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) the number of new Open Cast Coal Mines come up in Majri area of the Western Coalfield Limited in Chandrapur District of Maharashtra;

(b) the details of total land acquired from the farmers of above area and the estimated expenditure incurred thereon;

(c) the quantum of coal available in this area, mine-wise;

(d) the details of compensation given to the farmers, mine-wise;

(e) whether employment to all the family members of the affected families has been given;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) if not, the reasons therefor and the norms for giving employment to the affected family members and the total number of such families?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI DILIP RAY) : (a) 3 new opencast coal mines have been approved and are under various stages of construction in the Majri area of WCL in Chandrapur Distt. of Maharashtra.

(b) The details of total land acquired from the land owners of the above area and estimated expenditure incurred thereon are as under :

	Tenancy land acquired (In hectares)	Estimated expenditure incurred (Rs. in lakhs)
(i) Kawadi OCP	166.88	53.77
(ii) Sirna OCP	65.89	27.00
(iii) Telwasa (OCP)	202.68	63.17

(c) The coal reserves available in this area, mine-wise, is as under;

	(in million tonnes)
(i) Kawadi OCP	5.47
(ii) Sirna OCP	3.55
(iii) Telwasa OCP	5.72

(d) The mine-wise details of compensation given by WCL to the land owners is as under :

	(Rs. in Lakhs)
(i) Kawadi OCP	53.77
(ii) Sirna OCP	27.00
(iii) Telwasa OCP	63.17
(e) No, Sir.	

(f) and (g) As per Coal India's existing policy, only one adult person from each affected family, from whom a minimum of 3 acres of non-irrigated or 2 acres of irrigated land has been acquired, is eligible for employment. From the total number of 478 families affected by the projects, 372 persons have been provided employment as per details below :

(i) Kawadi OCP	229 Nos.
(ii) Sirna OCP	24 Nos.
(iii) Telwasa OCP	119 Nos.
Total	372 Nos.

The balance families were not eligible for employment mostly due to acquisition of less acreage of land than the minimum as per norms.

Private Operators for Open Cast Mining

3521. SHRI BIJOY KRISHNA HANDIQUE : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) whether open cast mining have been offered to the private operators with special reference to Margherita Colliery;

(b) if so, since when they have been operating and the criteria adopted for selection of private operators;

(c) whether any conditions particularly in regard to environment have been laid down in the contract; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI DILIP RAY) : (a) and (b) No. Sir. North Eastern Coalfields (NEC) has awarded contracts in November, 1983 for hiring of Heavy Earth Moving Machinery (HEMM), for operation of the opencast mines of NEC, as per Ministry of Labour's notification No. SO-2063 dated 21st June, 1998 granting exemption to the quarries in the NEC of Sub-section (1) of Section 10 of Contract Labour (Regulation and (Abolition) Act, 1970. The criteria adopted for selection of parties for hiring of HEMM was through open tender and in accordance with the prescribed Coal India Limited norms.

(c) No condition in regard to environment have been laid down in the contract.

(d) Does not arise in view of reply to part (c) above.

NRI Targetted Schemes

3522. SHRIMATI LAKSHMI PANABAKA : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Non-Resident Indians targetted schemes announced in the Budget has evoked interest among NRIs;

(b) If so, whether the Government is confident of mopping up billions of dollars;

(c) whether SBI has floated new International Bond offering one percent high rate of interest than the existing International rates; and

(d) if so, the latest response 9 to the Government's move?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) : (a) to (d) The schemes/facilities announced in the Budget for NRIs are in the process of implementation. The State Bank of India's international Bond issue primarily targetting NRIs would be launched shortly. The Bonds are proposed to be denominated in US Dollars, Pound Sterling and Deutsche Marks with interest rates of 7.75% for Dollar investments, 8% for Pound Sterling and 6.25% for Deutsche Marks. Assessment of the response to the initiatives announced in the Budget could be made after the schemes have been implemented.

UK Investment

3523. SHRI ANAND RATNA MAURYA : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that the British Government has instructed the leading British companies to reduce the pace of investment in India;

(b) if so, whether the Government have taken any measures to ensure that the pace of foreign investment do not go slow; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) : (a) There is no evidence that the British Government has advised the British Companies to reduce the pace of Investments in India.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Export of Fish Products

3524. SHRI MAHESH KANODIA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have exported fish, dry fish and various fish products during the last three years;

(b) if so, the item-wise details thereof; and

(c) the efforts made or being made by the Government for setting up storage of fishes, factories for fish meal in Southern Gujarat and Saurashtra?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) and (b) Details of items exported from India during the last 3 years, are as follows :

Q : Quantity in Metric Tons

V : Value in Rupee Crores

Item	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98
Frozen fish	Q : 100093	173005	188029
	V : 372.26	636.92	726.73
Dry fish/dry fish Product	Q : 7725	9805	5692
	V : 46.48	41.86	33.89
Frozen Shrimp	Q : 95724	105426	101318
	V : 2356.81	2701.76	3140.56
Frozen cuttle-fish and squid	Q : 78870	72102	72353
	V : 580.44	562.82	594.30
Others	Q : 13865	17861	18426
	V : 145.12	178.00	202.00
Total	Q : 296277	378199	385818
	V : 3501.11	4121.36	4697.48

(c) As per the available information, there are 57 cold storages, 2 fish meal plants and 16 storages for dry fish in southern Gujarat and Saurashtra region. Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA) extends financial assistance by way of giving subsidies for the establishment of cold storages, upgradation of deficient cold storages, and for the procurement of generator sets, plate freezers, individual quick freezing (IQF) machines, insulated fish boxes and automatic flake/chip/tube ice making machines etc. Necessary technical guidance for the establishment of cold storages and procurement of machinery and equipment etc, is also provided by MPEDA. Assistance from MPEDA under the above schemes can be availed in any part of the country including Southern Gujarat and Saurashtra.

Additional Burdens of DEBT

3525. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Comptroller and Auditor General of India has submitted its report for the year ended on March, 1997;

(b) if so, the observations made by him;

(c) whether Government have been trapped in the additional burden of debt;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the measures proposed to be taken by the Government to pay back this debt?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Total liability of the Union Government, which consisted of the internal borrowings, external borrowings, and balances in the Public Account utilised as resource by the Government, increased by 60 per cent over the last five year period from Rs. 480467 crore in 1992-93 to Rs. 770513 crore in 1996-97, at the current rate of exchange for the external debt.

(c) and (d) The increase in total liability was due to successive fiscal deficits being incurred for meeting the gap between the total expenditure and the non-debt receipts. However, the total liability, as a percentage of GDP, has come down from 68 per cent in 1992-93 to 60 per cent in 1996-97.

(e) The maturing liability is rolled over through fresh borrowings.

[English]

Chargesheet Against AGM, GIC

3526. SHRI BHERU LAL MEENA : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Central Vigilance Commission has over-ruled the GIC and New India Assurance Co. Ltd. and have asked them to issue a "major penalty" chargesheet to them AGM for his alleged involvement in cases of fraud and corruption highlighted by the Employees Association;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons for undermining the seriousness of the charges by the New India Assurance Co. Ltd. and GIC;

(c) whether the chargesheet was issued to the accused Officer on the last day of his retirement from service for the corruption cases coming to light many years back;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor and the officers responsible for the delayed action and showing favour to the corrupt officials have been identified; and

(e) if so, the action taken against them as well as against the other corrupt officials?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) Certain complaints against the then Assistant General Manager of New India Assurance Company Limited (NIAC) (a subsidiary of the General Insurance Corporation of India (GIC) were investigated by the NIAC. They found that no vigilance angle was involved in the matter. The GIC recommended to the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) issuance of a minor penalty against the officer. The CVC advised initiation of major penalty proceedings against him. The GIC felt that the documents were inadequate to sustain such charges against the officer and deputed a Manager to explain the factual position to CVC who reiterated their earlier advice.

(b) The GIC has reported that the seriousness of charges was not undermined either by NIAC or by GIC.

(c) Yes, Sir. A charge Sheet was issued to the officer on the date of his retirement from service.

(d) There was no delay in taking action. On receipt of advice from CVC on 28.1.1998 for initiation of major penalty proceedings the charge sheet was served on the officer on 30.1.98.

(e) Does not arise.

Security SCAM

3527. SHRI RAMESHWAR PATIDAR :
SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH CHAUHAN :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the inquiry committee constituted by the Reserve Bank of India to investigate the security scam, has submitted its report to the Union Government;

(b) if so, the main findings of the Committee; and

(c) the action taken by the Union Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) to (c) A Committee was constituted in 1992 by Reserve Bank of India (RBI) under the chairmanship of Shri R. Janakiraman, the then Deputy Governor of RBI to look into securities transactions of banks and financial institutions. Presumably the reference in the question is to the findings and recommendations of the Janakiraman Committee. The Committee had concluded that the irregularities in securities transactions had largely arisen out of the attempts to circumvent the RBI regulations. The committee also noted that the main source of funds for the irregular transactions had been from the corporate sector and particularly public sector undertakings and the device used for circumventing the RBI regulations was through portfolio management scheme and allied schemes. There was also a close nexus between brokers and certain banks which enabled the brokers to have unauthorised access to the funds and also to undertake unauthorised transactions to their advantage. RBI have reported that necessary action has been taken by RBI for implementation of various recommendations of the Janakiraman Committee. The steps taken by RBI include, among others, prescription of adequate safeguards in ready forward transactions, streamlining the functioning of Public Debt Offices in RBI and the Portfolio Management Scheme operations of banks, strict enforcement of rules regarding use of Bank Receipts, issue of guidelines regarding inter-bank securities transactions, laying down norms by individual banks for dealing with approved brokers and review of internal control systems in banks.

Foreign Currency Non-Resident Deposits

3528. SHRI RAMKRISHNA BABA PATIL :
SHRI GURUDAS KAMAT :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether nationalised Banks have started revising the existing rates on their foreign currency non-resident (FCNR) deposits; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) : (a) and (b) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Insurance Sector

3529. SHRI R. SAMBASIVA RAO : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government has taken a decision to consider the insurance sector reforms expeditiously;

(b) if so, details thereof;

(c) whether any International Conference on Insurance was held in India recently;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether all the recommendations of the Malhotra Committee on Insurance Sector reforms have been considered; and

(f) if so, to what extent these recommendations are likely to be incorporated in the new insurance sector;

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) and (b) In the budget speech 1998-99, it has been announced that the insurance sector would be opened to competition from private Indian Companies. The Insurance Regulatory Authority would be converted into a statutory body. Necessary legislation would be introduced later in the year.

(c) and (d) Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry organised an International Conference on "Insurance : The case for Liberalisation", on 22nd-23rd April, 1998. The conference was attended by public sector insurance companies, members from private sector and foreign companies, representatives of Insurance Regulatory Authority and the Government.

(e) Yes, Sir.

(f) It has been decided to keep the recommendations in view while Insurance Sector Reforms are introduced from time to time.

Establishment of 'Paryatan Bhawan'

3530. SHRI SADASHIV RAO D. MANDLIK : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) the efforts being made by the Government to simplify the procedure to facilitate tourists to go from Airport to a tourist spot directly;

(b) whether the Government propose to set up Paryatan Bhawans' in the country;

(c) if so, the details thereof, Statewise; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI OMAK APANG) : (a) Tourists arriving at airports on package tours are transferred by cars/coaches to their destinations by Travel Agents/Tour Operators. Cars, pre-paid taxis and coach service to city centres are also available at major airports in the country. Efforts are made to further upgrade and improve these facilities with the help of concerned agencies.

(b) to (d) It is proposed to set up a Bharat Paryatan Bhawan in New Delhi to improve facilitation and information service for tourists. All State Governments have also been requested to establish a Paryatan Bhawan in each State capital for this purpose.

[Translation]

Foreign Tourists

3531. SHRI DATTA MEGHE Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether our foreign embassies also take some measures so that more and more foreign tourists come to India; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI OMAK APANG) : (a) and (b) The Indian Missions overseas render all possible assistance to all the persons who approach them and who intend to visit India by way of issue of visas and dissemination of information through pamphlets and brochures. It also maintains sections on Indian culture and tourism in its Home Page on internet.

The Govt. of India Tourist Offices overseas work in close coordination with the Missions and synergise their efforts in positioning India as an attractive destination in the niche markets.

[English]

Debt Trap

3532. SHRI PRITHVIRAJ D. CHAVAN Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether many State Governments are facing debt-trap on account of high indebtedness and low Additional Resource Mobilisation efforts, as reflected in the Debt to Net State Domestic Product;

(b) if so, the States which are likely to be most affected; and

(c) the details of Debt/NSDP figures for the last three years, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) : The information is being collected and will be furnished.

Banking Ombudsman Scheme

3533. SHRI PRAKASH YASHWANT AMBEDKAR : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the progress of the 'Banking Ombudsman Scheme' formulated by the Reserve Bank of India;

(b) the number of complaints received, under this scheme;

(c) whether the Apex Bank exercises any surveillance over the redressal of complaints received by Nodal Officers in Public Sector Banks;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the Apex Bank has received any complaint of breach/violation of Citizens' Charter adopted by all the Public Sector Banks; and

(f) if so, the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) and (b) Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has formulated the Banking Ombudsman Scheme which came into operation from 14.6.95 for expeditious and inexpensive resolution of customer complaints. RBI has so far appointed 15 Banking Ombudsmen covering all major centres/territories in India. The details of complaints received and handled by Banking Ombudsmen at various centres as on 31.12.97 as reported by RBI is given in the statement.

(c) and (d) Every Public Sector Bank has appointed a Grievance Officer known as Nodal Officer to deal with customer grievances/complaints. The details of these Nodal Officers were published by Indian Banks' Association (IBA) in the news-papers. Board of Directors review the progress of complaints redressed by the respective banks.

(e) and (f) No specific complaint regarding breach/violation of Citizens' charter adopted by the Public Sector Banks has been received by RBI.

Statement

Position of complaints received and handled by Banking Ombudsman at various centres as on 31.12.1997

S. No.	Centre	Total Complaints received	Complaints which are outside the scope of the Scheme	Complaints attended to by B.O.	No. of cases settled
1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	Mumbai	1329	450	879	769

1	2	3	4	5	6
2.	Delhi	1377	717	660	600
3.	Bhopal	785	303	482	423
4.	Bangalore	847	257	590	510
5.	Chandigarh	784	361	423	408
6.	Hyderabad	749	352	397	329
7.	Patna	780	176	604	497
8.	Jaipur	998	788	210	168
9.	Kanpur	1251	605	646	516
10.	Guwahati	263	23	240	165
11.	Bhubaneshwar	104	14	90	62
12.	Chennai	212	66	146	98
13.	Calcutta	363	165	198	71
14.	Ahmedabad	127	53	74	55
15.	Thiruvananthapuram	120	50	70	15

Production of Tobacco

3534. SHRI S.S. OWAISI : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) the production of Flue Cured Virginis Tobacco during the 1996-97 and 1997-98 in the country, State-wise;

(b) the financial assistance provided by the Tobacco Board to each State to boost the production of tobacco during the above period;

(c) whether the tobacco growers of several States have demanded remunerative price for their products;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) Production of Flue Cured Virginia tobacco during the years 1996-97 and 1997-98 in the country. State-wise :

Year	Production (Million Kgs.)		Total
	A.P. Maharashtra & Orissa	Karnataka	
1996-97	131.79	36.42	168.21
1997-98	127.00(E)	46.00	173.00

(E) : Estimated Production.

(b) Tobacco Board has been implementing various developmental and extension schemes in the states of

Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka for increasing the yields and quality of FCV tobacco. Financial assistance in the shape of subsidy is also being given to the tobacco farmers. Details of expenditure on such schemes statewise for 1996-97 and 1997-98 are given below :

Year	Expenditure (Rs. in Lakhs)		
	A.P.	Karnataka	Total
1996-97	39.19	23.18	62.37
1997-98	37.70	28.88	66.58

(c) to (e) There has been demand from the FCV tobacco growers for remunerative prices or tobacco. Every year Minimum Support Prices (MSP) for various grades of FCV tobacco is declared by the Government on the basis of recommendations of the Commission on Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP). Whenever the prices fall below the minimum support price, market intervention is carried out to shore up the prices. Against MSP of Rs. 23.50 per kg., the average price realisation in the 1997-98 tobacco auctions in Karnataka was Rs. 48.82 per kg. and in Andhra Pradesh Rs. 43.14 per kg.

Import of Cashewnuts

3535. SHRI T. GOVINDAN : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) the quantity of raw cashewnuts imported during 1997-98; and

(b) the foreign exchange earned on the export of cashewnuts during the above period?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) The quantity of Cashewnuts imported during 1997-98 was 241495 tonnes. (P)

(b) Foreign exchange earned on the export of Cashewnuts (including Cashewnut shell liquid) during 1997-98 was Rs. 1408 crores. (P)

P : Provisional

Source : DGCI & S, Calcutta.

Coal Reserve in Jitpur Colliery

3536. SHRI MOINUL HASSAN : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) the quantity and quality of coal reserve in Jitpur colliery at present;

(b) the present production and manpower of the colliery;

(c) whether contractual workers are being engaged in the colliery to raise coal production;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the future plan of the Government to develop the Jitpur mine?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI DILIP RAY) : (a) As per information furnished by Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) the extractable reserve of coal under Jitpur colliery of Indian Iron and Steel Company (IISCO) are estimated at 16.96 million tonnes. The quality of coking coal is Washery Grade-III (Ash 24-28%).

(b) The present production and manpower is as under:

1. Production	500 tonnes per day (approx.)
2. Manpower executives	37
	Non-executives 1465
	Total 1502

(c) No, Sir.

(d) and (e) It has been reported by Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) that a project for reconstruction & development of Jitpur colliery for attaining production level of 1000 TPD at an estimated expenditure of Rs. 49.57 crores had been approved in February'92. However, the project could not be implemented due to financial crisis being faced by IISCO, which is presently referred to BIFR.

Loans to North-Eastern States By Financial Institutions

3537. SHRI BHIM DAHAL : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the total loans sanctioned by the Public Financial Institutions to the North-Eastern States and Sikkim during each of the last three years, State-wise.

(b) the number of cases pending with the Public Financial Institution for sanction of loans from these States; and

(c) the steps taken to expedite sanction of loans?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) As per information provided by the Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI), the State-wise financial assistance sanctioned by all India Financial Institutions* during the last three years to North-Eastern States and Sikkim is given in the attached statement.

(b) and (c) IDBI has reported that only one application is pending with them as on date. The application is being examined by IDBI for sanctioning additional Assistance.

*Financial Institutions covered are IDBI, Industrial Finance Corporation of India Ltd. (IFCI) and Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation of India Ltd. (ICICI).

Statement

Total Assistance Sanctioned by IDBI, IFCI and ICICI to North Eastern States and Sikkim between 1995-96 and 1997-98

(Rs. in Crore)

States	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98
Arunachal Pr.	1.60	8.60	32.61
Assam	526.50	83.71	65.87
Manipur	-	-	-
Meghalaya	-	-	-
Mizoram	-	-	-
Nagaland	-	9.10	-
Sikkim	-	-	12.00
Tripura	-	-	-
Total	528.10	101.41	110.48

Modernisation/Development of HMT

3538. SHRI GEORGE EDEN : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have any proposal for the modernisation/development of the Hindustan Machine Tools Limited, Kalamassery; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SUKHBIR SINGH BADAL) : (a) and (b) HMT is working on a Revival Plan for the Company. Development & Modernisation of the Kalamassery Unit will be considered in the Revival Plan.

Waiving of Outstanding Interest of Singareni Colliery

3539. SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government have received any request to waive the outstanding interest of Rs. 663 crores accrued during VIII Plan in respect of Singareni Colliery; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI DILIP RAY) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A request

from the Government of Andhra Pradesh to waive the outstanding interest of Rs. 663 crores accrued during VIII Plan in respect of the Singareni Collieries Company Limited has been received in the Ministry of Coal. This is part of an overall rehabilitation plan submitted by the Company. The proposal is under examination.

Customs House Agents

3540. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Cargo clearance at Indira Gandhi International Airport has been hampered due to cancellation of the licences of 109 customs house agents;

(b) if so, the reasons for cancelling their licences;

(c) whether the Government propose to review these cases; and

(d) if so, the time by which final decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) No, Sir, There has been no dislocation of clearance of cargo in the Indira Gandhi International Airport as a result of cancellation of licences of the temporary Custom House Agents.

(b) The licenses were cancelled as these temporary licences were not able to pass the prescribed written and oral examinations within the stipulated period of 2 years.

(c) and (d) In pursuance with the orders of the Hon'ble High Court of Delhi, the cases have been reviewed and the applicants have been given an additional change for oral examination. The decision would be taken as soon as the oral examination is over.

Tourist Spots in Maharashtra

3541. SHRIMATI RANI CHITRALEKHA BHONSLE :
SHRI RAMKRISHNA BABA PATIL :

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) the number of tourist centres/spots set up in Maharashtra, location-wise;

(b) the performance thereof during each of the last three years; and

(c) the funds allocated by the Union Government for the purpose during the current financial year, Project-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI OMAK APANG) : (a) and (b) The Ministry

of Tourism does not set up tourist Centres/spots. However financial assistance was provided to Government of Maharashtra for the creation of following tourist facilities during the last three years :

1. SEL show at Shaniwarwada, Pune.
2. Fairs and Festivals.
3. Kokani House at Harihareshwar, District Raigad and Ganapatipule District Ratnagiri.
4. Tourist Complex at Kinkeshwar.
5. Tourist Complex-cum-crafts Centre at Village Penguli.
6. Guest House-cum-water sports at Lake Dhampur.
7. Construction of Tourist Complex at Penguli, District Sindhudurg in Maharashtra.
8. Elephanta Festival.
9. Ganesh Festival.
10. Ellora Festival.
11. Expansion of Tourist Resort at Ganapatipule.
12. Expansion and Upgradation of Tourist Bungalow at Shirdi.
13. Expansion and Upgradation of Tourist Bungalow at Aurangabad.
14. Upgradation of Holiday Resort at Bhandardara.
15. Upgradation of Holiday Resort at Fardapur (near Ajanta Caves).
16. Upgradation of Ajanta cave Restaurant.
17. Upgradation of holiday resort at Mahabaleshwar.
18. Kala Ghoda festival.
19. Karwar festival.
20. Kalidas festival in Nagpur.

The performance of these projects are being monitored by the State Government.

(c) Financial assistance is provided each year on the basis of projects prioritised in consultation with the State Governments, on the basis of the implementation and performance of the State Governments.

Waiving of Interest on Loans

3542. SHRI C. GOPAL : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether some nationalised banks in Tamil Nadu have waived interests on the loans provided to some industrialists during the last three years;

(b) if so, the bank-wise and industry-wise details thereof; and

(c) the grounds on which the interest amount has been waived?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) and (b) RBI's data reporting system does not generate information in the manner asked for. However bank-wise amounts of loans written off by nationalised banks during the last three years are given in the statement.

(c) Since recovery through Courts is a long drawn process, banks negotiate with borrowers to realise maximum possible amount keeping in view various factors which, inter alia, include the realisable value of securities held by the bank, status of guarantor etc. even if they have to sacrifice certain dues. Except in very rare cases, banks do not permit write-off of the principal loan amount.

Statement

Bad debts written off by the Nationalised Banks during the last three years

(Amount in crores)

S.No.	Name of the Bank	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97
1.	Allahabad Bank	55.73	6.71	21.39
2.	Andhra Bank	38.78	1.95	37.42
3.	Bank of Baroda	270.27	46.42	70.17
4.	Bank of India	260.38	307.08	217.15
5.	Bank of Maharashtra	81.12	56.52	47.30
6.	Canara Bank	200.00	169.49	18.20
7.	Central Bank of India	144.12	138.44	156.83
8.	Corporation Bank	18.64	19.13	0.94
9.	Dena Bank	27.34	51.92	58.76
10.	Indian Bank	42.51	115.94	10.28
11.	Indian Overseas Bank	5.94	75.01	375.73
12.	Oriental Bank of Commercial	2.13	0.82	46.22
13.	Punjab National Bank	220.77	53.14	150.34
14.	Punjab & Sind Bank	1.70	2.86	9.93
15.	Syndicate Bank	24.84	8.03	58.79
16.	Union Bank of India	27.86	38.81	30.57
17.	UCO Bank	165.07	110.98	220.57
18.	United Bank of India	119.00	36.51	65.48
19.	Vijaya Bank	4.19	13.26	12.72

Development of Pilgrim Places as Tourist Spots

3543. SHRI CHAMANLAL GUPTA
SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL :

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether 17 pilgrimages have been identified by the Government Committee for developing them as tourist places;

(b) if so, the number out of them are in Jammu & Kashmir;

(c) the detailed plan formulated for their development;

(d) by when the places identified in J & K are likely to be developed;

(e) whether in view of disturbances in J & K, there has been any shift of preferences in foreign and domestic destinations; and

(f) if so, details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI OMAK APANG) (a) The Ministry of Tourism has identified 23 pilgrim centres in 14 states and 4 pilgrim circuits in Uttar Pradesh for development.

(b) The places identified in J & K as pilgrim centres are Mata Vaishno Devi and Katra.

(c) and (d) The Ministry of Tourism provides funds for development of Tourism infrastructure. The Ministry has provided funds for the following infrastructure in these centres,

Katra -

Tourist Complex

Pilgrim Sheds

Tented Accommodation

Additional tourist accommodation

Vaishno Devi -

Yatri Niwas

Tented Accommodation

(c) and (f) There has not been any shift in preferences of foreign and domestic tourist as far as pilgrim tourism in J & K is concerned.

Mandrex Tablet Unit

3544. DR. SUGUNA KUMARI CHELLAMELLA :
SHRI K.P. NAIDU :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether illegal mandrex tablet unit has been unearthed by the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence in June, 1998;

(b) if so, the action taken against those involved; and

(c) the measures taken/proposed to stop such activities in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) Yes, on the basis of the intelligence developed by Directorate of Revenue Intelligence and information passed to Central Excise Commissionerate Indore-II. On 9.6.98 the officers of Central Excise Commissionerate, Indore-II raided the premises of M/s Vimal Industries, Pilukhedi Distt. Rajgarh and residence of its partner Mr. Pawan Saxena and unearthed an illegal mandrex tablet manufacturing unit, which resulted in the recovery of 106.96 kgs. (approx.) of mandrex tablets and methaqualone powder alongwith machinery, raw material, sale proceeds etc. These items were seized under the provisions of NDPS Act, 1985. The total value of all seized items comes to Rs. 69.3 lakhs.

(b) As per information available, 3 persons involved in the aforesaid case have been arrested so far. The investigation's are still in progress. Appropriate action against the persons involved in the illegal activities including prosecution provided under NDPS Act, 1985 will be taken on completion or investigation.

(c) The field formations under the Department of Revenue are on high alert to check any such illegal activities of clandestine production of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. Stepped up efforts are being made for developing intelligence to identify the kingpins and major drug syndicates involved in such illegal activities for taking appropriate strike action. The preventive formations are also sensitised about the new modus operandi involved.

[Translation]

Loan to Industry

3545. SHRI PANKAJ CHOUDHRY :
DR. RAMKRISHNA KUSMARIA :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether any proposal regarding reduction in the rate of interest charged on the loans being granted to the industries for technical development and modernisation is under consideration of the Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) No, Sir. As per the extant prescriptions of the Reserve Bank of India, the lending rate of scheduled commercial banks applicable to industry for technical development and modernisation is also governed by the general landing rate prescriptions. Since October 1994, banks have been given the freedom to prescribe the lending rate for credit limits above Rs. two lakh. Banks are required to fix their Prime Lending Rate (PLR) which is the minimum rate applicable to the above category of borrowers after approval from their respective Boards and applicable uniformly in all branches of the bank. The actual rate charged by a bank to a particular borrower, however, is dependent on relevant factors like the track record of the borrowal account, risk perception, etc. Interest rates on credit limits of upto Rs. 2 lakh should not exceed the Prime Lending Rate (PLR) which is available to the best borrower of the concerned bank.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Foreign Exchange Reserves

3546. SHRI RAM TAHAL CHAUDHARY :
SHRI SURENDRA PRASAD YADAV :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the names of countries whose currencies are there in our foreign exchange reserve at present;

(b) the details of the amount invested out of this reserve by the Reserve Bank of India during the last three years; and

(c) the effect on prices due to non-utilisation of the said reserve in productive activities?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) : (a) The foreign currency assets of the Reserve Bank of India broadly consist of convertible hard currencies of major countries where markets are deep and liquid.

(b) The entire foreign currency assets are invested abroad. The pattern of investment of the foreign currency assets would depend on the international economic situation, business cycle and liquidity requirement.

(c) Foreign exchange reserves are held by the Reserve Bank of India, with a view to maintaining a pool of liquid assets which could be utilised in case of contingencies. The existence of reserves generates confidence facilitates foreign borrowing and lubricates India's international trade.

[English]

Gross Transfers to States

3547. SHRI PRITHVIRAJ D. CHAVAN : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the ratio of Gross Transfers to States as to the GDP is declining over the last five years; and

(b) if so, the State-wise details of net transfers after adjusting for payment of interest on Central Government Loans over the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) : (a) and (b) The information is being collected and will be furnished.

Tax Collected from North-Eastern States

3548. SHRI TH. CHAOBA SINGH : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state the details of the funds collected by way of Customs and Excise Duty from the industrialists of North-Eastern States during each of the Last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : The revenue from customs and excise duties collected by Shillong Commissionerate of customs and Central Excise, which exercises the jurisdiction over North-Eastern States, are given below :

	(Rs. Crore)		
	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98(P)
Customs	5	5	7
Excise	782	765	740

P = Provisional

Statement-I

Statement showing number of Handloom Development Centres and Quality Dyeing Units sanctioned in the Country during 1995-96, 1996-97 and 1997-98.

Sl.No.	Name of State	1995-96		1996-97		1997-98		Total	
		HDC	QDU	HDC	QDU	HDC	QDU	HDC	QDU
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1.	Andhra Pradesh	47	3	159	49	111	62	317	114
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3.	Assam	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4.	Bihar	35	4	1	-	3	3	39	7

Handloom Development Centres

3549. SHRI ASHOK NAMDEORAO MOHOL : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) the number of Handloom Development Centres and quality Dyeing Units set up in the country during 1995-96, 1996-97 and 1997-98, till date, State-wise and location-wise particularly in Maharashtra;

(b) whether the Government propose to set up some more such centres/units during 1998-99;

(c) if so, the details thereof, State-wise and

(d) the effective measures taken by the Government for providing employment to the weavers in the country?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RANA) : (a) to (d) The number of Handloom Development Centres and Quality Dyeing Units sanctioned State-wise by the Government of India during 1995-96, 1996-97 and 1997-98 and location-wise to the State Government of Maharashtra is given in statements I & II respectively.

The Scheme for setting up of Handloom Development Centres and Quality Dyeing Units though initially approved for a period of four years (1993-94 - 1996-97) was continued during the year 1997-98 also. Further continuation or other wise of the scheme by the Government of India would depend upon the outcome of an overall assessment of the scheme in consultation with the State Governments and NABARD from whom feedback is yet to be received.

The Government of India is implementing a number of schemes for the development of handloom sector which besides providing support to weavers for modernisation of looms, upgradation of weaving skills through training, development of designs, provision of inputs and marketing of their products etc. also inter-alia facilitate generation of employment to the weavers in the country.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
5.	Gujarat	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-
6.	Goa	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
7.	Haryana	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
8.	Himachal Pradesh	5	1	1	2	-	-	6	3
9.	Jammu & Kashmir	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
10.	Karnataka	2	-	7	-	-	-	9	-
11.	Kerala	18	5	9	4	1	-	28	9
12.	Madhya Pradesh	11	-	-	-	-	-	11	-
13.	Maharashtra	5	1	-	-	-	-	5	1
14.	Manipur	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
15.	Meghalaya	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
16.	Mizoram	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
17.	Nagaland	2	-	60	1	80	6	142	7
18.	Orissa	55	1	57	5	16	2	128	8
19.	Punjab	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
20.	Rajasthan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
21.	Tamil Nadu	99	5	38	4	38	4	175	13
22.	Tripura	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
23.	Uttar Pradesh	7	8	2	-	4	1	13	9
24.	West Bengal	38	8	55	12	7	-	100	20
Total		326	36	390	77	260	78	976	191

Statement-II

List of Primary Handloom Weavers Cooperative Societies who have been sanctioned projects under Handloom Development Centres & Quality Dyeing Unit Scheme since inception

Maharashtra

S. No.	Name of Primary Weavers Coop. Society (HDC)	HDC	QDU
1	2	3	4
1.	Industrial Weaving Coop. Achalpur, Amravati	1	1
2.	Choudeshawari HWCS Ltd., Solapur	1	-
3.	Friends Weavers Coop. Society Kamptee, Nagpur	1	-
4.	Devi Hatmag Vinkar Coop., Solapur	1	-
5.	Kosare Vinkar Coop., Society, Bhandara	1	-
6.	Handloom Cloth Producers CS, Solapur	1	-

1	2	3	4
7.	Navprerana Weaving Coop., Mohadi	1	-
8.	M/s. Jaiswedganga Hatmag, Solapur	1	-
9.	Krishnaveni Handloom WCS, Solapur	1	-
10.	Subhash HWCS Ltd., Solapur	1	-
11.	Peerbaba Hatmag Vinkar Coop., Nagpur	1	-
12.	Nagpur Taluka Vinkar Khadi, Nagpur	1	-
13.	Savrodya Hatmag Vinkar, Solapur	1	-
14.	Suryalaxmi Handloom Weaver, Solapur	1	1
15.	Dewangan Hatmag Vinkar SS Nagpur	1	-
16.	The Sant Meherbaba Vinkar CSS Ltd., Khapri Pura, Nagpur	1	1
17.	Sh. Bhadrawati Handloom Weavers Coop. Society Ltd., Akkalkot Road, Solapur	1	1

1	2	3	4
18. Mahatma Hathkargha Vinkar Sahakari Utpadak Sangh Ltd., Akalkot, Solapur		1	1
19. Navbharat Hatmag Vinkar S. Utpadak S. Ltd., Akalkot, Solapur		1	1
20. Budhgaon Vinkar SS Ltd., Budhgaon, Sangli		1	1

Debt Recovery Tribunals

3550. SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE :
SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the number of cases referred to the Debt Recovery Tribunals (DRTs) by various banks and financial institutions since the date on which it was set up, bank-wise and year-wise;

(b) the amount of dues involved in these cases; and

(c) the number of cases disposed off and the amount recovered?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) to (c) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Funds for Development Programmes

3551. SHRI K.A. SANGTAM : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the funds for the development programmes in Nagaland have been released from the Consolidated Fund of India;

(b) if so, the funds released during the last three years;

(c) whether the Government propose to write-off an amount of over Rs. 800 crores incurred on insurgency related matters by Nagaland, as was done in case of Punjab;

(d) if so, the time by which the decision in this regard is likely to be taken; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor and other measures being taken by the Government to compensate the State of Nagaland under the 16-point Agreement?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The funds released during the last three years are as follows :

Year	Amount (Rs. in Crores)
1995-96	245.49
1996-97	294.64
1997-98	322.82

(c) to (e) There is no proposal to write off any amount in case of Nagaland. However, guidelines for reimbursement of security related expenditure to North Eastern States are under consideration of Government of India. After the guidelines are formulated, reimbursement claims of the Government of Nagaland for expenditure on insurgency related matters shall be duly considered alongwith other North-Eastern States.

In so far as assistance to the State of Nagaland under the 16 point Agreement is concerned, Government of Nagaland receives Non Plan grants under the award of Finance Commission. The Planning Commission also discusses the plan requirements of the State and allocates required funds for development.

Counter Guarantee to Power Projects

3552. SHRI KAMAL NATH : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) whether preferential treatment is being given to a company, HNPCL, owned by Hindujas by Coal India Limited in the matter of various terms of coal supply agreement;

(b) whether a counter guarantee has been given for the proposed power project of HNPCL; and

(c) the reasons for not giving such counter guarantee to other entrepreneurs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI DILIP RAY) : (a) The Hinduja National Power Co. Ltd. (HNPCL) and Mahanadi Coalfields Ltd. (MCL) have initialled a Coal Supply cum Transportation Agreement in April, 1998, with a few issues outstanding. This is the only Agreement being negotiated which is comprehensive Coal Supply and Transportation Agreement and the terms for supply of fuel are different from what is usually set-out in Coal supplies as between the coal companies and State Electricity Boards. As the financial risk in different projects is different, the terms of Fuel Supply Agreements are not strictly comparable.

(b) This is one of the eight Fast Track Projects and the Government have decided to issue counter guarantee to the power project of HNPCL.

(c) The Government have decided that counter guarantees would be available only to eight Fast Track Projects and not to the others.

Letters from MPs

3553. SHRI BHERU LAL MEENA :
SHRI RAMPAL UPADHYAY :
SHRI RAMA CHANDRA MALLICK :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the government are aware that the General Insurance Corporation of India and the New India Assurance Company Ltd. do not respond to letters received from Members of Parliament;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to punish the guilty officials and ensure instructions about dealing with letters from Members of Parliament are strictly followed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) to (c) Instructions were issued by the Government to Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC), General Insurance Corporation of India (GIC) and its four subsidiaries, to ensure prompt disposal of communications received from Hon'ble MPs and other VIPs. The GIC and New India Assurance Co. Ltd., have reported that they are generally abiding by these orders. Specific instances of non-compliance of these or any other Government orders are taken up by the Government, as required, with concerned organisations.

Widening of Tax Net

3554. SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR :
SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE :
SHRI V.K. KHANDELWAL :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the schemes relating to the widening of the tax net on the basis of economic criterion as introduced in 1997-98 budget has met with envisaged and adequate success;

(b) if so, the number of potential tax payers located under this scheme and the total revenue (Income Tax) collected under this scheme;

(c) whether the Government have received any proposals to rehash this scheme; and

(d) if so, details thereof and action taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) and (b) The primary objective of the Two-by-Four economic criteria Scheme is to cast an obligation on taxpayers to file returns of income and thereby widen the tax base in twelve cities and their urban agglomeration in the country. The scheme was operational for the first time in assessment year 1997-98 and during this period a growth of 20% in the number of returns filed was recorded as against the preceding assessment year. The revenue collection attributing to this Scheme cannot be segregated from out of total collection.

(c) and (d) The Finance (No.2) Bill 1998 proposes to further expand and extend the scope of the provisions introduced in 1997 relating to widening of tax net. Two more economic criteria namely, holding of credit card and membership of expensive clubs have been proposed to be added to the existing four criteria. Also, the obligation to file return will be on fulfilling any one of the six criteria. It will thus become One-by-Six Scheme instead of the existing Two-by-Four Scheme. The Scheme is also proposed to be extended to twenty-three new cities and their urban agglomeration.

Surplus Workers in Coal Sector

3555. PROF. AJIT KUMAR MEHTA :
SHRI PITAMBAR PASWAN :
PROF. PREM SINGH CHANDUMAJRA :
DR. CHINTA MOHAN :

Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) whether a large number of employees have become surplus in Coal India Limited and its subsidiaries;

(b) if so, the number of surplus employees as on March 31, 1998, subsidiary-wise;

(c) the number of employees out of them have taken retirement under Voluntary Retirement Scheme in each subsidiary; and

(d) the efforts made or proposed to be made by the Government for their rehabilitation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI DILIP RAY) : (a) As reported by Coal India Limited there are some surplus employees in three subsidiary companies of CIL namely ECL, BCCL and CCL.

(b) In an exercise undertaken by CIL it was indicated that ECL, BCCL and CCL had 34,920 manpower surplus to their requirement as on 1.4.94. Assessment of surplus manpower is a continuous process.

(c) Out of 34,920 surplus employees, the number of employees retired after April, 1994 under VRS in these subsidiary companies is given as under :

Company	No. of Employees Retired under VRS	
	1994-95 to 1997-98	1998-99 (April & May)
ECL	6109	328
BCCL	8519	299
CCL	2426	074
	17054	701

(d) CIL's Voluntary Retirement Scheme for retiring employees, besides payment of gratuity and contributory provident fund (CPF) as per rules, provides for an ex-gratia amount equivalent to 1 and 1/2 months wages for each completed years of service or monthly wages at the time of retirement multiplied by the number of month of service left before the normal date of retirement, whichever is less.

Ex-gratia payment and other terminal dues in the form of provident fund, gratuity etc. when invested give adequate return to the employees. Besides the employees covered under the coal mines pension scheme will also be entitled to monthly pension in terms of the provisions of the scheme.

Sick Spinning Mills

3556. SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

- whether some spinning mills have fallen sick in Orissa;
- if so, the details thereof, as on date;
- whether the Government propose to sanction Central assistance for revival of those spinning mills; and
- if so, the details thereof and the steps taken in that direction?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RANA) : (a) and (b) As per information made available by the Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR), as on 30.4.98 there were 5 textile mills of Orissa registered with the BIFR. In respect of 2 cases, BIFR has sanctioned Schemes, 2 cases have been declared in non-maintainable and 1 case is under winding up notice.

- There is no such proposal.
- Does not arise.

[Translation]

Ban on Recruitment

3557. SHRI SURESH CHANDEL :
SHRI NARENDRA BUDANIA :
KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE :
SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT 'BACHDA' :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

- whether there is a ban on recruitment in the offices of the Central Government;
- if so, the reasons therefor;
- the number of posts particularly of Grade III and IV status lying vacant in these offices;
- the time since when these posts are lying vacant;
- the reasons for these vacancies lying vacant; and
- the time by which these are likely to be filled up?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) : (a) There is no ban on recruitment in the offices of the Central Government.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The estimated total number of vacant posts in the Group 'C' (NG) & 'D' (NG) was 196119 & 94163 respectively as on 31.3.97.

(d) to (f) The details are not available as the same are not centrally maintained.

[English]

Stock Exchanges

3558. SHRI MANIKRAO HODLYA GAVIT : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

- the names and number of recognised Stock Exchanges functioning in the Country;
- the number of shares listed and volume of business done by each stock exchange during the last five years, year-wise;
- the number of share brokers and share holders in each stock exchange;
- whether any complaint against any broker and/or functioning of Stock Exchange have been received by the Government and if so, the details thereof; and
- the action taken there on so far?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) : (a) to (e) A statement is enclosed.

Statement

According to Securities and Exchange Board of India, the details are as follows :-

Sl. No.	Name of the Stock Exchange	No. of companies listed*			Turnover (In Rs. Crores)			No. of Brokers as on 31.3.98	Complaints pending against Brokers as on 31.5.98	Action against Stock Brokers
		1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98			
	(a)	(b)			(b)			(c)	(d)	(e)
1.	The Stock Exchange, Mumbai	1760	1810	1811	50064	124284	207383	651	108	Action
2.	The Calcutta Stock Exchange Assn.	1962	1875	1892	62128	105664	178779	929	81	against stock
3.	Delhi Stock Exchange Assn. Ltd.	1579	1744	1669	10077	48631	67840	390	127	brokers are within the pur-
4.	Madras Stock Exchange Ltd.	593	664	649	1594	2315	1228	201	47	view of...
5.	Hyderabad Stock Exchange Ltd.	520	619	624	1286	480	1860	313	12	SEBI and
6.	Bangalore Stock Exchange Ltd.	253	255	255	890	4398	8637	242	7	the stock
7.	Pune Stock Exchange Ltd.	121	173	176	7072	9903	8624	201	2	exchanges
8.	Ludhiana Stock Exchange Assn. Ltd.	227	290	296	4849	5274	8316	291	9	
9.	Vadodara Stock Exchange Ltd.	272	325	329	1260	4268	4577	326	19	
10.	The Stock Exchange, Ahmedabad.	551	676	692	8786	20533	30771	306	3	
11.	Cochin Stock Exchange Ltd.	90	140	94	1803	1401	1784	492	16	
12.	National Stock Exchange of India Ltd.	2	7	11	68142	294504	369934	1028	84	
13.	UP Stock Exchange Assn.Ltd.	321	347	346	2373	16070	15390	528	36	
14.	Mangalore Stock Exchange.	18	20	23	39	373	309	149	1	
15.	Madhya Pradesh Stock Exchange.	229	268	248	205	12	1	191	14	
16.	Jaipur Stock Exchange Ltd.	145	179	186	1048	1519	431	595	13	
17.	Saurashtra Kutch Stock Exchange Ltd.	36	43	46	564	398	18	446	4	
18.	Bhubaneswar Stock Exchange Assn.	43	46	46	226	231	202	234	4	
19.	Gauhati Stock Exchange Ltd.	175	170	196	620	484	21	207	2	
20.	Coimbatore Stock Exchange Ltd.	86	96	95	2504	2398	2137	201	9	
21.	Over the Counter Exchange of India	88	108	115	218	221	125	887	5	
22.	Magadh Stock Exchange Assn.	29	35	34	1629	2755	324	197	27	
	Total	9100	9890	9833	227376	646116	908691	9005	630	

*Listing on regional Stock Exchange only.

Loans to Corporate Sector

3559. SHRI JUNG BAHADUR SINGH PATEL :
SHRI DEVENDRA BAHADUR ROY :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the names of the corporate sector companies which have borrowed more than Rs. 500 crore from Indian Banks and Financial Institutions as on April 1, 1998;

(b) the Government liabilities pending against the above mentioned corporate sector companies, like excise, customs, incom-tax etc.; and

(c) the total amount of borrowings as well as the total amount of liabilities against each such companies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House to the extent available and permissible under the Rules.

Expansion of Trade with Other Countries

3560. SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) the names of the countries which have shown keen interest to expand trade with India;

(b) whether the Government have received any business proposals from those countries; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) Generally, all countries have shown interest in expanding trade ties with India. However, special thrust is being given by us to expansion of trade relations with Latin American countries, CIS and Africa.

(b) and (c) Normally business proposals are received directly by Indian business-enterprises who interest directly with their counterparts abroad;

Price of Rubber

3561. SHRI P.C. THOMAS : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the price of natural rubber in countries like Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand has come down during the last two years;

(b) the details of price situation in these countries during these years, month-wise;

(c) whether the fluctuation in prices in these countries has affected the domestic price of natural rubber;

(d) the cost of production of rubber in Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and India during the above period month-wise; and

(e) the steps taken to save Indian farmers from fall in price?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. the price of Natural Rubber has come down in Malaysia in the last two years.

Monthly average price of Natural Rubber in Indonesia and Thailand are available. The same in respect of Malaysia during the last two years month-wise is given below :

	(Rs. in quintal)			
	RSS-3	RSS-4	RSS-5	SMR-20
January'96	5379	5274	5204	5577
February'96	5500	5393	5321	5500
March'96	5162	5061	4994	5042
April'96	4788	4666	4619	4475
May'96	4932	4823	4755	4429
June'96	4912	4796	4727	4219
July'96	4545	4426	4357	4219
August'96	4409	4290	4220	4261
September'96	4432	4313	4243	4387
October'96	4236	4122	4052	4305
November'96	4467	4336	4266	4385
December'96	4406	4261	4190	4362
January'97	4327	4176	4105	4341
February'97	4306	4155	4083	4291
March'97	4343	4191	4119	4221
April'97	4086	3935	3863	3909
May'97	3920	3770	3698	3727
June'97	3933	3783	3712	3669
July'97	3314	3168	3084	3338
August'97	3256	3118	3052	3275
September'97	3127	3000	2939	3157
October'97	3091	2976	2920	3142
November'97	3026	2910	2856	3113
December'97	2637	2527	2475	2820

(c) The domestic price of Natural Rubber interalia is influenced by the price in the international market.

(d) The cost of production of 100 kg. of Natural

Rubber in the small holding sector in India, Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand, as published by the Association of Natural Rubber Producing Countries (ANRPC), for the years 1995 & 96 is given below :

	India		Indonesia		Malaysia		Thailand	
	US Cents	Rs.	US Cents	Rs.	US Cents	Rs.	US Cents	Rs.
1995	97.84	3185	86.71	2822	112.35	3657	96.58	3144
1996	96.70	3402	82.88	2916	NA	NA	94.00	3307

Month-wise details of the same are not available.

(a) With a view to improve the prices of Natural Rubber, the Govt. of India has authorised STC to procure an additional quantity of 20,000 MT of Natural Rubber on Govt. account. The earlier quantity procured was 9596 M.T. The STC has also been directed not to off-load the procured quantity of Natural Rubber into the doemstic market. The corporation has been further directed to export and/or sell the entire quantity of procured rubber to the Advance Licence Holders. In order to provide a remunerative price to the rubber growers, the process of revising the Bench Mark Price for Natural Rubber is underway.

Tourism in A.P.

3562. SHRI K.P. NAIDU : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government of Andhra Pradesh has requested to share the cost of preparing the tourism master plans for Hyderabad, Tirupati, Visakhapatnam and Nagarjuna Sagar; and

(b) if so, by when it is likely to be finalised and the response of the Union Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI OMAK APANG) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. In view of paucity of funds to carry out surveys and studies, the Ministry of Tourism is not in a position to provide assistance to the tune of Rs. 1.00 crore as requested by the State Government for the purpose. The World Tourism Organisation has included the preparation of Tourism Master Plan for Andhra Pradesh in their work programme for the year 1998-99.

Export Intensive Areas

3563. SHRI BHAGWAN SHANKAR RAWAT : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government have received any detailed feasibility report from the Government of Uttar Pradesh and other States on Identified Centres to be developed as Export Intensive Area for necessary clearance;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) to (c) A scheme under this nomenclature had been proposed during 1995-96. However, this was incorporated within the Critical infrastructure Balance (CIB) scheme which was introduced in the same year. The CIB Scheme, covers any investments required for quicker and strategic removal of bottlenecks for general export facilitation. Financial assistance have been approved/given to State Governments as well as to other agencies for strengthening of infrastructure for exports at different places including those identified by States. Following is the list of approved projects under the CIB Scheme :

State	Approved Projects
1	2
Andhra Pradesh	1. Appareal Export Park, Gundiapochampally. 2. Road Overbridge at Duvada Rail Crossing, Visakhapatanam. 3. Installation of High Speed Data Communication System at Visakhapatanam Export Processing Zone (EPZ).
Goa	1. Construction of By-Pass between NH 17 and Murnugao Port
Kerala	1. Infrastructure Development for marine exports at Aroor. 2. Teaknet Industrial Complex, Palaghat. 3. Construction of a Fire Station, Thirakkakara

1	2
Karnataka	1. Construction of Road connecting Export Promotion Industrial Park (EPIP), Hoodi.
Maharashtra	1. Strengthening of Uran-Panvel State Highway.
Meghalaya	1. Installation of Sub-Station at EPIP, Byrnihat. 2. Improvement of Road near EPIP, Byrihat.
Mi oram	1. Construction of a Composite building, Zokhawthar
Madhya Pradesh	1. Strengthening of road between Malanpur-Inland Container Depot and Railway Station.
Rajasthan	1. Construction of Earth Station, Sitapur. 2. Four laning of Dharuhera-Bhiwadi Road.
Uttar Pradesh	1. System Improvement Scheme, Moradabad 2. Infrastructure Development, Jajmau. 3. Infrastructure Development, Bhadhoi 4. System Improvement Scheme, Aligarh.
West Bengal	1. Construction of Truck Terminus at Bongaon and widening of Bongaon-Panchpotta Road. 2. Construction of Bridge over river Naubhashan. 3. International Land Port at Petrapole. 4. Construction of a Fire Station at Falta EPZ.

[Translation]

Approval for Setting up Industries :

3564. SHRI JAYSINHJI CHAUHAN :
SHRI NRIPAN GOSWAMI :
SHRI VITHAL TUPE :
SHRI MADHAV RAO PATIL :
SHRI RAM SHAKAL :
SHRI MOHAMMAD ALI ASHRAF FATMI :
SHRI SURENDRA PRASAD YADAV :
(JAHANABAD)

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) the approval accorded by the Union Government to set up industries in various States during each of the last three years, industry-wise and State-wise;

(b) the details of proposals under consideration State-wise and industry-wise; and

(c) the time by which the approval is likely to be given in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT) : (a) An Industry-wise and State-wise details of Letters of Intent issued during the last three years (from 1996 to 30th June 1998) by the Central Government under the provisions of Industries (Development & Regulation) Act, 1951 is given Statement I & II respectively.

(b) As on 30.6.1998 a total of 104 Industrial Licence applications for grant of Letter of Intent are under consideration of the Government. A statement showing State-wise and Industry-wise details of these proposals are given in Statement-III.

(c) All steps are taken for speedy disposal of applications. Actual disposal of the applications depends on the sectoral policy adopted by the Administrative Ministry, their recommendations in specific cases and also furnishing of relevant information by the applicants.

Statement-I

Statement Showing Scheduled Industry-wise details of Letters of Intent (LOIs) issued from 1996 to 1998 (Upto 30th June 1998).

Sch. Ind. No. & Sch. Ind. Name	1996	1997	1998 (upto 30-06-98)
1	2	3	4
01 Metallurgical Industries	13	8	1
02 Fuels	19	9	10
03 Boilers & Stream Gen. Plants	0	0	0
04 Prime Movers	0	0	0
05 Electrical Equipments	9	3	2
06 Telecommunications	15	1	0
07 Transportation Industry	13	5	5
08 Industrial Machinery	5	9	2
09 Machine Tools	1	0	4
10 Agricultural Machinery	0	0	0
11 Earth Moving Machinery	0	0	0
12 Misc. Mech. & Engg. Ind.	6	5	1

1	2	3	4
13 Comm./Office/H.hold Eqpt.	1	0	0
14 Medical & Surgical Eqpt.	0	0	0
15 Industrial Equipment	0	0	0
16 Scientific Instruments	0	0	0
17 Math. Survey, Draw. Insent.	0	0	0
18 Fertilisers	0	0	0
19 Chemicals (Except Fert.)	50	41	14
20 Photographic Raw Film/Paper	0	0	0
21 Dye Stuffs	0	0	0
22 Drugs & Pharmaceuticals	8	5	3
23 Textiles	122	91	29
24 Paper & Pulp	7	2	0
25 Sugar	161	93	11
26 Fermentation Industry	0	1	0
27 Food Processing Ind.	18	7	1
28 Veg. Oils & Vanaspati	2	3	0
29 Soap Cosmetic & Toiletries	2	0	0
30 Rubber Goods	7	1	0
31 Leather	18	13	4
32 Glue & Gelatin	0	0	0
33 Glass	1	0	0
34 Ceramics	4	3	0
35 Cement & Gypsum	19	9	1
36 Timber Products	11	0	0
37 Defence Industries	0	0	0
38 Miscellaneous Ind.	10	12	0
Total	522	321	88

Statement-II

Statement Showing State-wise details of Letters of Intent (LOIs) issued from 1996 to 1998 (Upto 30th June 1998)

S. No.	States/Union Territories	1996	1997	1998(upto 30-06-98)
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Andhra Pradesh	50	41	10

1	2	3	4	5
2.	Assam	2	0	0
3.	Arunachal Pradesh	0	0	0
4.	Bihar	11	9	1
5.	Delhi	2	0	0
6.	Goa	2	0	1
7.	Gujarat	31	23	5
8.	Haryana	19	14	4
9.	Himachal Pradesh	3	4	0
10.	Jammu & Kashmir	1	1	0
11.	Karnataka	56	21	4
12.	Kerala	6	5	1
13.	Madhya Pradesh	13	17	1
14.	Maharashtra	59	29	17
15.	Manipur	0	0	0
16.	Meghalaya	0	0	0
17.	Mi oram	0	0	0
18.	Nagaland	0	0	0
19.	Orissa	5	13	1
20.	Pondicherry	6	0	0
21.	Punjab	35	19	4
22.	Rajasthan	9	6	0
23.	Sikkim	0	0	0
24.	Tamil Nadu	99	74	23
25.	Tripura	0	0	0
26.	Uttar Pradesh	90	35	10
27.	West Bengal	18	7	4
28.	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	0	0	0
29.	Chandigarh	0	0	0
30.	Dadra & N Heveli	3	3	1
31.	Daman & Diu	2	0	1
32.	Lakshadweep	0	0	0
0.	More than 1 State	0	0	0
Total		522	321	88

Statement-III

Statement Showing State-wise/Industry-wise Industrial Licence Applications Under Consideration for Approval As On 30-06-1998.

S. No.	Name of the States/Union Territories	Sugare	Chemical	Textile	Others	Total
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.	Andhra Pradesh	1	8	0	3	12
2.	Assam	0	0	0	0	0
3.	Arunachal Pradesh	0	0	0	0	0
4.	Bihar	0	2	0	0	2
5.	Delhi	0	0	0	0	0
6.	Goa	0	0	0	0	0
7.	Gujarat	0	0	1	4	5
8.	Haryana	1	0	0	2	3
9.	Himachal Pradesh	0	0	0	0	0
10.	Jammu & Kashmir	0	1	0	1	2
11.	Karnataka	1	2	0	1	4
12.	Kerala	0	0	0	0	0
13.	Madhya Pradesh	3	4	1	1	9
14.	Maharashtra	22	1	2	7	32
15.	Manipur	0	0	0	0	0
16.	Meghalaya	0	0	0	0	0
17.	Mizoram	0	0	0	0	0
18.	Nagaland	0	0	0	0	0
19.	Orissa	0	4	0	0	4
20.	Pondichery	0	0	0	1	1
21.	Punjab	0	0	2	0	2
22.	Rajasthan	0	0	0	1	1
23.	Sikkim	0	0	0	0	0
24.	Tamil Nadu	1	4	5	2	12
25.	Tripura	0	0	0	0	0
26.	Uttar Pradesh	4	0	0	4	8
27.	West Bengal	0	0	0	3	3
28.	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	0	0	0	0	0
29.	Chandigarh	0	0	0	0	0

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
30.	D & N Havali	0	0	1	1	2
31.	Daman & Diu	0	0	0	0	0
32.	Lakshadweep	0	0	0	0	0
0.	More than 1 State	0	0	0	2	2
Total		33	26	12	33	104

Capital Investment in PSUs

3565. PROF. PREM SINGH CHANDUMAJRA :
DR. CHINTA MOHAN :
SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN :
SHRI SHANTI LAL CHAPLOT :
SHRI S. AJAY KUMAR :

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the capital investment has been increased in Public Sector Undertakings during the last three years; and

(b) if so, the total capital investment in these Undertakings during 1995-96, 1996-97 and 1997-98, sector-wise and State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SUKHBIR SINGH BADAL) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Pattern of capital investment during the years 1995-96 and 1996-97 for which period information is available, cognate group-wise and State-wise are given in the Statements appended.

Statement*Cognate Group Wise Pattern of Investment*

(Rs. in crores)

S.No.	Name of the Company	1996-97	1995-96
1	2	3	4
I.	Enterprises Under Construction	1401	743
II.	Enterprises Producing/Selling Goods		
1.	Steel	3038	906
2.	Minerals and Metals	-397	-710
3.	Coal and Lignite	34	-878
4.	Power	741	1225
5.	Petroleum	1570	497
6.	Fertilizers	1146	877
7.	Chemicals and Pharmaceuticals	1351	-99
8.	Heavy Engineering	-196	15
9.	Medium and Light Engineering	53	42

1	2	3	4
10. Transportation Equipment		-65	-154
11. Consumer Goods		327	46
12. Agro-Based Industries		12	0
13. Textiles		291	198
Total (II)		7905	1965
III. Enterprises Rendering Services			
1. Trading and Marketing Services		20	20
2. Transportation Services		-104	-884
3. Contract and Construction Services		634	242
4. Industrial Dev. and Tech. Consultancy		924	852
5. Tourist Services		-11	-5
6. Financial Services		3742	1015
7. Telecommunication Services		860	206
8. Section 25 Companies		151	153
Total (III)		6216	1599
Grand Total (I+II+III)		15522	4307

Loan repayment is reflected as (-)

State Wise Pattern of Investment

S.No.	Name of the State/UT	1996-97	1995-96
1	2	3	4
1.	Andhra Pradesh	-309	-70
2.	Assam	555	-3
3.	Bihar	554	-266
4.	Gujrat	1282	-131
5.	Haryana	-10	87
6.	Himachal Pradesh	566	580
7.	Jammu & Kashmir	0	0
8.	Karnataka	-50	-72
9.	Kerala	108	207
10.	Madhya Pradesh	-373	-116
11.	Maharashtra	3551	50
12.	Manipur	0	0
13.	Meghalaya	434	608
14.	Nagaland	0	0
15.	Orissa	-595	-669

1	2	3	4
16. Punjab		-1	-1
17. Rajasthan		14	-1
18. Tamilnadu		238	159
19. Uttar Pradesh		-2184	451
20. West Bengal		1121	144
21. Andaman & Nicobar Islands		0	0
22. Delhi		10641	3356
23. Goa		-20	-6
24. Pondicherry		0	0
25. Arunachal Pradesh		0	0
Grand Total		15522	4307

With reference to registered office

BIC Mills

3566. SHRI JAGAT VIR SINGH DRONA : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the labourers of B.I.C. Mills gheraoed the management of Algin Mill in protest against the non-receipt of notice regarding increase in the wages and the period of closure; and

(b) if so, the steps taken/being taken by Central and State Government to avoid the closure of B.I.C. Mills?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RANA) : (a) The employees of the BIC Cotton subsidiaries, namely, Elgin Mills Co. Ltd. and Cawnpore Textiles Ltd., gheraoed the management on the 9th & 10th of June, 1998 for payment of wages and salaries for the months of April & May, 1998.

(b) The BIC Cotton subsidiaries, namely, Elgin Mills Co. Ltd. and Cawnpore Textiles Ltd. have been ordered to be wound up by the BIFR and their cases for winding up are pending before the High Court at Allahabad. Pending further proceedings by the High Court, Government have decided to continue providing budgetary support towards payment of wages/salaries and VRS to the workers/employees of these mills upto the end of July, 1998.

[English]

Strike by Officers of Customs and Excise

3567. SHRI MOHAN RAWALE : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Group 'D' officers of the Central Excise and Customs went on an indefinite strike throughout the country from the 15th May, 1998;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith their main demands;

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto;

(d) the measures taken by the Government to ensure early call off of their strike;

(e) whether any agreement has been made with the All India Customs and Central Excise Group 'D' Officers Federation; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) to (f) The Members of the All India Customs & Central Excise Group 'D' Officers Federation proceeded on strike from 18th May, 1998 in pursuance of their following demands :

- (i) Pay scales at par with those of CBI/Delhi Police Constables for the Sepoys of Customs & Central Excise.
- (ii) Five promotions during the service career.
- (iii) 25% quota for the sepoys in the air pool at International airports.
- (iv) Washing allowance at market rates.
- (v) Cash payment in lieu of uniform.
- (vi) Increase/revival of Sepoy posts.

2. The demands of the Federation were discussed with the representatives of the Federation. The Central Board of Excise & Customs provided its response to the demands made by the aforesaid Federation and consequently the Federation has called off the strike w.e.f. 18th June, 1998.

[Translation]

Favourable Environmental Technique in Textiles

3568. SHRI PRABHASH CHANDRA TIWARI : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have made any estimate of the expenditure to be incurred on adoption of

technique favourable to the environment in textiles industry including handloom and powerloom;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken to adopt this technique during the Ninth Five Year Plan and the amount allocated for the purpose.

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RANA) : (a) to (c) No, Sir. However, looking to the felt needs of the industry, the Government has undertaken a scheme for expansion/setting up of testing facilities in the country through a network of laboratories. Besides, steps have also been initiated for offering consultancy to the aspiring textile units including handloom and powerloom on professional basis relating to Environmental Management System and also for creating awareness regarding eco-friendly techniques through seminars, workshops, publication of literature, etc.

Development of Rural Industries

3569. SHRI VITHAL TUPE : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) the funds provided to each state for the development of rural industries during each of the last three years;

(b) whether the budget allocation during 1997-98 and in the current year for this purpose is quite low as compared to 1995-96 and 1996-97; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT) : (a) to (c) Setting up of Rural Industries is primarily the responsibility of the individual entrepreneurs. However, Central and State Governments supplement their efforts by way of providing infrastructural facilities, incentives, financial assistance through various institutions like SIDBI, NABARD etc., for setting up industries in the rural areas as well as imparting training to the rural artisans for development of skill in various trades.

Sectorwise/Schemewise funds allocation for development of rural industries in various States are being made by the respective State Governments, after finalisation of the budget proposals by the Planning Commission. The details of the funds allocated during the last three years for development of rural industries in various States by the Khadi and Village Industries Commission and Coir Board, under the administrative control of the Department of SSI & ARI, are given in statement I & II.

*Statement-I**Statement Showing Disbursement of Grants and Loans Under Khadi and V.I. Sector for the Last Three Years*

(Rupees in Lakhs)

S.No.	States & U.Ts.	1994-95		1995-96		1996-97	
		Grant	Loan	Grant	Loan	Grant	Loan
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.	Andhra Pradesh	210.40	867.19	381.95	721.10	959.73	642.06
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	-	2.39	-	3.04	125.41	43.75
3.	Assam	52.71	86.06	20.79	19.82	65.25	66.11
4.	Bihar	574.12	301.57	585.89	286.34	663.46	201.15
5.	Goa	-	20.71	0.65	32.08	45.95	47.95
6.	Gujarat	866.70	458.15	161.44	157.09	1441.87	92.05
7.	Haryana	181.32	562.67	232.57	136.76	311.98	140.39
8.	Himachal Pradesh	115.67	154.55	210.67	128.40	205.47	43.00
9.	Jammu and Kashmir	66.65	107.29	89.70	302.03	333.77	40.48
10.	Karnataka	337.27	883.70	537.93	507.38	908.90	227.64
11.	Kerala	294.53	461.95	158.04	461.75	1322.21	130.69
12.	Madhya pradesh	203.23	497.36	112.07	303.23	821.24	202.53
13.	Maharashtra	364.93	437.02	327.23	958.50	1055.86	307.92
14.	Manipur	-	12.68	24.53	115.66	210.54	10.26
15.	Meghalaya	5.22	27.79	2.45	12.49	237.31	42.79
16.	Mizoram	14.88	101.60	21.16	36.64	1029.18	1.62
17.	Nagaland	46.88	265.36	6.05	13.16	761.78	19.51
18.	Orissa	76.22	276.92	5.22	217.89	442.19	195.98
19.	Punjab	6.03	238.22	151.88	220.24	672.06	78.10
20.	Rajasthan	333.54	725.95	871.10	437.53	1496.90	237.03
21.	Sikkim	-	-	2.40	15.08	-	3.90
22.	Tamil Nadu	1376.00	1435.64	1603.49	254.83	1490.36	489.87
23.	Tripura	5.17	49.90	2.93	34.69	90.81	26.60
24.	Uttar Pradesh	2989.89	1455.34	2927.19	1332.25	3730.83	734.20
25.	West Bengal	73.12	579.41	261.31	267.12	1239.24	207.87
	Total-I	8194.48	10009.36	9698.64	6975.10	19662.30	4163.45
II.	Union Territories						
1.	Andaman and Nicobar	-	-	-	-	42.85	-
2.	Chandigarh	312.00	76.34	356.98	2.32	-	-

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
3.	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	-	-	-	-	-	-
4.	Daman and Diu	-	-	-	-	-	-
5.	Delhi	501.09	163.15	268.64	29.59	394.17	17.07
6.	Lakshdweep	-	-	19.51	66.01	30.59	5.10
7.	Pondicherry	-	2.21	0.13	2.96	7.60	2.06
Total-II		813.09	241.70	645.26	100.88	475.21	24.23
Grand Total		9007.57	10251.06	10343.90	7075.98	20137.51	4187.68

Statement-II

Statewise provision of Funds made to the State Governments for the Development of COIR Industry

S.No.	State	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98
1.	Kerala	193.21	586.13	664.21
2.	Tamil Nadu	59.14	37.50	142.64
3.	Andhra Pradesh	3.12	3.48	8.96
4.	Karnataka	7.96	17.07	52.68
5.	West Bengal	3.35	0.00	0.00
6.	Goa	0.00	0.00	0.00
7.	Orissa	9.97	5.21	9.36
8.	Maharashtra	0.00	1.00	0.00
9.	Pondicherry	0.04	0.00	0.04
10.	U.T. of Andaman & Nicobar	0.02	0.00	0.00
Total		276.81	650.39	777.89

[English]

Development of Mangalore Port as Free Port

3570. SHRI H.G. RAMULU : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to develop new Mangalore Port as a free port;

(b) if so, the estimated cost of the proposed project;

(c) the amount proposed to be spent during 1998-99;

(d) the facilities proposed to be provided therefor; and

(e) the time by which it is likely to be commenced/completed?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) to (e) The Advisory Committee set up under the Chairmanship of Shri Raunaq Singh, Industrialist, to examine the desirability and feasibility of establishing a Free Port in India had submitted its report on the subject. The report has been examined and the Govt. has asked the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade to draw up an implementation model including likely changes in laws and rules, administrative framework and also various fiscal measures to enable the Govt. to take a policy decision. However, at present, there is no decision on new Mangalore Port as a Free Port.

Import of Agricultural Commodities

3571. SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have earmarked any agricultural commodity for import during 1998-99;

(b) if so, the details thereof indicating the quantity proposed to be imported and the consumers/landing price;

(c) whether the Government have made a prior assessment about the need for such import;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the foreign exchange involved in such import?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) No, Sir. The Government has not earmarked any agricultural commodity for import during 1998-99.

(b) to (e) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Purchase of Dialysis Machine by BCCL

3572. PROF. RITA VERMA : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) the date on which the Dialysis Machine for Central Hospital in Jagjivan Nagar of BCCL was purchased and the cost thereof?

(b) the details of amount spent on the training of doctors and nurses for operating this machine;

(c) the reasons for sending the patients for dialysis to other places inspite of having this machine in the hospital; and

(d) the details of the amount spent for providing dialysis facility somewhere else to the employees of BCCL during each of the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI DILIP RAY) : (a) The Dialysis machine at Central Hospital in Jagjivan Nagar of BCCL was purchased in May, 1991 at a cost of Rs. 2.72 lakhs.

(b) Two doctors and one nurse were trained in operating the dialysis machine at a total cost of Rs. 34,951.50.

(c) Patients are referred to nephrology units outside for treatment of chronic renal failure as a whole and not for dialysis alone. In some of these cases the patients referred outside had to undergo dialysis also. This was required as the hospital does not have qualified nephrologists who can monitor dialysis.

(d) It has been reported by Coal India Limited that as per records maintained at Central Hospital, Dhanbad, the following cases were referred for treatment of chronic renal failure to higher medical centres having nephrology unit. Some of these patients referred for treatment of chronic renal failure as a whole had also undergone dialysis :

1996	13
1997	18
1998	16 (till 03.07.98).

Reimbursement records are not maintained itemwise i.e. there, are no separate records available for reimbursement in any particular item like dialysis. However, the approximate amount spent on haemo-dialysis of the 47 patients referred outside (on the basis of average of the rates of haemo-dialysis prevailing at Bokaro General Hospital, a public sector undertaking hospital and Apollo Hospital, Chennai, a reputed private hospital where patients are mostly referred) works out to Rs. 2.17 lakhs.

[Translation]

Trade Deficit

3573. SHRI MOTILAL VORA :
SHRI NRIPEN GOSWAMI :

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the trade deficit of the country has widened despite increase in the export during the last three years?

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the import-export made separately during each of the last three years: and

(d) the steps taken by the Government to reduce the imbalance?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) and (b) The trade deficit is measured by excess of imports over exports. The increase in trade deficit is primarily due to increased imports of fertilizers besides capital goods, raw material and intermediate goods. During the same period the export growth rate has been lower than the rate growth of imports.

(c) As per the data received from the Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence & Statistics (DGCI&S), the value of Exports and Imports during the last three years in Rupee terms and in Dollar terms are :

Year	Export Values		% Growth over Previous Year	
	US\$ Million	Rs. Crores	(in Dollar Terms)	(in Rs. Terms)
1995-96	31797	106353	20.8	28.6
1996-97	33470	118817	5.3	11.7
1997-98(P)	33980	126286	1.5	6.3

Year	Import Values		% Growth over Previous Year	
	US\$ Million	Rs. Crores	(in Dollar Terms)	(in Rs. Terms)
1995-96	36678	122678	20.0	36.4
1996-97	39132	138920	6.7	13.2
1997-98(P)	40779	151554	4.2	9.1

P : Provisional

(d) The key to reducing trade deficit lies in accelerated export growth. To this end, export promotion measures are initiated on a continuing basis by the Government, to enhance the export growth of the country. These include policy liberalisation and simplification of procedures for providing an exporters friendly environment. Export Promotion measures are initiated on the basis of constant interaction with the trade industry and export promotion organisations, set up by the Government.

[English]

RBI Nominee in Private and Public Sector Boards

3574. SHRI K.S. RAO : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have received any proposal from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for withdrawal of its nominee Directors from the board of private and public sector banks;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the rationale therefor;

(c) whether the RBI has formulated any guidelines in this regard;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the Government also propose to withdraw their nominees from the Board of the Private and Public Sector Banks on the lines of RBI; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) to (d) Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has reported that in pursuance of Section 36 AB of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949 it has been appointing its officials as additional directors (nominee directors) on the boards of private sector banks. RBI's nominee directors on the boards of public sector banks are nominated in terms of the provisions of the Banking Companies (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertaking) Act, 1970 and 1980. As of now, there is no proposal for withdrawal of RBI's nominee directors from the boards of public sector banks.

(e) and (f) There is at present, no proposal under consideration of the Government for withdrawal of its nominee directors from the boards of public sector banks. Government does not appoint its nominee directors on the boards of private sector banks.

Conditions of Handloom Workers

3575. SHRI MULLAPALLY RAMACHANDRAN : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have made any study about the number of persons working in the Handloom Sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise; and

(c) the steps propose to take by the Government to improve the conditions of handloom workers?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RANA) : (a) Yes, Sir. The First Census of Handlooms was conducted in 1987-88. The second Census of Handlooms has commenced during 1995 through National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER), New Delhi, which is still under process.

(b) Statement showing number of persons working in the handlooms sector as per 1987-88 Handloom Census is attached herewith.

(c) Under various schemes of the Government assistance is being provided for skill upgradation, design development, technical development, input supplies, marketing support and welfare etc. for improving the conditions of handloom workers.

Statement

Statement Referred to In Part (b) of Reply to the Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 3575 for 10.07.1998

S.No.	State/UTs	*No. of persons working in handloom sector as per 1987-88 Census
1	2	3
1.	Andhra Pradesh	463507
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	47400
3.	Assam	2003297
4.	Bihar	240627
5.	Delhi	19727
6.	Goa	101
7.	Gujarat	67875
8.	Haryana	37537
9.	Himachal Pradesh	55285
10.	Jammu & Kashmir	53432
11.	Karnataka	185810
12.	Kerala	74694
13.	Madhya Pradesh	79350
14.	Maharashtra	137695
15.	Manipur	335383
16.	Meghalaya	13886
17.	Mizoram	129285
18.	Nagaland	147617
19.	Orissa	245980
20.	Pondicherry	7536

1	2	3
21.	Punjab	24210
22.	Rajasthan	84614
23.	Tamil Nadu	709564
24.	Tripura	137936
25.	Uttar Pradesh	647482
26.	West Bengal	736829
Total		6686659

*Number of persons working in handloom sector includes Household Members engaged in weaving activity and preparatory work (Full Time and Part Time) and number of Hired Weavers in Non-household Units.

India's Share in World Flower Market

3576. SHRI MADHAV RAO PATIL : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

- (a) whether India's share in the World Flower Market is very low;
- (b) if so, the reasons therefor and the details of the actual share at present; and
- (c) the steps being taken by the Government to boost the export of flowers?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The floriculture industry in India is in a nascent stage and India is a new entrant in the international floriculture market. Production of flowers that meet the requirements of the international market such as having long stems and long vase life has started only during the last 3 to 4 years with the setting up of Units with Green Houses. The lack of appropriate infrastructure for maintenance of the cold chain, high cost of investments and airfreight incidence compared to our competitors have also affected the export performance of the Indian floriculture industry. The share of India in the world exports of floriculture has been around 0.3% during 1997-98.

- (c) Some of the steps taken to enhance production and exports of floriculture products include the following :
 - (i) Provision of soft loans for setting up of grading/processing centres, auction platforms, quality testing equipment;
 - (ii) Providing financial assistance to exporters/growers/Cooperative Societies for development of infrastructural facilities such as purchase of specialised transport units, establishment of pre cooling/cold storage facilities;
 - (iii) Grant of financial assistance for improved packaging and strengthening of quality control;

- (iv) Grant of Air Freight Subsidy for exports of selected fresh horticulture & floriculture products;
- (v) Arranging promotional campaigns such as buyer-seller meets and participation in important international fairs, flower shows and exhibitions;
- (vi) Setting up of integrated cargo handling and cold storage facilities at various International Airports for handling export of perishable items such as floriculture and horticulture products; such a facility at the Indira Gandhi International Airport at New Delhi has recently started functioning;
- (vii) providing technical advisory services and other support services to trade and industry including training to farmers for export production, quality control, packaging, transport, etc.

[Translation]

Branches of Indian Banks Abroad

3577. SHRI D.S. AHIRE : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

- (a) The policy being followed by the Government to open Overseas branches of private and public sector banks;
- (b) the number of Overseas branches of Indian banks functioning in other countries at present; and
- (c) the steps taken by the Government to open more Overseas branches of Indian banks?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) and (c) RBI has reported that requests from banks for setting up of branch offices abroad are considered on the basis of certain criteria which, inter alia, include financial strength of the banks, their standing in the domestic sector, compliance with regulatory requirements and the policy followed by the host country regulatory authorities including the reciprocity conditions, trade and commerce between India and host country. The assessment also takes into account commercial and political risks involved. Only such requests which are found meeting these feasibility/viability criteria are considered suitable. Applications received from the Indian Public Sector Banks are considered for opening their branches abroad taking into consideration these factors.

- (b) As at June 1998 eight public sector banks and one private sector bank are having 97 branches abroad in 25 countries.

[English]

**Termination of Services of Chairman/
M.Ds of PSUs**

3578. SHRI NARESH PUGLIA : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have terminated the services of some of the Chairman/Managing Directors of the Public Sector Undertakings falling under the jurisdiction of his Ministry;

(b) if so, the name of the PSUs and also the names of the executives whose services have been terminated by the Government since April 1998;

(c) the reasons and justification of terminating the services of such executives;

(d) whether the Government propose to review their decision; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SUKHBIR SINGH BADAL) : (a) to (c) The services of Gp. Capt. *p+39XT. Rudra. Chairman-cum-Managing Director, Tannery & Footwear Corporation were discontinued w.e.f. 1.6.98. He was on ad-hoc extension after his regular tenure expired on 22.4.95.

(d) and (e) Since the officer has been relieved on completion of his extended tenure, the question of review does not arise.

Excise Duty on Beverages

3579. SHRI ARIF MOHAMMED KHAN : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether duty is being collected from small retailers selling beverages through dispensers;

(b) if so, the estimated excise duty likely to be collected;

(c) the manpower required and the costs associated for the Revenue Department for such collections;

(d) whether the costs and resources are commensurate with the revenues earned;

(e) if so, the details thereof;

(f) whether it is practical to expect small retailers to maintain an invoice and MODVAT records for each cup of beverage sold to a consumer; and

(g) if so, the estimated cost involved for maintenance of such records by a retailer?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS

AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) and (b) The information is being collected.

(c) to (g) This information is not being maintained by the Government for individual commodities. Time and labour involved in the compilation of this information may not be commensurate with the results likely to be achieved.

MMTC Projects in Gujarat and Maharashtra

3580. SHRI MAHESH KANODIA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Minerals and Metals Trading Corporation of India Limited (MMTC) has made any plan to launch some projects in Gujarat and Maharashtra;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the estimated cost thereof; and

(c) the employment generation potentiality of those projects?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

Loans to ESSAR Group of Companies

3581. SHRIMATI SURYAKANTA PATIL : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether public financial institutions have advanced loans to ESSAR Group of Companies;

(b) if so, the details of the loans sanctioned and disbursed, project-wise;

(c) whether ESSAR Group has not been able to repay the instalments of loan regularly; and

(d) if so, the action taken or proposed to be taken by the financial institutions in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House to the extent available and permissible under the Rules.

[Translation]

Development of Buddhist Places

3582. SHRI RAMSHAKAL : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to develop all the Buddhist places as tourist places;

(b) if so, the number thereof Buddhist places proposed to be covered under this scheme; and

(c) the reasons for not including Kushinagar- the 'nirvanisthali' of Lord Buddha under this scheme, which receives maximum grants from abroad?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI OMAK APANG) : (a) to (c) The Task forces constituted by the Ministry of Tourism in 1986 and 1988 have identified 63 places in the country for the development of Buddhist Tourism with the efforts of the Central and State Governments and the Private Sector in a phased manner. Kushinagar is one of the places identified for development. In Kushinagar, development activities such as strengthening of National Highways, landscaping, augmentation of water and electricity supply and provision of wayside amenities have been completed with the assistance of Overseas Economic Co-operation Fund (OECF) of Japan.

[English]

Standing Committee of the Inter State Council

3583. SHRI AJOY MUKHOPADHYAY : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government of West Bengal expressed the view in the Fourth Meeting of the Standing Committee of the Inter-State Council held in New Delhi on July 8, 1987 that it should be allowed a share of foreign exchange earned by units located in the State since the State Government has to incur considerable expenditure to provide infrastructural support to export oriented units; and

(b) if so, the steps taken in this regard by the Union Government?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) There was a consensus in the Inter State Council on this issue that in view of the improvement in existing system of release of foreign exchange, and relaxation of controls on foreign exchange releases, no action was required to be taken by the Union Government.

Chairman/CMD of Banks and Financial Institutions

3584. PROF. JOGENDRA KAWADE : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to allow/appoint Chairman/Chairman & Managing Director of

nationalised Banks/Public Sector Banks/Financial Institutions beyond 60 years of age;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Government are considering to appoint persons who have remained less than 2 years for attaining the age of 60, as Chairman/CMD in the Banks/Financial Institutions viz IDBI & IFCI; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) The statutes governing the appointment of wholtime directors on the boards of public sector banks and financial institutions (including Industrial Development Bank of India) specify that they shall hold office for such term not exceeding five years as the Central Government may specify and shall be eligible for reappointment. No minimum tenure, however, has been prescribed. As regards Industrial Finance Corporation of India Ltd. it is incorporated as a Company and it is for its directors to elect a wholtime Chairman/Managing Director and determine the period for which he is to hold office.

[Translation]

Foreign Finance Companies

3585. SHRI RAMESHWAR PATIDAR : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that the foreign financing companies which are taking over the small and big finance companies of our countries are spreading rapidly in the country;

(b) if so, whether the taking over policy of these foreign companies is being monitored by the Govt.;

(c) if so, whether any rules have been framed by Government in regard to take-over procedure of these companies;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the government are also aware that the rates of interest of these companies is very high and uncontrolled;

(f) if so, whether the rate of interest of these companies is recognized by the Reserve Bank or some other Government financial institution; and

(g) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (YASHWANT SINHA) : (a) and (b) Foreign Direct Investments in Indian Companies is made either by offer of new shares or by sale of existing shares with the approval of the Board of the company. All such investments are considered for approval under the guidelines for foreign direct investments by Foreign Investment Promotion Board (FIPB) or Reserve Bank of India (RBI) as the case may be.

(c) and (d) The acquisition of existing shares of an Indian company by any other company is governed by Securities & Exchange Board of India (SEBI) (Substantial Acquisition of Shares and Takeovers), Regulations 1997.

(e) to (g) The activities of non banking financial companies are regulated under the Reserve Bank of India (Amendment) Act, 1997. Reserve Bank of India (RBI) have issued detailed guidelines on January 2, 1998 subsequently revised on January 31, 1998 regarding norms of deposit acceptance, prudential norms etc. for various categories of Non Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs).

[English]

Seizure of Gold

3586. DR. BIZAY SONKAR SHASTRI : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether gold worth Rs. 3.68 crore was clandestinely removed from an import shed at Air Cargo complex at Indira Gandhi International Airport recently;

(b) if so, whether the Government had inquired into the matter; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) to (c) There are no reports of any recent clandestine removal of gold from an Import Shed at Air Cargo Complex at IGI Airport, New Delhi. Perhaps the Hon'ble Member has in view the case where recently a seizure of gold and certain other articles worth Rs. 3.68 crores was effected by Customs at Air Cargo Complex, Delhi. The facts of the case are that acting on a specific information, that certain consignments containing huge amounts of contraband items from a particular consigner in Hong Kong were to arrive by a United Airlines Flight and which were likely to be removed from the Import Shed of Air Cargo Complex, IGI Airport clandestinely, without filing of documents, the officers of Headquarters Preventive Unit of Commissionerates of Customs at IGI Airport, New Delhi, kept a surveillance. They were able to trace out two such

consignments. The officers examined the said two consignments, which had arrived from Hong Kong by United Airlines Flight No. UA-001. vide Airway Bills No. 0165775 2973 and 016 5775 2962 on the night of 17.6.1998. The goods covered by the said Airway Bills were declared to be Automobile car parts and Metal fittings. However, the examination of these consignments resulted in the recovery of 600 gold biscuits of 10 Tolas each valued at Rs. 2.95 crores, and other misc. goods i.e. LCD Display modules, watch parts, calculators and computer parts, valued at Rs. 73.14 lakhs, collectively valued at Rs. 3.68 crores. All those goods were seized for misdeclaration and contravention of the provisions of the Customs Act, 1962. The two consignments were booked in the name of M/s Marita Enterprises, 12-C, Sri Nagar, Shakur Basti, Delhi and M/s S.N. Impex, 308-c/55, Suneja Towers, Janakpuri, New Delhi respectively. The address of the consignee mentioned in the first Airway Bill, was found to be nonexistent, whereas the address in respect of the second Airway Bill was found to be fictitious. However, the first consignee's actual address was ascertained and the premises were searched, which resulted in recovery of a rubber stamp and a tin sign board of the consignee i.e. M/s Marita Enterprises. The occupant of the premises Shri Brij Mohan Behl was interrogated and subsequently placed under arrest. Further investigations are in the progress. Appropriate action for adjudication of seized goods/prosecution against the concerned persons etc. will be taken after completion of investigations.

Indo-China Cooperation in Coal Sector

3587. SHRI R. SAMBASIVA RAO : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) whether India and China have decided to cooperate in coal sector;

(b) if so, whether any agreement between the two countries have been signed;

(c) if so, the details of the agreement; and

(d) the extent to which China will help in the coal sector?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI DILIP RAY) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Coal India Limited (CIL) has signed four separate contracts in respect of four mines viz. Balrampur, Rajendra, New Kumda and Churcha West with China National Coal Mining Engineering Equipment Group Corporation, China in September, 1995. The provisions of the contracts provide for supply of powered support longwall equipment, expert services for installation, commissioning and operation of the equipment for a specified period of 150 continuous working

days to demonstrate the guaranteed production from these four projects. The value of these four contracts is as under :

Name of the contracts	Value in US\$ Million
1. Balrampur	7.271
2. Rajendra	3.369
3. New Kumda	7.271
4. Churcha West	9.754

85% of the above contract amounts are covered by Chinese credit.

(d) In the 4th Indo-China Working Group Meeting held in November, 1997 the Chinese side have proposed help in following areas :

1. Development of greenfield projects.
2. Briquetting of Indian Coal.
3. Co-manufacture of PSLW equipment spares, and
4. Co-manufacture of electric side discharge loader.

Hotel Industry

3588. SHRI RAMKRISHNA BABA PATIL : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether there has been an adverse effect in the Hotel Industry after the Pokharan tests;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the corporate delegations scheduled to visit India and had booked hotels in the country, have cancelled the visit;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI OMAK APANG) : (a) and (b) There has been a limited effect on the hotel industry during the month of May and June which can be attributed to several factors like the World Cup - SOCCER, sanctions etc.

(c) and (d) A few cancellations have been reported by the hotels of the business delegations from countries like USA, Australia, Belgium and Germany. Also business visits from the World Bank and ADB have been reduced. The occupancy levels in the business segment in the major cities is lower than last year through-out the six month period.

(e) The Ministry of Tourism is of the opinion that this is a temporary phenomenon, and have been reassuring potential visitors through its marketing offices about the

stable business and political environment in the country, both in the business and leisure segments.

New Funding Pattern of Growth Centres

3589. SHRI P.R. KYNDIAH : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) the present status of implementation of setting up of Growth Centre proposed at Mendipathar (Meghalaya) and the quantum of funds released for the purpose so far:

(b) whether under the new funding pattern based on the Prime Minister's new initiatives, the Growth Centres in the North-East region would receive the entire expenditure as Central assistance subject to a ceiling of Rs. 15 crores: and

(c) if so, whether the Government propose to release the balance funds at enhanced rate for early implementation of the Mendipathar Growth Centre?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT) : (a) The Growth Centre at Mendipathar in Meghalaya was approved by the Government in October, 1997. The first instalment of Rs. 50 lakhs has also been released on approval.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. Released of funds is made depending upon the progress achieved by the State Government/its implementing agency in implementation of the growth centre.

Support Price of Cotton

3590. SHRI S.S. OWAISI : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) the number of times the support price of cotton has been increased during the last three years along-with the price increased each time; and

(b) the steps taken by the Government to check the rise in market price of cotton?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RANA) : (a) The Minimum Support Prices (MSP) for the basic varieties of cotton viz. F414/H777 and H-4 are announced by the Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India. The table below indicates the MSPs announced over the last three years :

(Rs. per quintal)		
Year	Basic Variety	MSP announced
1995-96	F414/H777	1115.00
	H4	1350.00
1996-97	F414/H777	1180.00
	H4	1380.00
1997-98	F414/H777	1330.00
	H4	1530.00

(b) While the price of cotton is dependent on the demand and supply situation, Government keeps a close watch on the price of cotton, and takes suitable measures if the situation so warrants. Meanwhile, cotton is freely importable at zero rate of duty.

Coal Handling and water Treatment Plants in BCCL

3591. SHRI MOINUL HASSAN : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) the number of Coal Handling Plants and Water Treatment Plants made in BCCCL, till March 31, 1998;

(b) the amount spent on them separately; and

(c) the number out of them actually operating presently?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI DILIP RAY) : (a) and (b) The details of Coal Handling Plants and Water Treatment Plants constructed by BCCL till 31st March, 1998 are as under :

	Number	Amount spent (Rs. in Lakhs)
1. Coal Handling Plant	32	4803.34
2. Water Treatment Plant	64	860.00

(c) Of the 32 Coal Handling Plants and 64 Water Treatment Plants, 30 Nos. Coal Handling Plants and 64 Nos. Water Treatment Plants are in operation. 2 Coal Handling Plants are not operating as the two linked mines which have serviced these 2 Coal Handling Plants, have closed down.

Financial Gain Due to Increase in Retirement Age

3592. SHRI GEORGE EDEN : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have calculated the total financial gain due to increase in the retirement age; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) : (a) and (b) The enhancement in the age of superannuation by two years in respect of Central Govt. civilian employees will result in fiscal relief of about Rs. 3700 crores in a full year for two years. As per the calculation made by the Ministry of Defence, the annual savings in respect of Defence personnel will be about Rs. 1500 crores. The aggregate savings would, thus, amount to about Rs. 5200 crores per annum for two years.

Impact of New EXIM Policy on Export/Import of Copra, Rubber

3593. SHRI T. GOVINDAN : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government is taking action to contain the adverse effect of the liberalised export import (EXIM) Policy affecting the coconut oil/copra and natural rubber producers, mainly in Kerala; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) and (b) The import of Coconut (copra) oil is canalised through State Trading Corporation and Hindustan Vegetable Oil Corporation. Natural Rubber can be imported against Special Import Licences (SIL).

There have been no recent changes in the importability of these items.

Loan by RRB and NABARD

3594. SHRIMATI RANI CHITRALEKHA BHONSLE :
SHRI RAM TAHAL CHAUDHARY :
DR. MADAN PRASAD JAISWAL :
SHRI NRIPEN GOSWAMI :
DR. SAROJA V. :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the loans provided by Regional Rural Banks and NABARD to small and marginal farmers during the last three years, separately, State-wise and project-wise;

(b) the number of SC/ST and OBC farmers benefited therefrom, State-wise; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to remove the problems being faced by the farmers in getting such loans?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House to the extent available.

FERA Violation

3595. SHRI RAM TAHAL CHAUDHARY :
DR. MADAN PRASAD JAISWAL :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the charges against the persons involved in Foreign Exchange Regulation Act (FERA) violations have not been framed since 1995 till date, as a result of which they have not yet been punished;

(b) if so, the number of persons involved in FERA violations since 1995 against whom charges have not been framed yet and the reasons for delay in each of such cases;

(c) whether the Government propose to review the long pending cases; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) and (b) No, Sir. However, in certain complicated/group cases, investigations take considerable period of time, which lead to delays. Since 1995, the number of cases taken up for investigation, and the number in which Show-Cause Notices (SCNs) have been issued and prosecution launched, are as follows :

No.	1995	1996	1997	1998 (upto March)
(i) Cases taken up for investigation	5633	5486	5577	880
(ii) SCNs issued	2456	2291	2721	636
(iii) Prosecution launched	202	101	90	17

(c) and (d) Government periodically, reviews, interalia, the pendency of cases under investigation/adjudication/prosecution, and issues appropriate instructions.

Agricultural Wages

3596. SHRI ASHOK NAMDEORAO MOHOL : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether some studies undertaken in the country under Economic Survey during the last five years have indicated that agricultural wages have declined sharply;

(b) if so, the details of States and Union Territories where declining trend prevailed and to what extent;

(c) whether such declining trend was improved in some States/Union Territories during 1992-93 and 1993-94;

(d) if so, the details thereof Statewise;

(e) whether Government propose to take some steps to improve the declining trend in this regard; and

(f) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) : (a) to (f) Average real wages for unskilled labour have increased during the last five years i.e. 1992-93 to 1996-97 (agriculture year July to June) for the country as a whole except for 1994-95 where there was a marginal fall by 0.39 per cent. A statement indicating annual percentage change in real wages for unskilled agriculture labour for selected States is annexed. It is observed that there have been no uniform trends across the States implying that local conditions exert significant influence on agriculture wages.

Statement

*Annual Percentage Change in Real Wages for Unskilled Agriculture Labour for Selected States
Percentage Change for agricultural year (July to June) over previous year*

State	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95(P)	1995-96(P)	1996-97(P)
1	2	3	4	5	6
Andhra Pradesh	(+) 1.57	(+) 8.60	(+) 2.71	(-) 1.73	(+) 1.35
Assam	(+) 0.58	(-) 6.58	(-) 1.67	(+) 2.68	(+) 1.68
Bihar	5.00	(+) 5.98	(+) 1.69	(-) 2.30	(-) 10.80
Gujarat	(+) 7.92	(+) 2.86	(+) 1.27	(+) 2.92	(+) 5.70
Karnataka	(-) 14.39	(+) 41.31	(-) 15.60	(-) 8.61	(+) 21.48
Kerala	(+) 9.74	(-) 2.84	(+) 5.24	(+) 13.20	(+) 14.03
Madhya Pradesh	(+) 12.57	(-) 3.53	(+) 4.93	(+) 1.24	(+) 1.23
Maharashtra	(+) 0.66	(+) 25.58	(-) 0.68	(-) 7.89	(-) 2.88

1	2	3	4	5	6
Orissa	(+) 11.03	(-) 0.14	(-) 3.52	(+) 0.55	(-) 0.30
Punjab	(+) 4.25	(+) 1.51	(-) 1.17	(-) 6.50	(-) 0.34
Rajasthan	(-) 3.56	(-) 7.66	(+) 1.05	(+) 10.33	(+) 16.42
Tamil Nadu	(+) 13.29	(+) 11.60	(+) 1.03	(+) 3.63	(+) 10.06
Uttar Pradesh	(+) 7.56	(-) 6.77	(-) 2.31	(+) 14.78	(-) 6.53
West Bengal	(+) 24.39	(-) 6.50	(-) 5.29	(-) 0.28	(+) 1.65
All India	(+) 5.21	(+) 5.61	(-) 0.39	(+) 0.72	(+) 1.64

P-Provisional

Source : Economic Survey 1997-98

Note : The Real wages for unskilled agricultural labour for each State have been weighted by total agricultural labourers of the State for working out all India average.

Credit to Farmers

3597. SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government of Andhra Pradesh has requested to grant exemption from compliance of section 11 of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949 for District Central Co-operative Banks to enable farmers to obtain credit; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Government of Andhra Pradesh had approached the Central Government for grant of exemption to seven District Central Co-operative Banks (DCCBs) from the compliance of Section 11 of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949 (As Applicable to Co-operative Societies). The matter was examined by the Central Government in consultation with Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the exemption sought by the State Government has since been granted in favour of these DCCBs.

Loan to States

3598. SHRI BHERU LAL MEENA : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the amount of loans owed by the States to the Centre as on March, 1998, State-wise;

(b) whether various State Governments have requested to the Union Government for additional loan during the current financial year; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) : (a) State-wise details of loans owed by the States to the Ministry of Finance as on 31-3-98 are given in the enclosed statement.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. The States of Himachal Pradesh, Manipur, Mizoram and Rajasthan have requested for soft, longterm loan for the purpose of tiding over ways and means difficulties.

Statement

Statement showing the details of Loan owed by State Governments to the Ministry of Finance.
as on 31.03.98

S.No.	State	Amount (Rs. in crores)
1	2	3
1.	Andhra Pradesh	11908.02
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	265.63
3.	Assam	3777.61
4.	Bihar	10836.81
5.	Goa	860.88
6.	Gujarat	11517.43
7.	Haryana	4093.22
8.	Himachal Pradesh	2322.51
9.	Jammu & Kashmir	3063.38
10.	Karnataka	7576.73
11.	Kerala	4929.11
12.	Madhya Pradesh	7515.37
13.	Maharashtra	19039.95

1	2	3
14.	Manipur	261.24
15.	Meghalaya	260.30
16.	Mizoram	174.92
17.	Nagaland	271.58
18.	Orissa	5546.66
19.	Punjab	11577.00
20.	Rajasthan	8108.28
21.	Sikkim	155.96
22.	Tamilnadu	9427.39
23.	Tripura	419.35
24.	Uttar Pradesh	24246.84
25.	West Bengal	16400.18
		164556.35

Assocham Study

3599.DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the study of Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry on fiscal prudence and consolidation have pointed out that despite considerable success in lowering the tax rates and narrowing their range, the fiscal reforms undertaken by the Government have hardly any impact on expenditure;

(b) if so, whether fiscal indiscipline was attributed to the present system of inter-Government fiscal transfers and the weak revenues;

(c) if so, whether Government have examined the other points made in the study report; and

(d) the steps being taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) : (a) In a paper entitled "Strategy for Fiscal Reforms" published in May, 1998, the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry had pointed out, among other things, that in spite of significant progress in reforming the tax structure, fiscal prudence continues to prove elusive and there is a need for more effective control over expenditure.

(b) to (d) Over the years, the government has maintained a strict fiscal discipline. Consequently, the total expenditure of the Central Government as percentage of GDP has declined from 19.7% in 1990-91 to 16.6% in 1997-98 (RE).

Import of Coal

3600.PROF. AJIT KUMAR MEHTA : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have allowed the import of coal in the country;

(b) if so, the date on which such decision was taken by the Government;

(c) the quantity of coal likely to be imported during the current financial year and the amount to be incurred therein;

(d) whether the import of coal has affected the working and coal production capacity of public sector coal producing companies;

(e) if so, whether the coal producing companies have protested the said decision;

(f) if so, whether the Government propose to review the import policy of coal; and

(g) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI DILIP RAY) : (a) and (b) As per the present import policy; coal is an Open General Licence.

(c) Consumers are free to import coal exercising their judgement and therefore Government do not import coal. As per the past trends, about 10 million tonnes of coking coal is likely to be imported by steel producers and about 3 million tonnes of non coking coal by other consumers.

(d) The liberalised import of coal has caused a decrease in the offtake of some industrial consumers like Cement Sector. There has as yet been no impact on production of coal.

(e) The Ministry of Coal has pointed out that even though the cost of coal in India is competitive, the incidence of State & Central levies and the cost of transport renders it uncompetitive at coastal locations as compared to imported coal.

(f) and (g) The Govt. propose to increase duty on imported coal by 4%.

India's Share in World Tourism

3601.SHRI MANIKRAO HODLYA GAVIT : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that the percentage share of India in the world tourism is still low in comparison with other countries;

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

(c) the steps proposed to be taken to increase the share of India in the World tourism?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI OMAK APANG) : (a) and (b) The percentage share of India in the world tourist arrivals during 1997 was 0.39. The inadequacies in the general level of infrastructure in the country and inadequate resources for promotion are the main reasons for low share of India in the world tourist traffic.

(c) Steps being taken to increase the share of India in the world tourist arrivals include improvement of infrastructural facilities, diversification of tourism products, strengthening of publicity efforts and sustained human resources development.

[Translation]

Compounding of Excise Duty

3602. SHRI JAGAT VIR SINGH DRONA : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that the trade of Induction-Furnace, rolling mills and scrap, in Uttar Pradesh is facing a very tough time due to compounding of excise duty; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Government in this matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) and (b) Government have seen reports that the induction furnace and re-rolling mills have been facing difficult times, inter-alia, due to severe demand recession and due to capacity based levy of excise duty. Representations had also been received from the trade and industry seeking changes in certain provisions of the scheme. Some changes have been made. However, the matter is sub judice in the Honourable Supreme Court of India and further changes could be considered only after the judgement of the Supreme Court is received.

[English]

Smuggling of Narcotics

3603. SHRI MOHAN RAWALE :
SHRI VIJAY GOEL :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there has been a sharp increase in the quantity of narcotics smuggled in the country during the last five years;

(b) if so, the quantity thereof, item-wise;

(c) whether the terrorists and organisations are involved in the anti-national activities in different parts of the country are behind such smuggling;

(d) if so, the names of those organisations and the areas where they are active;

(e) whether a special conference on narcotics was held by the United Nations Organisation in the first fortnight of June; and

(f) if so, the details of the decisions taken in the conference?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Question does not arise.

(c) and (d) Cases of seizure of narcotic drugs alongwith arms/ammunition/explosives suggest some involvement of terrorist organisations in drug trafficking. However, the Government does not have any authentic information regarding the names of such organisations and the areas where they are active.

(e) Yes, Sir. The United Nations General Assembly held a Special Session devoted to fight against illicit drugs in New York on 8-10 June, 1998.

(f) The General Assembly adopted unanimously a global strategy setting a 10 year target to eradicate demand and supply of illicit narcotics. The main document of the summit calls for a crack-down on demand and supply of drugs and the elimination of illicit crops with the provision for alternate development. The Resolutions adopted also provide for strong counter-measures to eliminate money laundering and production and abuse of Amphetamines, as well as for enhanced Judicial cooperation between member nations.

[Translation]

Training Centres for Employment in Tribal Areas

3604. SHRI PRABHASH CHANDRA TIWARI :
SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE :

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to establish Training Centre in the Country for providing employment to tribal people; and

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise and location-wise?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT) : (a) Khadi & Village Industries Commission have received proposals from North-Eastern States and Madhya Pradesh for establishing Training Centres in tribal areas. These proposals are pending for want of fulfilment of certain conditions by the concerned State Governments.

(b) The details of the proposals received from the concerned States are as follows :

S.No.	State	Location
1.	Meghalaya	Turo (West Garo Hills)
2.	Manipur	Imphal
3.	Nagaland	Dimapur
4.	Madhya Pradesh	Bilaspur

[English]

Promotion of Domestic Tourism

3605. SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have initiated any policy or have taken any steps to promote domestic tourism apart from tourism connected with pilgrimages at various places for all religions;

(b) if so, whether this includes the budgetary provision for providing accommodation and boarding facilities;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) funds earmarked for the purpose during 1998-99?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI OMAK APANG) : (a) to (d) The Ministry of Tourism, Government of India has a policy for development of tourism in the country, including domestic tourism and pilgrimage tourism. This is an on-going process and developmental activities are taken-up by the State Governments. The activities include construction of tourist complexes, wayside amenities, cafeterias; purchase of adventure sports equipment, floodlighting and refurbishment of monuments, putting up Sound & Light Shows; construction of the low-priced accommodation units like Yatri Niwas, Yatrikas and Pilgrim Sheds, etc. Financial assistance for these activities are provided by the Ministry of Tourism on the basis of specific proposals, which are examined on merit and as per guidelines.

In the budget for 1998-99, an amount of Rs. 52.80 crores has been earmarked for the development of tourism infrastructure.

LIC Proposal for Separate Company for Pension Business

3606. SHRI K.S. RAO : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) has sent any proposal to the Government suggesting having off its pension business into a separate company;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the rationale therefor; and

(c) the details of the pension scheme floated presently by the LIC and the reasons that weigh with the LIC to suggest separate companies therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) has introduced several individual annuity plans such as Jeevan Dhara, Jeevan Akshay, Jeevan Suraksha etc. as well as Group Superannuation Schemes to help individuals and employers to fund for pension benefits. The individual annuity plans are of two types - Deferred Annuities (such as Jeevan Dhara where the annuities start after certain period) and Immediate annuities (such as Jeevan Akshay where the payment of annuity starts immediately. The premium for Jeevan Suraksha Plan is deducted from the taxable income of the contributor upto a limit of Rs. 10,000/- p.a. and further Jeevan Suraksha is a deferred annuity plan.

Import of Polerethene

3607. SHRI MULLAPALLY RAMACHANDRAN : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have allowed the import, of Polerethene recently;

(b) if so, the quantum and value of Polerethene thus imported;

(c) whether the Polerethene import has adversely affected the rubber Industry in the country; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) to (d) No, Sir. Government has not allowed free import of Polerethene. If the question refers to Polyurethene, it has been freely importable for the last several years. Details of imports are as follows:

Year	Quantity	Value (Rs.)
1995-96	1143	166,271,059
1996-97	1156	205,921,762
1997-98 (April-August '97)	595	88,463,987

Source : DGCI&S, Calcutta

The import of such quantities does not adversely affect the rubber industry where projected production and consumption during 1997-98 is 5.84 Lakhs MT and 5.74 Lakhs MT respectively.

Import of Textile Garments

3608. SHRI MADHAV RAO PATIL : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) whether any decision has been taken by the Government to allow import of textiles garments including synthetic textiles through Special Licence Route during 1995-96;

(b) if so, whether the Government have assessed its impact on revenue earnings and also on production of textiles by the handloom and powerloom sectors;

(c) if so, the total revenue earnings from this sector during the last two years and expected shortfall during the next two years; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government to safeguard the interests of the handloom/powerloom sectors?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RANA) : (a) to (c) Two separate Notifications were issued on 15-2-1995 allowing imports of certain items freely without an import licence and imports of certain other items against Special Import Licence (SIL), as required under the Indo-US and the Indo-EU Market Access Agreements signed under the aegis of the Multi Fibre Arrangements (MFA) and subsequently under the Agreement on Textile and Clothing (ATC) of WTO, which came into force w.e.f. 1.1.1995. Imports under SIL, as per the EXIM Policy, carry the normal import duty as per the policy announced from time to time.

The production of textiles by handloom and powerloom sectors have not been affected.

The total revenue earnings from the textile industry during the last two years and the budget for 1998-99 are as follows:

	(Rs. in Crores)
1996-97	5071.53 (Actuals)
1997-98	5605.83 (Revised)
1998-99	6183.38 (Budget)

Government anticipates no revenue shortfall at this stage.

(d) The Government is generally monitoring the situations and any representations from the affected sector could be examined under the laws including the safeguard provisions of the W.T.O. agreements.

Small Savings

3609. SHRI D.S. AHIRE : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the amount realised through small savings during the Eighth Plan, year-wise and State-wise;

(b) whether there was a decline in small savings collections during that period;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether any target was fixed in this regards;

(e) if so, the reasons for not meeting the desired target through small savings; and

(f) the steps taken by the Government to increase the collection under small savings schemes?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) : (a) The amount realised through small savings during the Eighth Plan, year-wise and State-wise is given in statement.

(b) There has been a steady growth in the collections over the years except a slight lowering in 1995-96.

(c) The slight decline in 1995-96 is perhaps due to discontinuation of Institutional Investment in several scheme w.e.f. 1.4.1995.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

(f) The steps include :

(i) Operating 11 schemes catering to different categories of investors on very attractive terms with tax incentives and the assured advantage of liquidity, safety and operational ease.

(ii) A large network of Post Offices and Public Sector Banks to collect the funds under these schemes including in remote and rural areas.

(iii) An agency force of over 3.5 lakhs under three agency schemes to reach the investors at the grassroot level. Grievances Cells have been set

up by the Department of Posts and the Offices of Regional Directors of NSO to assist the investor in solving his difficulties.

- (iv) The National Savings Organisation (NSO) with its headquarters at Nagpur and 26 Regional

Offices all over the country is actively engaged in encouraging mobilisation of resources. They are responsible for training and motivation of agents & conducting publicity campaigns for the various schemes.

Statement

Gross and Net collections of Small Savings Schemes in Post Offices State-Wise and UTs (with legislature)

(Rs. in thousand)

State/UT	1992-93		1993-94		1994-95		1995-96		1996-97	
	Gross	Net	Gross	Net	Gross	Net	Gross	Net	Gross	Net
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Andhra Pradesh	7981527	2031581	14254833	6003518	19914799	9205155	19958137	6098805	16312710	2012149
Bihar	10229224	1413368	14110739	2422102	19344347	6594170	19413942	4334751	21059550	6584181
Base	339848	50850	426747	80009	511406	404693	567023	55234	676066	90890
Delhi	5739260	1198937	8411021	2275122	13284761	6835536	12507907	6582091	11877627	1623378
J & K	1471362	584007	2267482	958987	3047201	1526393	3058872	1615304	3031014	1274885
Karnataka	9007986	3116429	11163964	3132422	21257923	12444941	13535696	2939543	13073121	3518226
M.P.	5632009	1152806	8306138	1983083	10999822	3980245	12101251	3908285	12558301	4672933
Orissa	4158584	261699	6048759	1634727	7555694	3341071	7245679	2754609	6987443	1382484
Rajasthan	8086605	2906203	11469414	4164274	14023638	6521264	14627854	5107055	16558127	5834044
U.P.	28053254	7840189	37236305	11682237	51097031	22352294	50400738	19898689	49338957	15740097
Haryana	5715441	1342665	7850040	1964782	10383026	4148808	9519613	3203755	10508271	3942578
Tamil Nadu	16551853	5634459	21080001	5235869	26503801	7100011	19659165	3798104	20519874	3629762
Pondicherry	78696	16754	102909	26724	127572	33482	127858	23145	143426	30385
Maharashtra	18782475	1005832	27373790	2222710	33951439	6061544	32311263	5714312	34177070	30014825
Goa	368404	36413	0*	0*	780927	210637	695367	89144	699539	127606
Gujarat	13945927	3756211	17174570	4556724	22224181	8189905	25916660	10056479	27073629	9237244
Kerala	4678327	1320294	7601779	3075651	11987741	6333646	9383308	2970765	9114816	1768512
Punjab	7558773	2559235	12298160	4259005	14016947	6515604	14608028	5805677	15587170	7267328
Himachal	2487980	250732	4201697	1511795	8707839	5987192	8983164	3899512	8141793	1775584
W. Bengal	20082548	5827142	30021101	12474932	41820892	19760055	43786368	19366101	45418200	21445951
Sikkim	20044	2662	0*	0*	76830	57162	85685	60217	73243	39343
Assam	3359785	1060551	4478933	1423266	9690079	6371840	6560156	2390678	7406284	2178173
Manipur	75891	27953	0*	0*	187674	104565	225101	119853	267188	142984
Meghalaya	197626	54271	1431780	485770	402685	184252	365323	72176	398341	110641
Tripura	535844	100226	0*	0*	907987	288906	975424	333909	931669	277197
Mizoram	76412	39537	0*	0*	137444	81039	160875	53977	156331	5309

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Nagaland	48331	11733	0*	0*	80270	31235	91900	24897	151910	89866
Arunachal Pd.	51836	21787	0*	0*	128269	73511	122710	53131	131021	58408
Total	175315852	43624526	247310162	71573709	343152225	143929770	326995067	99757222	332372691	121323795

Note : The above figures pertain to all the States and Uts with legislature.

The state-wise breakup for Maharashtra, North-east and West Bengal Postal Circles are not available with Department of Post for the year 1993-94.

Issue of New Sets of Currency Notes

3610. SHRI NARESH PUGLIA :
SHRI K. KRISHNA MOORTHY :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

- whether the Government have taken any decision to issue new sets of currency notes;
- if so, the denominations of which the new sets are likely to be issued in the coming months;
- whether currency notes of Rs. 500/- denomination are also likely to be replaced by new sets;
- whether the generation of black money have increased during the past few months; and
- if so, the steps taken by the Government to curb black money in the country?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) : (a) to (c) The new series of currency notes of Rs. 10, Rs. 50, Rs. 100, and Rs. 500 have already been issued by the Government and these are in circulation. Government has also decided to introduce note of Rs. 1000 denomination.

(d) A study was made by the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy (NIPFP) in the year 1983-84 and undisclosed money was estimated between Rs. 31584 crores to Rs. 36786 crores. Thereafter, no study has been made by the Government. No estimate of the generation of black money during the past few months can be made.

(e) The Government have been taking necessary legislative, fiscal and administrative measures, from time to time to unearth the undisclosed money. Rates of taxation have been progressively rationalised. Besides, the Income Tax Act, 1961 contains a number of provisions aimed at unearthing the undisclosed money. These include, inter alia, provision regarding compulsory maintenance and audit of accounts in appropriate cases u/s 44AA and 44AB, restrictions on cash transactions u/s 40A(3), 269SS AND 269T, preemptive purchase of property under Chapter XXC and provisions regarding penalties and prosecutions for punishing tax defaulters. The Act also contains provisions regarding summons, surveys and searches etc. to detect tax evasion. A new procedure for making assessments in cases of search has been introduced with the levy of tax on undisclosed income at 60%. These provisions are resorted to in appropriate cases.

Export of Jute

3611. SHRI MAHESH KANODIA :
SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK :

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

- the steps taken by the Government to increase the export of Jute;
- the details of the projections made for jute export during 1998-99;
- whether the workers of jute mills have demanded the revision of wages; and
- if so, the steps taken by the government to revise their wages?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RANA) : (a) Govt. have permitted export of raw jute freely without any kind of restriction in order to increase its exports irrespective of supply-demand situation in the country. However, export of raw jute has been very negligible in recent years, as the country does not have any exportable surplus.

(b) Since export possibility of raw jute is very limited no projection for export of raw jute during 1998-99 has been made by the Government.

(c) As per the information received from O/O Jute Commissioner, Calcutta, there are no reports of any demand made by workers of jute mills for revision of wages.

(d) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Foreign Participation in Coal Sector

3612. SHRIMATI SURYAKANTA PATIL : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

- the details of the proposals received from the foreign companies which are keen to invest in the Indian Coal Sector;
- whether the Foreign Investment Promotion Board (FIPB) have approved some proposals in this regard.
- if so, the amount likely to be invested under these proposals; and
- the number of foreign companies which have started functioning in this sector, till March, 1998?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI DILIP RAY) : (a) to (c) Two foreign investment proposals in private coal mining companies for undertaking mining operations for captive consumption, were received in the Ministry of Coal. In the first case, foreign investment of Rs. 446.51 crores in Central India Coal Company Limited (CICCO), a company promoted by the Ispat Group, equivalent to 71.77% of the equity of CICCO by the Overseas Associates of Ispat Group, Non-resident Indian and other foreign companies was cleared by the FIPB in July 1996.

In the second case a foreign investment proposal amounting to Rs. 19.907 crores from the International Finance Corporation, Washington, equivalent to 10% of the equity of Integrated Coal Mining Private Company Limited (ICMPCL), a company promoted by the Calcutta Electricity Supply Corporation was submitted by ICMPCL to FIPB in May 1998. The FIPB decision in the case has not been received in the Ministry of Coal.

(d) No foreign company has so far started functioning in coal sector.

Discretionary Quota of Ministers

3613. SHRI RAMSHAKAL : Will the Minister of PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) the Ministry-wise discretionary quota of Ministers at present;

(b) whether the Government propose to increase this quota; and

(c) if so, the Ministry-wise 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) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[English]

Taxation of Services

3614. SHRI AJOY MUKHOPADHYAY :
SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have received any proposals from various States for allowing them the right of taxation on services;

(b) if so, the details thereof along with earmarking the categories of services between Centre and the States; and

(c) the steps taken/being taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) to (c) The Government has received representations from the States of Tamil Nadu and West Bengal for allowing the States the right to levy tax on services. There is no proposal under consideration at present for allowing the States to levy tax on services.

Extension of Service in PSUs

3615. PROF. JOGENDRA KAWADE : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether his Ministry has issued instructions to all Public Sector Undertakings about non-extension of services of Chief Executives beyond 60 years of age on the lines of Government Notification issued by the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pension on 13.5.98;

(b) if not, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether permission/extension beyond 60 years has been given to any Chief Executive(s) of Public Sector Undertaking since January, 1998;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether his Ministry has also issued instructions to all PSUs regarding upper age limit for nomination of Members on the Board of PSUs; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SUKHBIR SINGH BADAL) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

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

(e) No, Sir.

(f) Does not arise.

Income Tax Dues

3616. SHRI JANG BAHADUR SINGH PATEL : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is Rs. 42947 crores due to be realised by the Income Tax department upto March 31, 1998;

(b) if so, the reasons for the dues to accumulate and the steps taken to expeditiously realising the same;

(c) whether the Government propose to investigate the reasons for the dues going into such huge arrears and bring to book those persons and officials;

(d) whether attention of the Government has also been drawn to the news-item appearing in this regard in Dainik Jagaran of June 21, 1998;

(e) if so the facts thereof; and

(f) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Entire outstanding demand of Rs. 42947 crore as on 31st March, 1998 is not recoverable. This amount includes demands not fallen due, demands paid but pending verification, demands stayed by courts/Settlement Commission/Appellate Tribunals and Income-tax Authorities etc. Only Rs. 4270.55 crore is net collectible demand as on 31.3.1998. The major reason for accumulating large arrears is on account of multiplicity of litigations on the same issue in different assessment years. The government is regularly monitoring and analysing the outstanding large arrears and taking necessary steps in this regard.

Income Tax Act, prescribes a statutory procedure for collection and recovery of taxes. The recovery of the outstanding tax is a continuous process. The process starts after the demand falls due after 30 days of the service of the Demand Notice. Thereafter, action is taken by Assessing Officer in respect of unstayed demand by attaching bank accounts, charging interest, levying penalty etc. In difficult cases, matter is referred to Tax Recovery Officer who takes various coercive measures as per the Act like attachment and sale of defaulter's movable and immovable properties, arrest of defaulter and his detention in prison, appointment of Receiver for the management of the defaulter's movable and immovable properties. The recovery action taken by the Assessing officers and TROs is closely monitored by the higher Income-Tax authorities.

Further dossier cases having outstanding demand of Rs. 10 lakhs and above are monitored by higher authorities on a regular periodic basis and necessary instructions are issued for taking various coercive measures for effecting the recovery of demand.

Moreover, proposed "Samadhan Scheme" in the Budget is a major step in the direction of reducing outstanding demand.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) and (f) The facts as stated in the news item in Dainik Jagran of June 21, 1998 are correct, except the fact that cash collection of 8% is out of arrear demand as on 31.3.1997 during financial year 1997-98. Further cash collection of 12% is out of current demand during financial year 1997-98. Moreover, if we include collection under VDIS during financial year 1997-98, Budget targets have been exceeded. However, excluding VDIS collection there is a shortfall during financial year 1997-98.

Government has taken a serious note of this and all out efforts are being made to have a sustained monitoring to ensure that Budget targets during financial year 1998-99 are not only achieved but exceeded too. For this purpose, a "Task Force" has been constituted in the Central Board of Direct Taxes for effective monitoring as reported in the news-item.

Development of Tourism

3617. SHRI R. SAMBASIVA RAO : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether travel and tourism experts have urged the Union Government to pay more concentration on developing tourism industry;

(b) if so, whether the experts have pointed out that the country's vast tourism potential has not been exploited properly till now;

(c) if so, whether some States such as Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh have prepared the ambitious plan to promote tourism; and

(d) if so, the details of assistance proposed to be provided by Union Government to these States to develop tourism?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI OMAK APANG) : (a) and (b) The Government is aware of country's tourism potential. However, it is not possible to develop all the places at present primarily due to financial constraints.

(c) and (d) Development of tourism is primarily the responsibility of State Governments/Union Territory Administrations. Ministry of Tourism provides assistance for development of tourism infrastructure based on specific project proposals received from the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations.

During the 8th Plan period, Rs. 437 lakhs and Rs. 741 lakhs were sanctioned to States of Andhra Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh respectively. Further assistance of Rs. 206 lakhs and Rs. 221 lakhs has been sanctioned to Andhra Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh respectively during 1997-98.

Kailash - Manasarovar Yatra

3618. SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to promote tourism by opening Kailash-Manasarovar Yatra;

(b) if so, whether Indo-China frontier is proposed to be opened in order to facilitate tourists visiting Kailash-Manasarovar;

(c) if so, the efforts, made in this regard; and

(d) the details of the plan of the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI OMAK APANG) : (a) Ministry of Tourism promotes Tourism within the country. Kailash-Manasarovar, however, are on the Chinese side of the border.

(b) to (d) Ministry of External Affairs under a bilateral agreement with China organises Yatra with the assistance of Government of Uttar Pradesh and Government of India/ State Government agencies between June and September every year. The Yatra is conducted through the Lipulekh Pass connecting Gunji in Uttar Pradesh and Pulan (Taklakot) in Tibet.

Every year increasing number of yatris have been visiting Kailash and Manasarovar. The number of pilgrims has gone up from 230 in 1992 to 516 in 1997.

Quality Silk Centres

3619. SHRIMATI RANI CHITRALEKHA BHONSLE :
DR. SAROJA V. :

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) whether some State Governments have been asked to take up the time bound programme for setting up of Quality Silk Centres in the area having large strength of silk farmers and weavers;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the number of units modernised so far, State-wise, district-wise, particularly in Maharashtra and Tamilnadu;

(c) whether the Union Government have provided any assistance for the purpose; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RANA) : (a) No. Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) In order to supplement the efforts of the State Senculture Departments, the Central Silk Board (CSB) is implementing a number of schemes/projects/

programmes for promoting development of all the four types of silk. These include schemes for extension of R&D, training, infrastructural & extension support to the sector through network of CSB's units & implementation of certain developmental/incentive/financial assistance schemes for encouraging adoption of modern sericultural practices for production of quality silk such as installation of common facility centre and backward integration in reeling sector.

[Translation]

Non-Functioning Coal Mines

3620. SHRI RAM TAHAL CHAUDHARY :
SHRI MOHAMMAD ALI ASHRAF FATMI :

Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) the names of the coal mines where mining work is not being done by coal industry at present and the reasons therefor;

(b) the reasons for abandoning these coal mines at this stage and incurring heavy losses of exchequer to the respective States as well as to the nation;

(c) whether the Government propose to hand over these unviable mines to the private parties by making necessary amendments in the concerned Act once again;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI DILIP RAY) : (a) and (b) The names of the coal mines which have been closed since nationalisation of coal mines upto 31.03.1998 in Coal India Limited which is under the administrative control of this Ministry are given in the Annexure. The reason for closure of these mines are exhaustion of mineable reserves, difficult geo-mining conditions, techno-economic unviability and safety considerations.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) and (e) Do not arise in view of answer to part (c) of the question.

Statement

EASTERN COALFIELDS LIMITED

1. Sanctoria, 2. East Jamehari, 3. Ratibati 5 & 6, 4. KLS Chalbalpur, 5. Chalbalpur Khas, 6. New Jamehari Khas, 7. Pure Searsole, 8. Damoda, 9. Seetaldash, 10. Belrui Dishergarh, 11. North Brook, 12. Gogla/Adjoy Bank, 13. Manderboni 1, 2 & 4, 14. Deoli, 15. B. Dhemo/Ramjilanpur, 16. Bank Simolia 7 & 8 17. Brights Rana, 18. Madhusudanpur 1 & 2, 19. Central Jamuria, 20. Nabakajora Ghanasyam, 21. Jote Janki, 22. Ratibati OC,

23. Purusottampur OC, 24. Nimcha OC, 25. Sheebpur OC, 26. Mahabir OC, 27. New/Central Satgram, 28. Alkusha Gopalpur OC, 29. Benalee, 30. Kenda/Dobrana, OC, 31. Darula, 32. Krishnagar, 33. Seetalpur, 34. Shankarpur, 35. Girimint, 36. Rana, 37. Mahabir, 38. Kankartalla 1 & 2, 39. Tara, 40. Dhandadih, OC, 41. Barmondia, 42. Dabor OC, 43. Gangaram Chak, 44. Poidih OC, 45. Ranipur, 46. Dalurband OC, 47. Palasthali, 48. Chapapur-I, 49. Badina/Pusai OC, 50. Kapasara OC, 51. Lalmatia UG, 52. Lalmatia OC, 53. Shampur-A, 54. Dalmiya OC, 55. Bhanora, 56. Damra, 57. Sangramgarh OC.

BHARAT COKING COAL LIMITED

1. Murlidih, 2. Bera OC, 3. ENA, 4. Basdeopur OC, 5. Laxmi OC, 6. Tasra OC, 7. Jhunkundar OC, 8. Victoria, 9. Kankanee, 10. Kenduadih, 11. Dharmaband, 12. South Tisra, 13. Kujama, 14. Gaslitand, 15. Bhurungia, 16. Teturiya.

SOUTH EASTERN COALFIELDS LIMITED

1. Domnara OC, 2. Burhar No.3, 3. Rungta, 4. North Jharakhand, 5. Burhari No. 1, 6. Pure Chirimiri, 7. Korba 1 & 2, 8. Korba 3 & 4, 9. Chachai OC, 10. Banki 5 & 6, 11. Jarwahi OC, 12. New Jhimar, 13. Banki 7 & 8, 14. S. Jhakrahand Old, 15. Ramnagar, 16. Jhimar Old, 17. Rajgamar 8 & 9.

WESTERN COALFIELDS LIMITED

1. Barkuhi UG, 2. Barkuhi West UG, 3. Bhamori Jhantachapa, 4. Datla East UG, 5. Datla West, 6. DHAO, 7. Shibpur OC, 8. Ghorawari Hirdagarh, 9. Ghorawari Kalan, 10. Ballarpur OC, 11. Kalichapar, 12. Newton Chikli, 13. N. Chandametta, 14. Nandora, 15. Sial Ghogri, 16. Nakoda OC, 17. Sasti BIT, 18. Ballarpur 1 & 2, 19. Robartson Inc/Bellora Inc/Ghughus, 20. Kumda OC, 21. New Majri No. 1, 22. Dhuptala OC, 23. Shibpuri-2 OC, 24. Taroda OC, 25. Sethia OC, 26. Bellorra OC, 27. N. DhuptalaRRR OC, 28. Rakhikole, 29. Chikalmau, 30. Umrer, 31. Satpura-I UG, 32. Sukri UG, 33. Chincholi UG.

CENTRAL COALFIELDS LIMITED

1. Semra, 2. Pakri Barwadhi, 3. Sugia OC, 4. Pure Dhori, 5. Mael UG, 6. Chalkari, 7. Karkatia, 8. Dhodidih, 9. Gidhania, 10. Rauta.

NORTHERN COALFIELDS LIMITED

1. Gorbi.

[English]

Export Quota of Cotton Bales

3621. SHRI ASHOK NAMDEORAO MOHOL :
SHRI MADHAV RAO PATIL :

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government of Maharashtra has requested to increase the export quota of cotton bales;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the decision taken by the Government thereon so far?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RANA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The export quota of cotton is released by the Government from time to time after taking into account all relevant factors, including estimated production, availability, domestic demand and likely surplus of cotton as well as price trends, etc. An export quota of 0.75 lakh bales of cotton was released to the Maharashtra State Cooperative Cotton Growers' Marketing Federation Ltd. on 19th September, 1997. As on 17-6-1998 the Maharashtra State Federation has not been able to effect any exports against the quota of 0.75 lakh bales allotted to it for the cotton year 1997-98.

Trade Related Entrepreneurship Assistance for Rural Women

3622. SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government of Andhra Pradesh has requested for clearance of Trade Related Entrepreneurship Assistance and Development Programme (TREAD) for rural women; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Government to clear the pending projects of Andhra Pradesh sent to them long back?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A pilot project on Trade Related Entrepreneurship Assistance and Development (TREAD) for women was sanctioned by Government of India during 1996-97. The Scheme was posed for its continuation during the IXth Plan. However, the Inter-Ministerial consultations with Departments of Women and Child Development, Rural Employment and Poverty Alleviation, Planning Commission, etc. took a considerable time. As a result, the TREAD scheme could not be approved during the first year of the IXth Plan i.e. during 1997-98 and therefore none of the proposals received under TREAD from any State including those from Andhra Pradesh could be cleared during 1997-98.

The TREAD Scheme has now been approved by the Standing Finance Committee for its continuance during the remaining four years of the IXth plan. The proposals received from Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) located in Andhra Pradesh will now be processed expeditiously as per the norms prescribed under the scheme.

[Translation]

Free Import of Equipment

3623. SHRI JAGAT VIR SINGH DRONA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have received any memorandum from the President of the Export Promotion and Infrastructural Development Panel, on behalf of U.P. Leather Industries Association;

(b) if so, the details of the requests made in the memorandum; and

(c) the reaction of the Government on the aforesaid matter?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The Government receives representation from trade & industry with regard to various provisions of Exim Policy and related procedure. The suggestions of U.P. Leather Industries Association have also been received which have been examined by the Government. These suggestions basically relate to Export Promotion capital goods scheme, the Duty Exemption Scheme and the duty structure on leather products. The Association's request to allow jigs, fixture, dies and moulds under EPCG scheme without any limit is under examination in consultation with Department of Revenue. The exemption limit for payment of excise has already been enhanced from Rs. 30 lakhs to Rs. 50 lakhs in the recent budget. The Association's request with regard to refund of all duties on the basis of documents produced will have to be studied in consultation with other export promotion organisations. The request to put all items presently allowed under SIL to be put under OGL is not acceptable for the present.

[English]

OGL Policy

3624. SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) the number of industries which are not covered under the Open General Licencing (OGL) Policy; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) The number of items covered under various industries which are in the Negative List of Imports are given in Chapter 15 of the Export and Import Policy, 1997-2002 (incorporating amendments made upto 13.4.1998).

(b) The items are in the Negative List because of the Balance of Payments as well as security, environment and social reasons. Copies of the Export and Import Policy,

1997-2002, incorporating amendments upto 13.4.1998, have already been laid on the Table of the House.

Austerity Measures

3625. SHRI MOHAN RAWALE : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state : The austerity measures taken by the Government in view of economic sanctions imposed on India by the United States and other European Countries?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) : Since the sanctions/suspensions of official loans will mostly apply to new loans, the disbursements of loans already agreed upon is likely to remain unaffected. The impact on the economy and on ongoing projects is expected to be limited. Austerity measures are a continuous process of review and adaptation and are not necessarily connected to specific events.

Tourism in Kerala

3626. SHRI MULLAPALLY RAMACHANDRAN :
SHRI S. AJAYA KUMAR :

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) the steps being taken by the Government to attract more tourists, both foreign and Indian to Kerala, which is well known for its long coastal lines, evergreen forests, rivers, back-waters and places of historical importance;

(b) whether Government have initiated any special measures to familiarise the foreign tourists with the tourist destinations in Kerala;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) the details of specific projects in Kerala approved for Central assistance during 1998-99; and

(e) the details thereof and the amount sanctioned and released against each of them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI OMAK APANG) : (a) to (c) The Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India has positioned Kerala as an attractive tourist destination in the niche markets overseas by way of advertising in print and electronic media, participation in travel marts, direct mailing, organising of 'Know India' seminars and dissemination of information through pamphlets/brochures and video cassettes. The promotion of fairs and festivals of Kerala like the Great Elephant March, Onam and the Boat Races, is an integral part of the marketing strategy.

(d) and (e) The Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India, offers Central financial assistance to State Govt./ Union Territories for development of tourism infrastructure

on the basis of inter-se priorities, availability of funds etc. on receipt of specific proposals for the same. No proposal in this regard has been received from the State Govt. of Kerala for Central financial assistance during 1998-99.

Assest of PSUs

3627. SHRI D.S. AHIRE : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are considering to sell surplus land/non-performing assests of certain Public Sector Undertakings in the country, particularly in Maharashtra to finance their working capital requirements;

(b) if so, the names of PSUs whose land/non-performing assets likely to be sold;

(c) the reasons for taking such decision;

(d) the effect on PSUs in the long run as a result thereof;

(e) whether the said decision is likely to be reviewed; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SUKHBIR SINGH BADAL) : (a) to (f) Government/PSEs consider the sale of surplus land/non-performing assests as a possible option for mobilisation of resources to finance the proposals for long term viability of the PSUs. In the case of NIC mills in Maharashtra the revival package envisages sale of surplus land for sourcing the funds. There is, however, no general decision on sale of non-performing assests. Such proposals are considered on merit and on case to case basis.

Private Sector Banks

3628. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Reserve Bank of India have set up a High-Level Committee during the month of January 1998 to review the norms for allowing entry of new private sector banks;

(b) if so, whether the Committee has submitted its report;

(c) the main recommendations made by the Committee; and

(d) the number of the recommendations which have been implemented so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF

FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) An 'In house Working Group' has been formed in Reserve Bank of India in January, 1998 to objectively examine the various aspects of working of new private sector banks and to suggest the policy frame work for future.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

[Translation]

Action Plan for Tourism

3629. SHRIMATI SURYAKANTA PATIL : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) the details of the on-going tourism projects in the country being sponsored by the Union Government, State-wise;

(b) the details of Action Plan prepared for the development and promotion of tourism in the country during the Ninth Five Year Plan;

(c) the amount allocated for this purpose, during 1997-98 and 1998-99 State-wise; and

(d) the concrete steps being taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI OMAK APANG) : (a) and (b) The Ministry of Tourism provides financial assistance to State/U.T. Governments for the implementation of tourism projects including accommodation units, way side amenities, adventure tourism facilities etc. based on specific proposals received from them and availability of funds. During the year 1997-98 the Ministry of Tourism sanctioned a sum of Rs. 4752.96 lakhs for the implementation of 259 projects. A statement giving state wise details is enclosed.

The action plan for development and promotion of tourism during 9th Five Year Plan includes strengthening of institutional set-up, creation of awareness about economic and social benefits of tourism ensuring accelerated infrastructure and project development, pursuing sustained human resource development, ensuring synergy in cost effectiveness in tourism promotion, marketing and guiding the development process through market research and technological innovations.

(c) and (d) The budget allocation for providing assistance to State/U.T. Governments during 1997-98 and 1998-99 were Rs. 24.3 crores and Rs. 52.0 crores respectively. State wise allocation for 1997-98 is given in the enclosed statement. The steps being taken for the development of tourism include creation of awareness about economic benefits of tourism, continued assistance

to State/U.T. Governments for the development of tourism infrastructure, enhanced marketing and promotional efforts and strengthening of human resource development activities.

Statement

State-wise details of Amount Sanctioned and Amount Released during 97-98

(Rs. in Lakhs)

Sl.No.	State	1997-98	
		Project	Amt. Sanced.
1	2	3	4
1.	Andhra Pradesh	12	206.70
2.	Assam	14	288.88
3.	Arunachal Pradesh	9	271.00
4.	Bihar	11	233.07
5.	Goa	13	144.62
6.	Gujarat	7	111.84
7.	Haryana	7	108.24
8.	Himachal Pradesh	5	119.00
9.	J & K	10	293.35
10.	Karnataka	10	130.78
11.	Kerala	11	282.00
12.	Madhya Pradesh	9	119.31
13.	Maharashtra	12	169.84
14.	Manipur	5	186.11
15.	Meghalaya	5	85.70
16.	Mizoram	6	142.45
17.	Nagaland	4	116.90
18.	Orissa	28	557.05
19.	Punjab	6	52.87
20.	Rajasthan	13	107.33
21.	Sikkim	10	65.20
22.	Tamil Nadu	7	59.74
23.	Tripura	8	126.65
24.	Uttar Pradesh	13	221.10
25.	West Bengal	6	157.76
26.	Andaman & Nicobar	1	60.00

1	2	3	4
27.	Dadra Nagar Haveli	1	5.20
28.	Delhi	7	229.43
29.	Daman	4	60.17
30.	Lakshadweep	1	5.00
31.	Pondicherry	4	35.64
Grand Total		259	4752.96

[English]

Introduction of Consignment Tax

3630. SHRI AJOY MUKHOPADHYAY : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that the State Finance Ministers and the recommendations to the Sarkaria Commission are in favour of Consignment Tax and necessary Central legislative action; and

(b) if so, the steps being taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) and (b) One of the recommendations of the Sarkaria Commission on Centre-State Financial Relations related to bringing out suitable legislation for levying Consignment Tax. This issue was considered in the meeting of the Finance Ministers of States and UTs convened by the Union Finance Minister on 4th July, 1997. Keeping in view the differences prevailing among the States, as expressed in the meeting, on the desirability and implications of imposing such a levy, it was decided that further discussions would be held on the advisability and expediency of imposing Consignment Tax.

NPA

3631. SHRI MOINUL HASSAN : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the Bank-wise position of NPA in Public Sector Banks as on 31st March, 1998 showing the variation in percentage to the total credit as compared to the previous year;

(b) the amount written off as bad debt during the previous year;

(c) the names of beneficiaries whose outstanding dues exceeded Rs. 50 lacs at the time of writing off, showing the amount written off in each case, alongwith the

value of realisable assets of the borrower concerned, mentioning separately the amount of loss of principal, if any, and loss on account of interest on the date of writing off; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government to reduce the NPA of Public Sector Banks ensuring timely repayment of bank dues from public sector undertakings and Government guaranteed accounts?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARATHANAN) : (a) Bank-wise position of Non Performing Assets (NPAs) in public sector banks for the years 1995-96 and 1996-97 (latest available) are given in the Annexure. The Percentage of NPAs to total bank credit has declined from 18.01 per cent for 1995-96 to 17.84 per cent for 1996-97.

(b) Amount of bad debts written off by the public sector banks during the years 1995-96 and 1996-97 are Rs. 1742.21 crore and Rs. 2162 crore respectively.

(c) Reserve Bank of India (RBI) data monitoring system does not generate the information asked for.

(d) RBI/Government of India/Banks have taken number of steps not only to check fresh incidence of NPA but also to ensure recovery of NPAs (including NPAs of PSUs and Government guaranteed advances) of Public Sector Banks. These are :

- All public sector banks have documents of loan recovery policy prepared and July vetted by Board of Directors.
- Banks have been advised that in their attempt to reduce their NPAs through negotiated settlements they should ensure maximum recovery at minimum expenses. However, in this regard precaution to be taken while arriving at compromise level has also been laid down.
- Recovery Cells have been set up at Head Office under a General Manager and branch-wise targets have been set up by banks. Performance of branches in recovery is monitored by Head Office on monthly basis and Board of Directors are kept informed of the progress on quarterly basis.
- Debt Recovery Tribunals at Calcutta, Delhi, Bangalore, Ahmedabad, Chennai, Guwahati, Jaipur, Patna and Jabalpur and an Appellate Tribunal at Mumbai have been set up to assist speedy recoveries of banks dues.

- Compilation and circulation of list of defaulters/suit filed account of Rs. 1 crore and above to all banks and financial institutions.
- The Board of Directors review top 300 NPAs with special reference to the system prevailing in the banks to fix staff accountability.

Statement

Position of Non-Performing Assets Public Sector Banks (Gross)

Name of the Bank	(Rs. in Crores)			
	1995-96		1996-97	
	Amount	% to total adv.	Amount	% to total adv.
1	2	3	4	5
State Bank of India	10553.53	15.96	10961.54	16.02
State Bank of Bikaner & Jaipur	337.95	12.45	454.99	13.83
State Bank of Hyderabad	759.74	17.89	840.42	19.19
State Bank of Indore	218.84	14.20	266.76	15.81
State Bank of Mysore	328.93	14.54	467.06	16.92
State Bank of Patiala	399.71	11.49	454.80	11.32
State Bank of Saurashtra	265.98	13.50	326.40	14.79
State Bank of Travancore	430.22	11.74	586.85	14.49
Total for State Bank group	13294.90	16.46	14367.82	15.81
Allahabad Bank	1255.00	23.98	1302.89	23.96
Andhra Bank	332.20	11.61	365.68	11.81
Bank of Baroda	2840.09	16.16	3116.00	17.15
Bank of India	2434.00	14.49	2275.00	11.78
Bank of Maharashtra	694.26	21.87	749.43	20.67
Canara Bank	2647.32	17.93	3323.72	20.26
Central Bank of India	2420.00	23.91	2520.00	25.00
Corporation Bank	251.83	9.67	316.78	9.92
Dena Bank	541.00	14.70	674.21	15.10
Indian Bank	3140.00	34.15	3303.00	39.12
Indian Overseas Bank	2020.00	22.59	1317.00	15.80
Oriental Bank of Commerce	271.30	5.68	367.56	7.36
Punjab & Sind Bank	957.53	27.70	1089.70	30.71

1	2	3	4	5
Punjab National Bank	2518.00	18.74	2426.14	16.31
Syndicate Bank	1311.75	20.97	1291.78	19.32
UCO Bank	1839.52	24.54	1872.62	28.35
Union Bank of India	945.86	10.38	987.80	10.35
United Bank of India	1401.00	38.00	1398.00	36.20
Vijaya Bank	545.38	20.36	511.95	18.73
Total For Natl. Banks	28366.04	19.52	29209.27	19.05
Total for PSBs	41660.94	18.01	43677.09	17.84

Paid Up Capital of ICRA

3632. PROF. JOGENDRA KAWADE : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the authorised and paid up capital of Investment Information and Credit Rating Agency Limited (ICRA);

(b) the names of organisations, having share-holding in ICRA Ltd. i.e. names of organisations, value of shares and percentage of share-holdings; and

(c) the net profit earned by ICRA during 1996-97 and 1997-98?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) : (a) The authorised and paid up capital of Investment Information and Credit Rating Agency Limited (ICRA) are Rs. 10,00,00,000 and Rs. 7,80,51,000 respectively.

(b) A statement is enclosed.

(c) The net profit after tax earned by ICRA during 1996-97 and 1997-98 are Rs. 273.18 lakhs and Rs. 506.82 lakhs respectively.

Statement

Share Holders of ICRA Ltd.

S.No.	Names of Shareholders	(Rs. in Million)		
		Shares	Amount	Percentage
1	2	3	4	5
1.	The Industrial Finance Corp. of India Ltd.	2653100	26.531	33.994
2.	State Bank of India	1020400	10.204	13.074
3.	Life Insurance Corporation of India	765300	7.653	9.805
4.	Unit Trust of India	700000	7.000	8.968
5.	Punjab National Bank	525000	5.250	6.726
6.	General Insurance Corporation of India	510200	5.102	6.537
7.	Central Bank of India	255100	2.551	3.268
8.	Union Bank of India	255100	2.551	3.268
9.	Allahabad Bank	171500	1.715	2.197
10.	United Bank of India	129400	1.294	1.658
11.	Indian Bank	102500	1.025	1.313
12.	Andhra bank	87500	0.875	1.121
13.	Canara Bank	87500	0.875	1.121
14.	Export-Import Bank of India	87500	0.875	1.121
15.	UCO Bank	87500	0.875	1.121
16.	20th Century Finance Corporation Ltd.	70000	0.700	0.897
17.	Housing Development Fin. Corp. Ltd.	70000	0.700	0.897
18.	Infrastructure Leasing & Fin. Ser. Ltd.	70000	0.700	0.897

1	2	3	4	5
19.	The Vysya Bank Limited	52500	0.525	0.673
20.	Indian Overseas Bank	35000	0.350	0.448
21.	Oriental bank of Commerce	35000	0.350	0.448
22.	Ajay Kumar Kayan	35000	0.350	0.448
Total		7805100	78.051	100.000

Outdated Laws

3633. SHRI R. SAMBASIVA RAO : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Finance Minister has expressed that outdated laws need overhauling;

(b) if so, whether the laws of the forties and fifties that inhibit economic growth so that the twin goals of a seven percent GDP growth and abolition of poverty by 2020 is realised;

(c) if so, the total outdated laws that are being considered for overhauling; and

(d) if so, the time by which the final decision in this regard is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) : (a) to (d) The modern legal system is essential for high growth of GDP as well as abolition of poverty. The outdated laws need overhauling as laws of forties and fifties have often inhibited economic growth.

An expert group was set up under the chairmanship of Finance Secretary in the Department of Economic Affairs to review Laws/Acts pertaining to this Department. The expert committee has reviewed, in all 50 Law/Acts pertaining to Department of Economic Affairs.

Out of these Acts, three pertain to the Insurance and 18 Acts pertain to the Banking Division. The recommendations of the Committee are being examined.

Guidelines on Investment of Surplus Funds to PSUs

3634. SHRI ASHOK NAMDEORAO MOHOL : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have issued guidelines to Public Sector Undertakings on investment of surplus funds;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether some Public Sector Undertakings are finding it difficult to generate funds;

(d) if so, the details of such PSUs; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government to help these PSUs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SUKHBIR SINGH BADAL) : (a) and (b) The govt. have issued guidelines to the PSUs on investment of their surplus funds which provides inter-alia that investments should be made only in instruments with maximum safety having no element of speculation on the yield after verifying credit rating of the instruments and that it should be based on sound commercial judgments.

(c) to (e) The difficulties faced by the PSUs to generate funds varies from time to time and enterprise specific actions are taken by the Government and the Managements.

Dumping of Used Magnesia by China

3635. SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Andhra Pradesh Government has requested the Union Government for taking steps to prevent dumping of used magnesia by China and consider a provisional anti-dumping duty in the context of Sea Water Magnesia Plant set up by M/s. Birla Periclase Ltd., Visakhapatnam; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Government to avoid irreparable damage to the above nascent industry?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) The Andhra Pradesh Government has made no request regarding dumping of used magnesia by China. However, the Andhra Pradesh Government has requested the Union Government for taking steps to prevent dumping of fused magnesia by China and consider a provisional anti-dumping duty in the context of Sea Water Magnesia plant set up by M/s. Birla Periclase Ltd. Visakhapatnam.

(b) The Designated Authority appointed under the Customs Tariff Act and the Rules made thereunder, is conducting investigations into the existence, degree and effect of alleged dumping of fused magnesia and shall notify its findings, preliminary or otherwise, in accordance with the time limits prescribed within the law.

**Impact of New Exim Policy on the
Export of Marine Product**

3636. SHRI MULLAPALLY RAMACHANDRAN : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have made any study about the effects of New Exim Policy on the Marine Product Industry and its export from the country;

(b) whether the Government have received any representations from the marine product dealers/exporters in this regard; and

(c) if so, the response of the Government there on?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) MPEDA has made an analysis of the new Exim Policy announced on 13th April, 98. The lowering of threshold limit from Rs.5 Crores to Rs. 1 Crores for zero duty imports has been accepted as a positive step. The seafood industry, in particular, has welcomed the inclusion of seafood and aquaculture process food within the definition of food processing industry. The trade has welcomed the announcement of the DEPB rates for marine products. The extension of SIL benefit to units holding HACCP registration has been accepted favourably. The simplification of procedures and decentralisation of licensing powers is expected to go a long way in helping the exporters.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. Seafood Association has suggested exemption from payment of additional customs duty on zero duty EPCG imports as the product manufactured by the marine sector is non modvacable.

The proposals are being considered in consultation with other agencies and suitable clarifications shall be issued by Public Notice/Circular for the benefit of trade and industry.

Infrastructure Funding

3637. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Reserve Bank of India has underlined the need for evolving a good mechanism for obtaining feedback from financial institutions and banks and taking up these issues with the Government agencies;

(b) if so, whether the financial institutions and the Banks were advised to jointly prepare an action plan which could form a base for discussion with the Government on infrastructure;

(c) if so, whether any concrete measures in this regard have been worked out; and

(d) if so, to what extent they have been discussed with the Government and the final outcome of the discussion held?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) to (d) As per information provided by Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor, RBI had a meeting with the chief executives of financial institutions and major commercial banks in December 1997 to review the financing of infrastructure projects. In the meeting, Governor RBI emphasised the need for evolving a good mechanism for obtaining feedback from financial institutions and banks and taking up these issues with Government agencies. The financial institutions and banks were advised to jointly prepare an action plan which would form a basis for discussions with the Government on infrastructure projects. Action in this regard has been initiated by preparation of papers on problems of financing each of the core sectors by selected financial institutions i.e. Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI) on power sector, Industrial Credit & Investment Corporation of India Limited (ICICI) on the telecommunication sector and Infra-structure Development Finance company Limited (IDFC) on roads and ports. These papers were presented by representatives of these institutions in a meeting convened by Governor, RBI in New Delhi in January, 1998 where top Government officials were also present. Follow up action with various agencies for resolving the problems in financing are also entrusted to different financial institutions. With a view to accelerate the pace of implementation of infrastructure projects in core sectors, Governor, RBI is also holding periodic informal interaction/ meetings with financial institutions/banks.

Power Projects by Financial Institutions

3638. SHRI AJOY MUKHOPADHYAY : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Indian Financial Institutions including IDBI have committed financial assistance to the power projects in some States and denied the same for other States;

(b) If so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reasons, for depriving the other States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) No, Sir. Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI) has reported that decision to finance power projects by financial

institutions in a State is generally based on various factors which include the health of respective State Electricity Board and its paying capacity as well as techno-commercial viability of the project. Financial institutions do not discriminate between States in providing financial assistance to projects including power projects.

(b) and (c) Do not arise in view of (a) above.

Definition of Assets for Wealth Tax and Capital Gains Tax

3639. SHRI K.S. RAO : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) has sent any proposal to Government with regard to the change in the definition of "assets" for the purpose of Wealth Tax and Capital Gain Tax;

(b) if so, the rationale for changing the present definition of "Assets";

(c) whether the tax experts have opined what the change of definition is likely to affect the interest of tax-paying population adversely;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the reaction of the government to the proposals?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R.JANARTHANAN) : (a) Though there is no specific proposal to amend the definition of "assets" for the purposes of capital gains tax, there is a proposal to amend the definition of "assets" for the purposes of Wealth Tax Act through the Finance (No.2) Bill, 1998.

(b) The present definition of "assets" is being modified in response to suggestions received from taxpayers and organisations. The effect would be a reduced Wealth Tax liability.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) and (e) In view of (c) above, does not arise.

Industrial Development Bank of India

3640. SHRI R. SAMBASIVA RAO : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the fixed deposits and flexibonds are the main instruments for the Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI) for raising the targetted amount of Rs.6,000 crores at the retail level during 1998-99;

(b) if so, the other main proposals being considered by the Industrial Development Bank of India to achieve the target;

(c) whether IDBI is considering to operate as a commercial bank; and

(d) if so, the time by which the final decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R.JANARTHANAN) : (a) and (b) Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI) has reported that fixed deposits and flexi-bonds are the main instruments being offered to retail market. In additions, capital gains bonds/deposits (u/s 54 EA and 54 EB of Income Tax Act) are presently offered by IDBI to retail investors.

(c) and (d) No such proposal is presently under consideration.

Tourist Hostels in Karnataka

3641. SHRI AJAY KUMAR S.SARNAIK : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) the number of tourist hostels, hotels and yatri-niwas constructed in Karnataka during the last five years with financial assistance from the Central Government; and

(b) the details of proposals sent by the Government of Karnataka and are lying for approval with the Union Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI OMAK APANG) : (a) The Ministry of Tourism provided financial assistance to the Government of Karnataka for the construction/expansion of 20 accommodation units including yatrikas, yatriniwases and Tourist Complexes since 1993-94.

(b) The Government of Karnataka submitted 16 project proposals for financial assistance during 1997-98. Out of these, 6 projects could not be sanctioned as they did not conform to the guidelines for financial assistance.

Foreign Investment by AIG

3642. SHRI P. SHIV SHANKAR : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal from American International Group (AIG) to invest in India;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith proposed amount of investment;

(c) whether the Government have agreed to the proposals of AIG; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT) : (a) to (d) Sir, American International Group (AIG) has been granted foreign collaboration approval on (i) 21.8.1996 for setting up a mutual fund, equity participation being 78% amounting to Rs. 1050 lakhs with M/s IL & FS and (ii) 26.12.96 for risk management, consultancy services in safety and environment to the Indian Industry, equity participation being 50% amounting to Rs. 105 lakhs with M/s Tata Risk Management Services.

Statement correcting reply to Unstarred Question No. 2510 dated June, 12, 1998 regarding Cheap Interest Rate on Export

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) : I invite the attention of the House to the reply to the Unstarred Question No. 2510 in the Lok Sabha on June 12, 1998. The answer to the question is incomplete in part. The revised answer read as follows:

(a) to (c) No, Sir, consequent to the reductions of rates on pre-shipment credit on April 29, 1998 the general export credit interest rate structure is already reasonably low. However, RBI have introduced a new scheme, effective June 12, 1998, to provide, as a temporary measure, rupee credit facility to exporters at 6.5 per cent per annum on their "incremental" exports made during April 1998 to December, 1999 over the level of exports made in the year April 1997- March 1998.

The error which occurred inadvertently is regretted and I crave the indulgence of the House to the extent mentioned above.

The delay in regard to giving correcting reply is regretted.

12.00 hrs.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

Annual Report of National Institute for Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development, New Delhi statement regarding review of its working and statement showing reasons for delay.

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT) : I beg to lay on the Table :

- (1) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the National Institute for Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development, New Delhi, for the year 1996-97 alongwith Audited Accounts.
- (ii) Statement (Hindi and English versions) regarding Review by the Government of the working of the National Institute for Entre-

preneurship and Small Business Development, New Delhi, for the year 1996-97.

- (2) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 959/98]

Annual Reports of Basic Chemicals, Pharmaceuticals and Cosmetics Export Promotion Council, Mumbai, Chemicals and Allied Products Export Promotion Council, Calcutta etc., review of their working and statement showing reasons for delay etc.

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : I beg to lay on the Table :

- (1) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Basic Chemicals, Pharmaceuticals and Cosmetics Export Promotion Council, Mumbai, for the year 1996-97, alongwith Audited Accounts.
- (ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Basic Chemicals, Pharmaceuticals and Cosmetics Export Promotion Council, Mumbai for the year 1996-97.
- (2) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.

[Placed in Library See No. LT 960/98]

- (3) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Chemicals and Allied Products Export Promotion Council, Calcutta, for the year 1996-97, alongwith Audited Accounts.
- (ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Chemicals and Allied Products Export Promotion Council, Calcutta for the year 1996-97.
- (4) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (3) above.

[Placed in Library See No. LT 961/98]

- (5) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Plastics and Linoleums Export Promotion Council, Mumbai, for the year 1996-97, alongwith Audited Accounts.
- (ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working

of the Plastics and Linoleums Export Promotion Council, Mumbai, for the year 1996-97.

- (6) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (5) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 962/98].

- (7) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Overseas Construction Council of India, Mumbai, for the year 1995-96, along with Audited Accounts.
- (ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Overseas Construction Council of India, Mumbai, for the year 1995-96.
- (8) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (7) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 963/98]

- (9) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Export Inspection Council and Export Inspection Agencies (Volume-I and II) for the year 1996-97, alongwith Audited Accounts.
- (ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Export Inspection Council and Export Inspection Agencies (Volume-I and II), for the year 1996-97.

- (10) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (9) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 964/98]

- (11) A copy of the Audit Report (Hindi and English versions) on the General Fund Accounts of the Coffee Board for the year, 1996-97.
- (12) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (11) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 965/98]

- (13) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the Annual Report and Audited Accounts of the Indian Tea and Restaurants Limited for the year 1996-97.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 966/98]

Annual Report of Wool and Woollens Export Promotion Council, New Delhi and Handloom Export Promotion Council Chennai, review of their working statement showing reasons for delay in laying the papers.

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RANA): I beg to lay on the Table:-

- (1) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Wool and Woollens Export Promotion Council, New Delhi, for the year 1996-97, alongwith Audited Accounts.
- (ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Wool and Woollens Export Promotion Council, New Delhi, for the year 1996-97.

- (2) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 967/98]

- (3) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Handloom Export Promotion Council, Chennai, for the year 1996-97, alongwith Audited Accounts.
- (ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Handloom Export Promotion Council, Chennai, for the year 1996-97.

- (4) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (3) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 968/98]

Copy of Unit Trust of India, General Regulations 1964, Annual Report of Centre for Development Economics, Export-Import Bank of India etc., Annual Account, review of their working, statement showing reasons for delay etc.

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) : I beg to lay on the Table:-

- (1) A copy of the Unit Trust of India, General Regulations, 1964 (Hindi and English versions) published in Notification No. 40 in Gazette of India dated the 4th October, 1997 under sub-section (4) of section 43 of the Unit Trust of India Act, 1963.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 969/98]

- (2) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Centre for Develop-

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ment Economics at the Delhi School of Economics, Delhi, for the year 1996-97.

- (ii) A copy of the Annual Accounts (Hindi and English versions) of the Centre for Development Economics at the Delhi School of Economics, Delhi, for the year 1996-97 together with Audit Report thereon.
- (3) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (2) above.
- [Placed in Library, See No. LT 970/98]
- (4) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Export-Import Bank of India, Mumbai, for the year 1996-97, alongwith Audited Accounts, under sub-section (5) of section 19 and sub-section (5) of section 24 of the Export-Import Bank of India Act, 1981.
- (ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Export-Import Bank of India, Mumbai, for the year 1996-97.
- (5) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (4) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 971/98]

- (6) A copy each of the Notification Nos. G.S.R. 288 (E) to G.S.R. 299 (E) (Hindi and English versions) published in Gazette of India dated the 2nd June, 1998 together with an explanatory memorandum regarding Customs changes and exemption in context of Budget proposals pertaining to Indirect Taxes announced by Finance Minister in Lok Sabha on the 1st June, 1998, under section 159 of the Customs Act, 1962.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 972/98]

- (7) A copy each of the Notification Nos. G.S.R. 300 (E) to 316 (E) (Hindi and English versions) published in Gazette of India dated the 2nd June, 1998 together with an explanatory memorandum regarding Central Excise duty changes and exemption in the context of Budget proposals pertaining to Indirect Taxes announced by Finance Minister in Lok Sabha on the 1st June, 1998, under sub-section (2) of section 38 of the Central Excise Act, 1944.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 973/98]

Copy of Notification under Coal Mines Provident Fund and Misc. Provisions Act, 1948 etc.

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA) :
On behalf of Shri Dilip Ray, I beg to lay on the Table:-

- (1) A copy each of the following Notifications (Hindi and English versions) under section 7A of the Coal Mines Provident Fund and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1948:-
- (i) The Coal Mines Provident Fund (Amendment) Scheme, 1998 published in Notification No. G.S.R. 264 (E) in Gazette of India dated the 25th May, 1998.
- (ii) The Rajasthan Coal Mines Provident Fund (Amendment) Scheme, 1998 published in Notification No. G.S.R. 265 (E) in Gazette of India dated the 25th May, 1998.
- (iii) The Andhra Pradesh Coal Mines Provident Fund (Amendment) Scheme, 1998 published in Notification No. G.S.R. 266 (E) in Gazette of India dated the 25th May, 1998.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 974/98]

12.01 hrs.

MESSAGE FROM RAJYA SABHA

SECRETARY-GENERAL : I have to report the following message received from the Secretary-General of Rajya Sabha:-

'I am directed to inform the Lok Sabha that the Rajya Sabha, at its sitting held on Thursday, the 4th June, 1998 adopted the following Resolution:-

"That this House concurs in the recommendation of the Lok Sabha that the Rajya Sabha do agree to the nomination by the Chairman of six members from the Rajya Sabha to the Parliamentary Committee to review the rate of dividend which is at present payable by the Indian Railways to the General Revenues as well as other ancillary matters in connection with Railway Finance vis-a-vis the General Finance and to make recommendations thereon."

I am further to inform the Lok Sabha that the Chairman has nominated the following six members of the Rajya Sabha to the said Committee:

1. Shri Janardan Yadav.
2. Shri O.S. Manian.
3. Shri Suresh Pachouri.

4. Shri John F. Fernandes.
5. Shri Md. Salim.
6. Shri Ranjan Prasad Yadav.'

- (1) Fourth Report on Demands for Grants (1998-99) of the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas.
- (2) Fifth Report on Demands for Grants (1998-99) of the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilisers (Deptt. of Chemicals & Petrochemicals).
- (3) Sixth Report on Demands for grants (1998-99) of the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilisers (Department of Fertilisers).

12.02 hrs.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Second, Third and Fourth Reports

SHRI MURLI DEORA (MUMBAI SOUTH) : I beg to present the following Reports (Hindi and English versions) of the Standing Committee on Finance:-

- (1) Second Report on Demands for Grants (1998-99) relating to the Ministry of Planning and Programme Implementation.
- (2) Third Report on Demands for Grants (1998-99) relating to the Ministry of Finance (Departments of Economic Affairs and Expenditure.)
- (3) Fourth Report on Demands for Grants (1998-99) relating to the Ministry of Finance (Department of Revenue).

12.03 hrs.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON FOOD, CIVIL SUPPLIES AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION

Second, Third and Fourth Reports and Minutes

SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH (Vaishali) : I beg to present the following Reports and Minutes (Hindi and English versions) of the Standing Committee on Food, Civil Supplies and Public Distribution:-

- (1) Second Report on Demands for Grants (1998-99) of the Department of Sugar and Edible Oils (Ministry of Food and Consumer Affairs.)
- (2) Third Report on Demands for Grants (1998-99) of the Department of Food and Civil Supplies (Ministry of Food and Consumer Affairs).
- (3) Fourth Report on Demands for Grants (1998-99) of the Department of Consumer Affairs (Ministry of Food and Consumer Affairs).

12.03½ hrs.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS

Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Reports

SHRI K.D. SULTANPURI (Shimla) : I beg to present the following Reports (Hindi and English versions) of the Standing Committee on Petroleum and Chemicals:-

12.04 hrs.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS

Fifty-Fifth, Fifty-Sixth, Fifty-Seventh, Fifty-Eighth and Fifty-Ninth Reports

SHRI MUKUL WASNIK (Buldana) : I beg to lay (Hindi and English version) of the Fifty-Fifth, Fifty-Sixth, Fifty-Seventh, Fifty-Eight and Fifty-Ninth Reports of the Standing Committee on Science and Technology, Environment and Forests on Demands for Grants (1998-99) of the Ministry of Science and Technology (Department of Science and Technology and Department of Scientific and Industrial Research), Department of Ocean Development, Department of Electronics and Department of Space respectively.

(Interruptions)

DR. SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY (Madurai) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, on the demand for the Statehood to Pondicherry, I want that the Government should make a statement. . .*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : The House will now take up Zero Hour. Shri Basu Deb Acharia.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I am allowing everybody. Please take your seat. I have called Shri Basu Deb Acharia.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I will allow you to speak on the postal strike. Please take your seat.

(Interruptions)

12.06 hrs.

RE: STRIKE BY POSTAL EMPLOYEES

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura) : Mr Speaker, Sir, Since yesterday, six lakh postal employees have gone on strike and the postal service in our country has completely paralysed. 90 per cent of the postal employees

[Shri Basu Deb Acharia]

have joined the strike. The Extra-Departmental Employees number about three lakhs.

In 1993, there was a strike by the postal employees. Then, the Government announced that a Committee would be constituted to examine the demands of the Extra-Departmental Staff of the Postal Department. Accordingly, the Talwar Committee was appointed. The Talwar Committee had given its recommendations and submitted its report at least six months back. But the Government is sitting quiet and it has not taken any action. They are in a slavish condition. Even in this 50th Year of India's Independence, the Slavish system is still existing in our country. There are Extra-Departmental Staff who work with meagre wages. We demand that the recommendations of the Talwar Committee should be implemented forthwith. The Government should start negotiations with the Unions of the postal employees.

There are other issues which are pertaining to the strike. There is the Fifth Pay Commission recommendation in regard to the Group 'D' staff, Postman, Mail Guard, TOBP, BCR Postal and Sorting Assistants and the HSG. These staff have been meted out with a semi-deal by the Fifth Pay Commission's recommendations. There are anomalies. They have demanded that their pay-scales should be upgraded. But the Government has not taken any action.

The hon. Finance Minister is here. As the postal service has completely paralysed since yesterday, I would urge upon him that Government should consider the demands of the Extra-Departmental Employees and implement the recommendations of the Talwar Committee forthwith. Also, the anomalies that have been there in regard to the implementation of the Fourth Pay Commission should be removed forthwith. Government should start negotiations immediately with the Unions of the postal employees. The hon. Finance Minister is here. I want a response from him...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI VAIKO (Sivakasi) : Since yesterday, I have been seeking permission. I am on the same subject. . .
(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I am allowing him on the same subject. I will also allow you on the same subject. Please take your seat.

(Interruptions)

SHRI VAIKO : I am on the same subject...*(Interruptions)*
Mr. Speaker, Sir...*(Interruptions)* Shri Radhakrishnan, you were the Speaker of the Assembly. . .*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Radhakrishnan, please take your seat. I have called Shri Vaiko.

(Interruptions)

SHRI VAIKO : Mr. Speaker, Sir on 3rd June of this year, I had raised the same issue on the floor of this House during Zero Hour drawing the attention of the Government saying that a strike notice was going to be served on 9th June of this year on this very same issue. That day, Shri Acharia and many Members from both the side had raised the same issue.

The basic utility service, the postal service is totally paralysed, Six lakh postal employees have gone on strike. This is not an issue born recently. This has been hanging fire for decades. Our heart will go with the sufferings, the plight of the postal employees who are regarded as the Extra Departmental Employees. It was not even agreed to by the Supreme Court of India. Justice Charanjit Singh Talwar Committee submitted the report and the main recommendation of that Committee was that this nomenclature should be changed from Extra Departmental System to Rural Postal System and they should be called as Rural Postal Employees. They have been treated as bonded labours. When we are saying that we are eradicating bonded labour, these employees have been suffering as bonded labours due to the system.

MR. SPEAKER : Sri Vaiko, Government is going to reply on this subject.

SHRI VAIKO : There were massive participation in the form of *dharna* which they undertook in the month of November last year. They again served the strike notice. Then they were called for negotiations by the Minister and an agreement was reached. They were assured that their demands would be definitely met and justice would be done. But nothing moved. For this reason, as a last resort, they have launched this agitation. This previous Governments did not care for their problem. The present hon. Minister had called them for talk. They had talked but they did not succeed. Therefore, it is high time...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : Please understand that the Government is serious about the situation and they are going to reply to it.

SHRI VAIKO : I understand the basic demands of the Extra Departmental Employees are being considered along with upgradation of pay scales, payment of bonus and other anomalies. This Government should get the credit, glorious credit of solving this problem which has been hanging fire for decades. Therefore, I urge upon the Government of India to accept all the demands without any further delay and take the credit.

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Mullapally Ramachandran to speak.

Shri Radhakrishnan, please take your seat.

SHRI MULLAPALLY RAMACHANDRAN (Cannanore) : I had already raised this issue on June 3, 1998 as Shri

Vaiko has stated. This is a very major issue. More than Six lakh postal employees have been on strike since yesterday, the 9th of July. Their demands are very genuine. As Shri Vaiko has stated, the ED employees are being treated as bonded labourers. They are living in difficult circumstances. I request the hon. Minister to intervene in this issue immediately and a solution is found without any loss of time. That is my request.

MAJOR GENERAL BHUVAN CHANDRA KHANDURI, AVSM (Garhwal) : I agree with what Shri Vaiko has stated. I also wish to highlight the miserable plight of the Extra Departmental Postal employees particularly in the hills in my constituency. These people virtually do 24 hours work. They travel long distance in hills on foot and yet they get miserable pay. A large number of people are ex-servicemen. Therefore, to treat them as worse than casual employees is not correct. We have been asking for proper service conditions for these people. I, therefore, urge the Communication and Finance Minister, the Government of India that the service conditions of ED postal employees must be improved and they must be brought on par with the general employees.

DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARY (Adilabad) : Sir, I draw the attention of the Government to settle this issue immediately without any further delay. Talwar Committee had submitted its Report and their demands are genuine. So, I request the Government to intervene in the matter immediately for early solution of the problem. Thank you.

SHRI P.C.CHACKO (Idukki) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the indifferent attitude of the Government has led to a crisis situation in the Postal Employees Department. The entire postal system has come to a grinding halt. I fully agree with what Shri Vaiko has said. But at the same time, I want to differ on one point. The postal system in this country is a model system, if you take the whole world. And, it is built up over a period of time. Sir, sufficient notice was given to the Government. All Members from various parties raised this issue earlier but nothing was done. The Government did not take any initiative and did not hold talks with their unions. It is the problem of the extra departmental labour. They were introduced at a time...*(Interruptions)*... But unfortunately, the whole system has come to a grinding halt. Nothing is happening. Nobody from the Government side is taking any initiative to hold talks with the postal unions... *(Interruptions)*... Their demand is legitimate and it is supported by all the political parties.

Mr. Speaker, you may kindly direct the Government call a conference with the agitating employees and come to a settlement immediately. Thank you...*(Interruptions)*

DR. SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY (Madurai) : Sir, please direct the Government to make a statement...*(Interruptions)*

MR.SPEAKER : The Parliamentary Affairs Minister is going to give a reply. Please take your seat.

SHRI PRAMOTHES MUKHERJEE (Berhampore) (WB) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, with your kind permission, I am on my legs with my support to the postal employees...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Mukherjee, just associate yourself with the previous Members.

(Interruptions)

DR. SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY: Sir, I have given a notice on some other issue ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PROMOTHES MUKHEJEE : Sir, I immediately demand that the Minister of Communications should come to this House and make a statement on this situation arising out of the nationwide postal employees strike for an indefinite period. This strike has already started on the bases of their 10-point Charter of Demands. Their demand is very simple. They have demanded the implementation of recommendations made by Justice Talwar Commission along with improvement of their pay-scales and finalisation of bonus formula.

Sir, they are very poor extra departmental employee who serve the rural postal services. By this strike, the urban affluent section may not suffer but the poor villagers will definitely suffer. The whole national communication system will get paralysed, if the Government do not pay proper attention to this strike. So, I would urge upon this Government to read the writing on the wall and immediately interfere with the striking postal employees. It has a heritage of its own. The postal employees strike is the prelude to change the course of the history.

So, I urge upon the Finance Minister and the Government to immediately pay attention to resolve this strike. Thank you.

[Translation]

SHRI CHANDRAMANI TRIPATHI (Rewa) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is true that postal staff is being treated as bonded labour. They have their own problems but...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura) : Sir, where is the Minister of Communications?...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : Hon. Members, please take your seats. This is not good.

(Interruptions)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura) : She should come and make a statement on the floor of this House...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : Nothing will go on record except what Shri Tripathi says.

*(Interruptions)**

MR. SPEAKER: Dr. Shakeel Ahmad, please take your seat. This is not good.

[Translation]

SHRI CHANDRAMANI TRIPATHI : Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to draw the attention of hon'ble Finance Minister and Government towards the problems faced by postal staff...*(Interruptions)* They are being treated as bonded labourers...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing will go on record.

*(Interruptions)**

[Translation]

SHRI CHANDRAMANI TRIPATHI : There are anomalies in their pay scales. It is not a new problem. Postal employees have been distressed since long. The solution to their problem can not be found in a single day. Therefore, I would like to request the union government and hon'ble Minister to hold talks with the postal employees and meet their demands. The anomalies should be removed. Besides, I would also like to ask the postal employees to bear for some more time and not to go in for strike.

I would like to ask the hon'ble Finance Minister to resolve this problem at the earliest.

SHRI LALU PRASAD (Madhepura) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is not a question of allegation levelled upon the government. Postal and communication services have been disrupted in rural areas. People are distressed due to price rise. We are raising this issue continuously. People do not have money in their pockets. Postal employees are on strike all over the country. Government should hold talks with them. The House is unanimous on this issue. Such a situation should not arise that the employees get provoked and indulge in destruction. Therefore, Government should hold talks with them without losing any more time and the strike should be ended. If the strike continues the employees may get provoked and the postal system will be totally disrupted. . . . *(Interruptions)* Everything will be destroyed. If the government does not agree, democracy. . . . *(Interruptions)* People will revolt. . . . *(Interruptions)* We support it, we are unanimous in this

*Not Recorded.

regard. Therefore, you should talk to the postal employees. . . . *(Interruptions)*

SHRI SHYAM BIHARI MISHRA (Bilaur) : What did you do earlier when you were in power, today you are talking about the annoyance of the employees.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Hon. Members, there are also other Members, Shri Sunil Kant, CPM, Shri Radhakrishnan, Shri Basu Deb Acharia, Shri Motilal Vora, Shri Rupchand Pal and Shri Hari Kewal Prasad. Now the Minister is going to reply.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Please take your seat.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : The Government is going to give reply. Please take your seat.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Please understand, Shri Basu Deb Acharia, this is not good. Let us hear what he says.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Mukherjee, this is too much. You are a senior Member. Please understand this position.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I would request all the Members to please take their seats.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Please take your seat. Please understand this position.

(Interruptions)

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (Hoogly) : The Minister of communications has threatened the employees. . . . *(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : You must first hear what the hon. Minister says. Other hon. Members have also given notices.

(Interruptions)

SHRI PRAMOTHES MUKHERJEE : He is not the Minister concerned with this. . . . *(Interruptions)*

SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR (Mumbai North-West) : Sir, I have been patiently waiting. I have not been given an opportunity. When will I get it? . . . *(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : You cannot question the Chair.

SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR : Do you expect that we should rush into the well of the House? . . . *(Interruptions)*

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL : We want a response from the Minister of Communications.

SHRI PRAMOTHES MUKHERJEE : We want that the Minister of Communications should come here.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL : She must come here and make a statement. She has threatened the employees. We want to listen to her statement only. . . . *(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : Please listen to me.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Please listen to me first. If necessary, I will direct that the Minister of Communications also should make a statement.

(Interruptions)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Sir, the entire nation is paralysed. The Postal services are paralysed. Where is the Minister of Communications? Why can they not call her here? . . . *(Interruptions)*

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL : Where is the Minister of Communications? This is a very sensitive issue. She must give a reply. Shri Madan Lal Khurana is not concerned with this.

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, this is serious issue, we are also concerned with it. The Hon'ble Minister will give statement in the afternoon in this regard.

(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Please listen to him first.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : This is not a good practice.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : The hon. Minister is saying that if necessary even the concerned Minister would also make a statement in the House.

(Interruptions)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : It is necessary.

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Basu Deb Acharia, you are a senior Member of this House. Please take your seat.

(Interruptions)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : The House is unanimous on this issue. The entire House is unanimous. . . . *(Interruptions)* What urgent work is she doing now? She has not cared to come to the House. The entire House is united on this issue. . . . *(Interruptions)*

DR. SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY : You please given a direction that the Minister concerned should reply. . . . *(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Basu Deb Acharia, please take your seat.

[Translation]

SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have said earlier also that the concerned Minister will give statement in the afternoon in this regard. . . *(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : We do not want to hear him. We want to hear only the statement of the Minister of Communications and not the statement of the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs. This is not sufficient. . . . *(Interruptions)*

SHRI SUNIL KHAN (Durgapur) : This is not sufficient.

MR. SPEAKER : He has already given a reply.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : He has already said that the Minister of Communications would make a statement in the House in the evening. Please take your seats.

(Interruptions)

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL : We are not satisfied with the statement made by Shri Madan Lal Khurana. The Minister of Communications should come and make a statement. . . . *(Interruptions)* When will she make her statement?

SHRI VAIKO : She is going to make the statement today itself. . . . *(Interruptions)*

SHRI E. AHAMED (Manjeri) : Sir, the Minister of Communications should come and make a statement. . . . *(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : Please take your seats.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Please take your seats.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Please resume your seats.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Basu Deb Acharia, please ask the Members of your party to take their seats.

[Translation]

SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE (Ratnagiri) : No other state get affected except Bengal. . . . (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Please take your seats.

(Interruptions)

SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR : Sir, please allow us also to speak. . . . (Interruptions) You are allowing only the hon. Members from that side of the House to speak. . . . (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I will allow you. Please take your seat first.

(Interruptions)

SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR : Sir, I am on a point of propriety of the House. . . . (Interruptions) Sir, you are not allowing us to speak. . . . (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I will allow you; you take your seat first. I will allow you also.

(Interruptions)

SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR : Sir, I should also be allowed to speak. That is my right also. . . . (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I will allow you. You take your seat first.

SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR : Sir, you are calling all the Members from that side to speak and you are not allowing us, from this side, to speak. . . . (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Please take your seat first. I will allow you.

[Translation]

SHRI SHYAM BIHARI MISHRA (Bilaur) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, he is standing, you should allow him to speak first. You are allowing them to speak. . . . (Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR : Sir, you never allow us to speak. . . . (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I will allow you; please take your seat first.

(Interruptions)

SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR : Sir, if they stand up, I will also stand up. . . . (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Please take your seat.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE : He is leader of our party. You are not allowing him to speak. He may be allowed to speak. . . . (Interruptions) You are allowing Lajuji to speak, you are allowing them to speak but you are not allowing our Leader to speak. . . . (Interruptions) We will not allow them to speak. What is this, why you are not allowing him to speak? He is our party leader. . . . (Interruptions) We have also a party, why you are not allowing us to speak?

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Please take your seat.

(Interruptions)

MAJOR GENERAL BHUVAN CHANDRA KHANDURI, AVSM : Mr. Speaker, Sir, my request to you is that please allow Shri Sirpotdar to speak first and then you may allow Shri Paswan to speak. . . . (Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI LALU PRASAD (Madhepura) : You belong to Sena which is not party. When you form a party then you can speak. . . . (Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE : We are the ruling party in Maharashtra, Please do not forget it. . . . (Interruptions)

SHRI MOTILAL VORA (Rajnandgaon) : Sir, I have also given a notice. . . . (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Please take your seat.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN (Hajipur) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, if he want to speak first their you call him first. . . . (Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR : Sir, I am on a point of propriety. We have been discussing this issue; and I have been watching all the activities that are going on in this House. This morning, the issue of postal strike was raised and I wanted to participate in it. Since the very beginning, I only raised my hand to attract the attention of the Chair and you have also noticed it, Sir. Thereafter, I noticed that whichever hon. Member stood up from that side, was being allowed to speak.

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY (Visakhapatnam) : It is because we are in the Opposition and we have to be given a chance.

SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR : We also stand up here to express our viewpoint regarding the postal strike. Is it not our responsibility, as a party, to express it? I am also leading one of the parties. So, it is very necessary that we express our viewpoint in this House. That is my birth right and one cannot take away that right. Whenever we stand up, we are asked to sit down. It is not proper. Those hon. Members who enter into the well of the House are given an immediate chance and allowed to speak. That is one point.

The second point is that they were ruling the country for years together. For the last two years, the United Front Government was ruling and those hon. Members were in the Government.

Yet, they have not solved the problem of the postal employees and today, they are asking us to solve the problem. Let me tell you that I agree 100 per cent with the problem of the postal employees. We are going to support them also. But that does not mean that the entire House should be taken to ransom. I insist upon the Government to take the necessary steps immediately. It is very much necessary for peaceful negotiations. We will have a dialogue with the employees; we will try to find out some solution and see that the strike is ended. But that does not mean that the entire House should jump upon the Government and insist the Government to get the result. This is not proper. This is my viewpoint. . . . (Interruptions)

SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR (Bikaner) : Sir, I just want to draw your attention to the remarks made against the Speaker. No Member should be allowed to cast aspersions on the Chair. . . . (Interruptions)

SHRI AJIT JOGI (Raigarh) : The aspersions cast on the Chair should be expunged. Sir, very serious aspersions have been cast on the Chair. The hon. Speaker should remove those remarks from the record. . . . (Interruptions) Any remark which is casting aspersion on the Chair should be expunged from the record. . . . (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : If there are any serious remarks, I will expunge them from the record.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Mr. Speaker, Sir, we request Minister of Parliamentary Affairs to explain their members that there is difference between Treasury Benches and Opposition. This is our right, if we walk out from the House then whether you will also stage a walk-out. . . . (Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR : It is our choice. What did you do as a Minister? . . . (Interruptions)

SHRI VAIKO : Shri Paswan, you may tell the House what you had done here as a Minister. You cannot preach here. . . . (Interruptions)

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : We also occupied treasury benches. . . . (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Sir Sirpotdar, please take your seat. (Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : When we used to sit on treasury benches then at that time we had never objected to it as to why members of Opposition party were allowed to speak. The language which has been used for the Chair is very objectionable. I feel that Minister of Parliamentary Affairs should apologise for this. Democracy cannot be run in this way. . . . (Interruptions) Chair cannot be challenged. . . . (Interruptions)

[English]

Sir, certain remarks were made against the Chair and we have taken them seriously. No Member has the right to cast aspersions on the Chair. . . . (Interruptions) You are ruling today. You have no right to cast aspersions on the Chair. I would urge upon the Minister for Parliamentary Affairs to express apology for the remarks which were made. . . . (Interruptions)

[Translation]

This is not an ordinary thing. . . . (Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI VAIKO : What happened yesterday from your side? You did not object to it. You were keeping quiet then.

[Translation]

SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to tell Ram Vilas Paswanji that he has given one sided version. He said that they also used to raise problems and it is the duty of opposition to raise problem. I also admit this that no one can stop this. I want to tell that you are accepting what he is saying but before this also strikes were held, problems were raised. I am saying that statement will be given in the afternoon, after that you can speak.

[English]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Sir, this is not my point . . . (Interruptions)

[Translation]

You are giving speech.

SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA : After listening everyone I said that as you are worried, Government is also worried. But let the statement be made in the afternoon.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL : First you bring suo-moto statement.

SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA : Let me speak. I do agree with Paswanji that no one can challenge the Chair. No one should challenge also. If any of our Member has said this, then I am sorry for that. The objection which you have raised I would like to express regret for that also. Though I am saying again and again that statement will be made in afternoon but you are not ready to listen this. . . . (Interruptions) You are not unanimous. . . . (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Next item.

(Interruptions)

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Sir, 5-6 lakh employees of Communication Department through out the country are on strike. It is not an ordinary issue. You said that when we were in Government. . . . (Interruptions)

SHRI RAJENDRA AGNIHOTRI (Jhansi) : Sir, the same Question is being raised again and again. . . . (Interruptions)

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : That same question is going on. . . . (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Next item.

(Interruptions)

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Sir, I would like to request that Hon'ble Members are agitated and they want Communication Minister to come and give statement. Therefore, we would like to request you that. . . . (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Now, we go to next item No. 20. Shri Ram Vilas Paswan.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : He has given another notice.

(Interruptions)

SHRI K. KARUNAKARAN (Thiruvananthapuram) : Before going to the next item, I want to make a suggestion. . . . (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I will call you.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : You had called us earlier. . . . (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Have you given notice?

(Interruptions)

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : You have yield earlier. Now you have called my name. I would like to tell that strike is going on since yesterday. . . . (Interruptions) Therefore we would like to request that Communication Minister should come and give his statement in the House. . . . (Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI MOTILAL VORA : How many times have we to get up? . . . (Interruptions) We requested you to call our names also. . . . (Interruptions) We have given the notice.

MR. SPEAKER : I will call you. Now, Shri Mohan Singh.

[Translation]

SHRI MOHAN SINGH (Deoria) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you I would like to draw the attention of Central Government towards one very important question. This question is no less important than the question which was raised just now. The Kashi Hindu University, which is one of the important educational institute of northern India, was set up as a result of hard efforts of Pt. Madan Mohan Malviya. Not only the youth of northern India but the youth of entire India and all those who are associated with educational field are getting inspiration from this educational institute. But today the condition of the University is gradually deteriorating. Murderous attack was made on one Professor of that institute and one student of Engineering College was murdered there. There the administration is drowned in the quagmire of corruption. One such educational institute which was set up by one ascetic and which contributed in educational world is getting ruined due to infighting and administrative failure. It is a matter of regret that Government of India has not constituted any elected body or administrative organisation during the last 15 years. In spite of the fact that Government of India had given assurances in this House many times. B.H.U. Bill is still pending since long time. Even today, the Government is not ready to present that Banaras Hindu University Bill. While drawing the attention of Minister of Human Resource Development towards this important question, I would like to request that one High Level Committee should be constituted to control violence, anarchy and corruption which is prevailing there. The

Committee should submit its report within one month after studying the conditions prevailing there so that this House could take some concrete steps, in the light of that report, for the development and progress of this great educational institution and for its regularisation.

[English]

SHRI K. KARUNAKARAN (Thiruvananthapuram) : Sir, the whole country is affected by the strike. . . . (Interruptions) We thought from their side, on their own initiative the Government will come to the House and tell us about it. . . . (Interruptions) It is unfortunate that the Government has taken it lightly. . . . (Interruptions) They should understand the seriousness of the situation as prevailing in the country and find out a solution. . . . (Interruptions) The Prime Minister should have authorised a member of his Cabinet to inform the House about the decision the Government has taken in this regard. . . . (Interruptions) The Government cannot take this type of an attitude. . . . (Interruptions) Sir, you should allow us to raise this matter. . . . (Interruptions) The situation should be rectified. . . . (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Please take your seat.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Nine Members have given notice on the same subject. I cannot allow all the nine Members to speak on this.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I am reading out the names of those nine Members who have given notice on this subject.

Shri Shailendra Kumar.

Shri Vashist Narain Singh, Shri Om Prakash, Shri Ajit Kumar, Shri Lalmuni Chaubey, Shri Raghuvans Prasad Singh, Shri Hira Lal Rai, Shrimati Usha Verma, Shrimati Reena Choudhary. . . . (Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH (Vaishali) : Sir, Minister of Parliamentary Affairs should say something in this regard.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : The issue raised by Shri Mohan Singh has been supported by all these Members.

(Interruptions)

SHRI E. AHAMED (Manjeri) : Sir, we could not hear what Shri Karunakaran has said. . . . (Interruptions) Sir, you should call his name once again. . . . (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Please take your seats.

Shri T.R. Baalu, please.

(Interruptions)

SHRI E. AHAMED : Sir, you may allow Shri Karunakaran once more. . . . (Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI OM PRAKASH (Ghazipur) : Sir, it is a very serious issue. . . . (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : You all have supported Shri Mohan Singh on the issue and it is deemed to have been raised by all of you. Please take your seats now.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Hon. Members, please take your seats.

[Translation]

SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Government is maintaining silence on such a serious issue. . . . (Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI K. KARUNAKARAN : The Government has taken a decision. . . . (Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER : Please take your seat first.

SHRI OM PRAKASH : I cannot sit. It is not fair that other Members keep on speaking and we are not allowed. Mr. Speaker, Sir, please listen to me. It is an important issue which relates to the youth of the whole country. So, there is no question of my sitting.

MR. SPEAKER : Please take your seat first.

(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Nothing is going on record.

(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Raghuvansh Prasad, You are on the panel of chairman also. Please take your seat.

(Interruptions)

SHRI K. KARUNAKARAN : Before going on to the specific subject, some decision should be taken on this issue. . . . (Interruptions) This is not a normal situation. This is a situation created due to a strike by the postal employees. In this regard, I have to request. . . . (Interruptions)

*Not Recorded.

[Translation]

DR. BIZAY SONKAR SHASTRI (Saidpur) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Member is a senior Member and he should know that a decision already been taken on this issue.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : I will call you. Please take your seat. This is not good.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Shailendra Kumar, please take your seat.

SHRI K. KARUNAKARAN : This is a burning issue. Unfortunately, the Government has not taken it seriously. This is an issue which should be treated. . . . (Interruptions) The hon. Minister should have been here and he should have told the House what effort the Government has made to solve this crucial problem. Unfortunately, the Government has not taken that route.

Now, I have to make a request to you. Before passing on to the next item, please direct the Government—you may ask the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs to ask the Minister concerned—to make a statement on this, failing which we would not be able to. . . . (Interruptions)

SHRI VAIKO (Sivakasi) : They have already announced it. What more do you want?

SHRI K. KARUNAKARAN : Please instruct the Government to make a statement on this. . . . (Interruptions)

SHRI VAIKO : What have you been doing for all these 50 years?

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Karunakaran, it is already over.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I will allow you also.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Om Prakash, Shri Mohan Singh has already raised it. You can supplement what he has already said.

[Translation]

SHRI OM PRAKASH (Ghazipur) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, this University was established under the guidance of the Father of the nation Mahatma Gandhi and Pt. Madan Mohan Malviya. The great people like Acharya Narendra Dev, reverend Shri Radhakrishnan, Bhagwati Sahayji, Shri Ayyar and Malviyaji had been chancellors of this university. . . . (Interruptions) During the Congress regime when Dr. Hari Gautam was appointed it was stated that he was favoured by Congress Party and during the regime of

United Front Government it was said that he was favoured by Janata Dal and now it is being said that he is favoured by the Bhartiya Janata Party. It is the first incident in the history of this University that talented students have been murdered. Manoranjan Singh. . . . (Interruptions) and topper in IIT examination Manish Roy were murdered. On instructions of Human Right Commission CBCID has given its report in this regard that. . . . (Interruptions) Chief Proctor is such a person who married his student. The atmosphere prevailing in the university is hellish and there is no law and order. The educational institution set up for spreading knowledge has become a modern club now. . . . (Interruptions) Mr. Speaker, Sir, hon'ble Minister is also sitting here. Sir, I would like to say that the university administration was in the docks after conducting inquiry by the Gajendra Gadkar Committee constituted in 1968 and now as per the report of CBCID the Chancellor is in the docks under the section 120 and orders have been issued to file criminal cases against the officers from the level of proctor to C.O.C.T. level. Now through You I would like to know as to why assistance is being provided to them in the name of law and order. . . . (Interruptions) Mr. Speaker, Sir, this question is no less important than others. He fought for Bihar. He has been a student of that university. The persons who have been killed. . . . (Interruptions) I would like to say that Minister of Human Resource Development should be called here to tell something about it. . . . (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Om Prakash, please take your seat.

[Translation]

SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon'ble Member has mentioned about Kashi Hindu Vishwavidyalaya. . . . (Interruptions)

SHRI MOHAN SINGH (Deoria) : You have also been a student leader and general-secretary of the Union there. . . . (Interruptions)

SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA : I will convey the sentiments of hon'ble Member to the Minister of Human Resource Development. . . . (Interruptions)

SHRI OM PRAKASH : An inquiry should be conducted in this regard.

SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA : I cannot say anything about it. The hon'ble Minister would himself say that about it.

[English]

SHRI PRABHAT KUMAR SAMANTARAY (Kendrapara) : This is a most disturbing and alarming news. . . . (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Already reply has been given.

(Interruptions)

SHRI PRABHAT KUMAR SAMANTARAY : Sir, the Chairperson of the National Commission for Women has stated in Orissa that some of the inmates of the Women's Hostel are prostitutes. The Chairperson who is supposed to protect the honour of the ladies has made a derogatory statement in the public. That has been condemned by everyone in Orissa and I appeal to my colleagues of this House to condemn her statement and to draw the attention of the Government that she is still continuing in the office after making such a statement.

She should be sacked and asked to explain. Instead of protecting the honour and dignity of women, The Chairperson of the Commission for Women is now in vilification of women community as a whole.

(Interruptions)

SHRI T.R. BAALU (Madras South) : Sir, you are aware of the fact that as per the demand made by our leader, Dr. M. Karunanidhi, the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, the former Prime Minister, Mr. V.P. Singh has ordered for a Tribunal to settle the issue of sharing of Cauvery water between Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. . . . *(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : I will allow Shri Muthiah. Shri Baalu's name is at No.5 in the list and your name is at No.16 in the list. I will also call you.

(Interruptions)

SHRI T.R. BAALU : The Tribunal gave an interim order on 25.6.91 to supply 205 tmc of water to Tamil Nadu every year. This order was notified by Government of India on 10.12.91 as per 6A of Inter-State Water Disputes Act, 1956. But the Government of Karnataka was not implementing the order of Tribunal. Hence the Government of Tamil Nadu filed a case in the Supreme Court in 1992 for effective implementation of the Award.

MR. SPEAKER : Nothing will go on record except Shri Baalu's statement.

*(Interruptions)**

SHRI T.R. BAALU : As advised by the Supreme Court both the Chief Ministers met more than five times, but no tangible solution arrived. The Attorney General filed a petition on 9.4.97 in the Supreme Court and stated and I quote:

"The Scheme will be sent within the next eight weeks to the party State for their comments and, thereafter, will be finalised by the Union of India and placed before the Parliament in accordance with law."

But even after 15 months, the Central Government has not come forward to notify the Scheme to implement the Interim Award of Tribunal in the Gazette and whenever the case came up in the Supreme Court the Central Government has managed to seek adjournment for not less than eight times. Now, the case is going to be heard on 21.07.98.

The Scheme provides for the constitution of the Cauvery River Authority to give effect to the decision of the Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal. The important stipulations in the Scheme are:

- (a) ensuring inflows of 205 tmc of water from the Karnataka reservoirs into Mettur Reservoir of Tamil Nadu month-wise and week-wise;
- (b) ensuring 6tmc of water for the Union Territory of Pondicherry; and
- (c) ensuring that the State of Karnataka does not increase its area under irrigation by the Waters of the river Cauvery beyond the existing 11.2 lakh acres.

13.00 hrs.

Therefore I urge upon the Government to come forward to notify the scheme in Gazette for effective implementation of the interim award of Cauvery Water Dispute Tribunal and also place it in this House as per Sub-Section 7 of 6A of Inter-State Water Dispute Act, 1956 without any further delay...*(Interruptions)*

MR.SPEAKER: Shri Baalu, please take your seat.

(Interruptions)

MR.SPEAKER : This is 'Zero Hour'. Please conclude.

SHRI T.R.BAALU : Sir, before I conclude I would like to say one thing. This Government should not be carried away by the plea of the Chief Minister of Karnataka to convene any more meeting of the Chief Ministers of States as it had failed more than 35 times, which will be once again a wasteful exercise. *(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing will go on record.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Yours is over. Please take your seat.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: He has already noted. Please take your seat. The Minister has already noted.

SHRI R. MUTHIAH (Periyakulam): Sir, the riparian right is becoming meaningless. Our rightful riparian areas of Cauvery are suffering a lot, year after year because of the non-implementation of the interim orders of Cauvery Water Dispute Tribunal ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : If the hon. Members behave like this, I will cancel the 'Zero Hour' Please understand this. It is not sending a good signal.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : If the members behave like this, I will cancel the 'Zero Hour' next day onwards.

SHRI R. MUTHIAH : Now a stage has arisen that this Government should come forward to implement the interim orders of Cauvery Water Dispute Tribunal. Moreover, as per its own national agenda, this Government is committed to implement the order. In its national agenda, an assurance is given to sort out the inter-State water disputes in a time bound manner. But the Cauvery Water Dispute Tribunal had already awarded its interim order as early as in 1991 itself...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI VAIKO : He cannot object to that. It is our right to raise the issue..*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Muniyappa, I will hear you.

SHRI R. MUTHIAH : This has been gazetted by the Central Government. Even this has been upheld by the Supreme Court of India. Hence, I insist that this is a rightful duty of this Government to implement the Tribunal's orders without any further delay. In view of these circumstances, I urge upon this Government to invoke Article 256 of the Constitution and give a direction to the Government of Karnataka to implement the interim orders without any delay. But it appears from the circumstances, even this Government is not ready for the speedy implementation of the orders. It is going to ask for another hearing in the Supreme court. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI R.L. JALAPPA (Chikballapur): How do you know? How does he know? *(Interruptions)*

SHRI R. MUTHIAH : I am coming to the point. It appears to me to be so. That is what I have told because the next hearing in the Supreme Court is on 21st of this month. For that, even this Government, it appears, is going to ask for another adjournment. The earlier Government had formulated a scheme called, Cauvery River Valley Authority Scheme, in May, 1997. But due to the influence of Karnataka and the Prime Minister being from that State, they had not notified this up to that period.

MR. SPEAKER : You cannot read the statement. Please conclude.

SHRI R. MUTHIAH : My friend, Shri Baalu had spoken here miserably, in those days, my friend and others were in the Cabinet. He was a Minister. Not only he, but also we were having nine Ministers from Tamil Nadu in those days. All the Ministers were from DMK and TMC. But in those days, they were not interested in this affair and

betrayed the people of Tamil Nadu. Therefore, we, on behalf of the AIADMK, urge upon the Government to notify that scheme in the Gazette and place it before the Supreme Court on 21st without asking for further adjournment ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI R.L. JALAPPA : How are you going to solve this issue? ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI R. MUTHIAH : The matter should be brought to the notice of the Supreme Court. The Government should use Article 256 to direct the Government of Karnataka to implement the interim award.

MR. SPEAKER : Shri R.L. Jalappa. Nothing else will go on record. Dr. Subramanian Swami, I have allowed Shri Jalappa.

SHRI R.L. JALAPPA : Both of us Tamil Nadu and Karnataka are neighbourly States. Hitherto we have been pulling on as brothers. We want this matter to be settled amicably. Now the case is before the Supreme Court and it is coming up on the 21st of this month. I do not know how hon. Member Shri Muthiah says that the Government of India is going to take an adjournment. I do not know who told him. *(Interruptions)*

Whatever it is, since the case is before the Supreme Court we cannot discuss anything here. It has become *subjudice*. Whatever they have said, it should not be on record. I request you to kindly take it out of the record.

MR. SPEAKER : If it is objectionable I will take it out of the record.

Dr. Subramanian Swamy.

DR. SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY : The Government had promised to make a statement about giving Statehood to Pondicherry. There is an agitation going on there. It is high time that the Government of India shook off its laziness and came forward and made a statement on the issue of Statehood to Pondicherry. Of course, the DMK Government previously was sleeping over the issue but we cannot allow the interests of the people of Pondicherry to be sacrificed.

[Translation]

SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, a friend from A.D.M.K. and Baaluji also came to me with the issue of according statehood to Pondicherry and I told them and here also I would like to say that during discussion on creation of new states the Minister of Home Affairs Shri Advani ji had very clearly stated that Delhi and Pondicherry both will be accorded statehood simultaneously and there is no doubt in it. So there is no need to raise this issue again and again.

DR. SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY : I have remind lest you may forget because the government is busy in so many cases and conspiracies...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA: It is the commitment of the Government that Pondicherry would be given statehood and I would like to make this announcement here...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI T.R. BAALU: You are great, very great, Sir.

SHRI NRIPEN GOSWAMI (Nowgong): I want to draw the attention of the Government of India to rotten rice supplied to the people of Assam through the Pubic Distribution System. Two rakes of the rotten rice have been sent to Assam by the Food Corporation of India authorities. The staff of the Food Corporation of India have refused to unload the rakes. So, this is a clear case of neglect of the people of the North-Eastern region. The Government of India should know that the people of the North-Eastern region, although they are neglected from a different point of view, are not ready to take the food which is not fit for human consumption.

It is really a matter of great regret that the people of the North-Eastern region have been treated like this by the Food Department. I have brought along with me a sample of the rice that has been given by the Food Corporation.

I want to show to this august House the sample of the rice that has been sent to the people of the North-Eastern Region by this Government. There is a news item that has been published in the newspapers of Assam that this particular rice has been sent to the North-Eastern Region at the instance of the hon. Minister of Food and Consumer Affairs. I will read out the headlines of the premier English daily of the entire North East. It reads like "Rotten rice from FCI at Barnala's prodding". That has been published in "The Assam Tribune". So, this is the head line that has come up in the newspapers. *(Interruptions)*. The Government of India cannot treat the people of the entire North East like this. *(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Goswami, Please take your seat.

SHRI NRIPEN GOSWAMI : The officials who were responsible for sending this type of rice should be brought to book immediately and the responsibility should be fixed on them. The hon. Minister of Food and Consumer Affairs should take immediate action in this matter. . . . *(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Goswami, Please take your seat.

[Translation]

SHRI LAL BIHARI TIWARI (East-Delhi) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, lakhs of people go to Haridwar and Brijghat to

take bath in the holy Ganges. Three years ago a plan involving an expenditure of Rs. 7 crore was formulated to construct Surajghat like Haridwar along the river Yamuna near the Wazirabad bridge. Now almost three years have lapsed but so far even the boundry wall for it could not be constructed. Therefore, Sir, through you, I would like know from the Government as to by when this plan would be implemented so that the sentiments of devotees could be honoured.

[English]

SHRI N.K. PREMCHANDRAN (Quilon) : Sir, I thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak.

An urgent intervention of the Ministry of Railways is required regarding the vehicular traffic in the State of Kerala. The Chief Safety Officer of Southern Railway, Madras has issued a circular recently which is creating traffic hazards near the railway lines. He has directed that all the non-interlock gates across the roads should be closed and to open only those gates which have got special sanction from the Ministry of Railways. Other gates could be opened only when it is found that it was necessary by the Station Master for road traffic. As a result of this order, the vehicles, which are waiting for crossing the railway line, have to wait for forty-five to fifty minutes. So, it is causing much inconvenience in the State of Kerala and the people are now going to take law in their own hands.

Therefore, I would urge upon the Government to review the Safety Circular and review the order and restore the previous position.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI BHAVNA DEVRAJBHAI CHIKHALIA (Junagarh) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, one month ago on 8th and 9th June a devastating cyclonic storm hit the Junagadh, Porbandar, Jamnagar, Rajkot and Kutchh districts of Sourashtra region in Gujarat. As per the primary survey this area suffered a loss of Rs.1200 core. Our hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayjeeji also visited the area along with Press reporters. An expert committee after survey reported that the area suffered a heavy loss. Gujarat Government has demanded that an assistance of Rs.500 crore should be provided to them. Sir, through you, I request the Government to allocate Rs.500 crore to Gujarat Government from the National Calamity Funds so that the affected people could be given assistance at the earliest.

SHRI SHAILENDRA KUMAR (Chail) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am grateful to you for giving me a chance to speak after submitting notices continuously for three days. Every day five persons are killed in road accidents in my parliamentary constituency Chail, Allahabad, Kaushambhi and Fatehpur areas of Uttar Pradesh. We have been

[Shri Shailendra Kumar]

this demand for years that facility of bye-pass should be given in the area, encroachment should be removed. Bridges should be constructed on Ganges and Yamuna to divert the highway traffic so that area of Allahabad, Kaushambhi and Fatehpur districts could be made accident free, pollution free and beautification of city and Pollution-free environment could co-exist.

With these words, I thank you for allowing me to speak and conclude.

[English]

SHRI P.S. GHATOWAR (Dibrugarh) : Sir, I want to draw your kind attention to the problem of surplus water in my State. My hon. colleagues here are fighting for supply of water but my problem is about surplus water. I want to draw the kind attention of the Government to the serious devastating flood situation in Assam. Almost half of Assam is now under flood water. The condition of Dhemaji, Nalbari, Dhubri, Goalpara, Sonitpur, Darrang and Cachhar districts is very serious and critical. Several thousands villages are submerged and lots of people are rendered homeless. Many of them are taking shelter at high places under the open sky. For some of these districts, the civil administration has taken the help of the Army for rescue of the marooned people. Many roads have been washed away by the recent floods, disturbing the road communication. Some portions of the National Highways also are under water. Several bunds and dikes have breached and the standing crops in very large areas have been destroyed by the recent floods. The State Government of Assam has completely failed to provide timely relief to these unfortunate flood-affected people. There is a scarcity of essential commodities due to destruction of road and rail communication. Therefore, Sir, through you I request the Central Government to immediately send a Central team to assess the critical flood situation in Assam and also to immediately arrange to send Central help and essential commodities to the flood-affected people of Assam.

I also request the Government, through you, to make a statement about the flood situation in Assam and the steps taken by the Central Government so save the people from these regular sufferings.

So, I request the Government to assess the situation and also to make a statement in the House.

SHRI BHUBANESWAR KALITA (Guwahati) : Sir, Shri Ghatowar has raised the issue of floods. As he has said, entire Assam is reeling under floods. The areas we represent are completely under flood. The embankments have breached at several places. The Government has already submitted plans to repair those embankments. Surprisingly, the marooned people are taking shelter in open air on the embankments and other high places, but

they are not given even an ounce of rice as relief. Most of them are starving. I request the Government to give a direction to the State Government.

After the floods, now the epidemic will come. So, I request the Central Government to direct the State Government to save the people from the devastating floods and immediately sanction money for repairing the embankments.

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY (Calcutta North-West) : Sir, I want to draw your attention and the attention of the hon. Members of this august House to the fact that the Election Commission of India had taken a decision to introduce photo identity cards at the time of elections. But it is a matter of great regret that the purpose which was declared by the Election Commission and was appreciated by the peace-loving people of the country, has been defeated and the entire money that has been invested, has gone waste. Introduction of photo identity cards at the time of General Elections has to be made mandatory.

All-party opinion is to be sought in this regard because crores of rupees were spent and people are very much keen to know what decision this august House is going to take regarding introduction of identity cards at the time of general elections.

In our State of West Bengal, the parliamentary democracy in the hands of the Communists has gone to its lowest ebb. With the way they are holding the elections and the ghost voters' list, the parliamentary democracy has become a total farce. This Communist Party totally believes in one party rule. So, this photo identity card only can uphold the basic principles of parliamentary democracy of the country. So, Sir, the photo identity card system is to be made mandatory.

[Translation]

SHRI SHYAM BIHARI MISHRA (Bilhaur) : Hon. Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to draw the attention of the Union Government and Hon. Prime Minister. The most prominent industrial and trading centre of Uttar Pradesh, Kanpur was lashed by heavy rain on 5th and 6th July, due to which the entire city was inundated. All the residential colonies such as Awass Vikas Colony, Barra, Sarvodaya Nagar, Kakadev as well as marketplaces have been water-logged, thus causing extensive damage to the stocks kept by the shopkeepers. The flood water level is one foot to five feet in houses of three thousand families. These families have left their homes and have taken shelter elsewhere. Life is totally disrupted there. Hence I urge upon Hon. Prime Minister to provide an assistance of Rs.50 crore to the Government of Uttar Pradesh for the relief measures required to be undertaken for the residents of Kanpur affected by heavy rainfall and flood. . . . (Interruptions)*

*Not Recorded.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : You have given notice regarding unemployment problem, but you are raising another matter. This is not good.

PROF. JOGENDRA KAWADE (CHIMUR) : This is a very important matter.

MR. SPEAKER : No, you cannot raise this matter. You have to raise matter which you have mentioned in the notice.

[Translation]

PROF. JOGENDRA KAWADE : All right.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : This must be noted and not that.

[Translation]

PROF. JOGENDRA KAWADE : So far as the issue of unemployment is concerned, I would like to submit that the Government has formulated a scheme for providing employment to the unemployed under Prime Minister Rojgar Yojana. There are several other schemes as well, still we have not been able to remove unemployment we expect from this government and make an appeal that the educated unemployed youth who have got their names registered in Employment Exchanges and have not got a call from the Employment Exchange even after five years, should be given unemployment allowance of at least fifteen hundred rupees per month by the government. I appeal to the government to implement this scheme at the earliest.

Several other Schemes formulated to check the rising unemployment in the country, are not implemented properly. Banks and other agencies also do not implement these schemes earnestly. For instance, the unemployed are given loans through banks for self employment, however proper assistance and co-operation is not given to them. Hence we demand that unemployment allowance of Rs. 1500 per month should be given to the unemployed.

MAJOR GENERAL BHUVAN CHANDRA KHANDURI, AVSM (Garhwal) : Hon. Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to draw the attention of the Government towards conversion of the Haridwar-Rishikesh-Srinagar, Garhwal-Badrinath road into National highway. This is an important road which is being maintained by Border Road Organisation. This road has strategic importance from the point of view of Defence, hence it has been handed over to the Border Road Organisation. Lakhs of people, not only from India but from all over the World travel on this road. This area attracts not only the pilgrims who visit Badrinath, Kedarnath and the pilgrimage of Sikhs, Hemkund Sahib but a large number of tourists also visit this area. It is a

tourist centre having facilities of adventure sports, mountaineering and the best trekking routes in the world. Besides, there are a number of holiday inns for gaining health and people come here from all over the World. Presently the road comes under the Border Road Organisation. It is deprived of the facilities available to National Highways. Ex-Servicemen also live here who use this road. This area is known for its natural beauty. Lakhs of tourists visit this area. The proposal regarding converting this road into National Highway forwarded by the Government of Uttar Pradesh to the Union Government has been lying pending since 1951. I request the Union Government and the Ministry of Surface Transport to take this decision at the earliest and Convert Haridwar-Badrinath road into National Highway.

SHRI RAJVEER SINGH (Aonla) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I associate myself with it. It should be extended upto Lucknow because Lucknow is the capital of a state. It is a National Highway. It should be linked with National Highway No.24.

SHRI RAMESH CHANDRA DWIVEDI (Banda) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, Rajapur, District Chhatrapat Sahuji Maharaj Nagar is the birth place of great poet and sant Goswami Tulsidas who enlightened the world by giving it the gift of Ramcharitmanas. This place is located at the banks of river Yamuna in Uttar Pradesh. A bridge is urgently required to be constructed there. Through you, I would like to make a request to the Union Government and Hon. Prime Minister Atal ji that a bridge should be got constructed on river Yamuna in the memory of the great saint and it should be named 'Tulsi Setu'. With the construction of this bridge, Fatehpur, Raebareli, Kaushambi and Allahabad will be directly linked with Chitrakoot, a religious and tourist centre and Bundelkhand. Thus development will take place there and lakhs of unemployed people will be employed. Hence, through you, I would like to urge upon the Government to get constructed 'Tulsi Setu' on river Yamuna at Rajapur for the development of this backward area.

SHRI LALU PRASAD : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I wanted to raise a point of order from the very beginning. Three months have passed, but we have not been allotted quarters as yet. The Division numbers of seats have not been allotted either to help determine the seats of the Members.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : I have allowed Shri P.R. Kyndiah. Please take your seat.

(Interruptions)

SHRI P.R. KYNDIAH (Shillong) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, during the last four months, after the installation of the BJP-led Government at the Centre, there has been

[Shri P.R. Kyndiah]

unprecedented activities of communal organisations to create a division among the people in the North-East and this has led to communal tension and communal disharmony. Their target is the Christian community in the North-East and the Christian tribals in particular in the States of Nagaland, Mizoram and Meghalaya.

Sir, my statement is corroborated by what had appeared in *THE ASIAN AGE* dated the 9th July, 1998. The news report contains the statement of the Organising Secretary of the VHP, Shri Arbind Bhattacharya. He has stated:

"We are also planning to appoint Hindu Missionaries in all the North-Eastern States to counter the campaign of Christian Missionaries who compel the tribal Hindus to adopt Christianity."

Sir, this is a communal issue. My point is, we cannot allow any organisation to divide the community or the society on the basis of religion. Now, they are targeting the Christians in the North-East, particularly in the States of Nagaland, Mizoram and Meghalaya.

This has happened only after the installation of the BJP-led Government. They said that some of the Christian missionaries are abetting militancy. This is a grave accusation against the Christian missionaries. My point is that we are living in a secular society. We cannot allow any organisation to fight on the basis of religion. In the North-East, we have a social harmony. There has been ethnic clashes but never in the past, the North-Eastern Society is divided on the basis of religion.

It has been reported in *The Asian Age* newspaper that the VHP has strengthened its organisational base in the region after the installation of the BJP-led Government at the Centre by carving out two control centres in the North-East. This is a very serious and grave issue. I would request the Government of India to take note of this issue.

[Translation]

SHRI SATNAM SINGH KAINTH (Phillaur) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the House and the government towards a very serious matter. Interests of lakhs of people are involved therein. All the Members of the House are aware that this area is full of stones. The people of Punjab and the farmers from Punjab have cut the rocks and made the land arable by putting in hard work. Hence I would like to request the government that no part of Udham Singh Nagar should be included in Uttarakhand region. Respecting the Sentiments of the residents of that area, it should be kept in Uttar Pradesh.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : The House stands adjourned to meet again at 2.30 p.m.

13.32 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned for Lunch till Thirty Minutes past Fourteen of the Clock.

14.36 hrs.

The Lok Sabha re-assembled after Lunch at Thirty six Minutes past Fourteen of the Clock.

[SHRI V. SATHIAMOORTHY in the Chair]

(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura) : The Minister of Parliamentary Affairs has said that the Communications Minister will come at 2 o'clock and make a statement.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJVEER SINGH (Aonla) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, this is not the way. When time has been fixed at three O'clock, why do they keep on rising again and again. We have some other business to attend to as well. I do not know why they waste the time of the House.

[English]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : The Minister of Parliamentary Affairs has said that the Communications Minister will come at 2 o'clock and make a statement.

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA) : Hon. Speaker has fixed the time at 3 o'clock. . . .

(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Why should the hon. Minister come at 3 o'clock?

MR. CHAIRMAN : The hon. Minister for Parliamentary Affairs has said that the Communications Minister will come and make his statement at 3 p.m.

SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA : I have already informed the Hon. Speaker that the Communications Minister will come at 3 p.m.

SHRI P.C. CHACKO (Idukki) : Why should the hon. Minister come at 3 o'clock?

[Translation]

SHRI RAJVEER SINGH : Chacko ji, when time has been fixed at three O'Clock, you should not raise this question again and again.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Hon. Members, I would like to inform you that Hon. Speaker has already given message to the Communications Minister to come to the House and make his statement by about 3.00 p.m.

MATTER UNDER RULE 377

- (i) **Need to Review The Decision of Madhya Pradesh Government Regarding Autonomy to Engineering Colleges.**

[Translation]

SHRI RAMA NAND SINGH (Satna) : Government of Madhya Pradesh has declared all Engineering Colleges and Polytechnic colleges of Madhya Pradesh to be Autonomous. Due to this declaration serious problems has arisen before the students of states engineering and polytechnic colleges. The effect of the autonomous status would be that the students have to give fees between Rs. fifty thousand and Rs. one lakh annually, which is impossible for states students belonging to poor farmers, labourers and common people. This is a way selling technical education to capitalists.

After this announcement by Government of Madhya Pradesh there is a turmoil in the engineering education. In almost all engineering colleges of state, 'Dharnas' have been organised. Memoranda have been given to the Government of Madhya Pradesh after organising demonstrations and agitations.

Therefore, I request the Government of India to intervene in this matter and direct Madhya Pradesh government to impart engineering education as before.

- (ii) **Need to start A Shatabdi Express Between Delhi and Lucknow via Bareilly.**

[Translation]

SHRI RAJVEER SINGH (Aonla) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, between Delhi and Lucknow there are districts of Moradabad and Bareilly which are big export centres. Moradabad is famous for export of brass and Bareilly is famous for wood, zari, embroidery, kites, kite thread, collisium and cane. Goods worth crores of rupees are exported from these. Lot of problems are faced by foreign tourists while coming to and going from Bareilly. Neither there is an airport nor any good hotel there. Therefore, there is urgent need to start fast Shatabdi express from Delhi to Lucknow via Bareilly for foreign tourists and traders

early morning for going to Moradabad, Lucknow via Bareilly and for coming back in the evening to Delhi by the same train. Railway can earn revenue by starting this Shatabdi train. This will give boost to export and will facilitate up and down journey for passengers and traders.

Therefore, I request the Railway Minister to take concrete and effective steps for starting urgently Shatabadi Express for Delhi-Lucknow via Bareilly.

- (iii) **Need to construct A New Bridge on the Ganges between Unnao and Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh**

[Translation]

SHRI DEVI BUX SINGH (Unnao) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, there is a very old bridge on river Ganga between Unnao (Uttar Pradesh), my Parliamentary Constituency and Kanpur. As its width is inadequate, thousands of people on both sides of the bridge are held up in traffic. School students, employees, people going for interview, seriously injured and seriously ill persons are affected as a result thereof. In the absence of treatment of patients in time, their lives are lost. Due to traffic, students cannot reach their centres of examination in time and their one year is lost. Persons going for interview are deprived of jobs.

My request to Central Government is to give early permission for construction of a new bridge between Unnao and Kanpur on river Ganga so that thousands of people could benefit.

[English]

- (iv) **Need to provide Financial Assistance to State Government of Karnataka for Desilting of All The Tanks in Kolar District**

SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA (Kolar) : Sir, Kolar district is a drought-prone area. This year also, there has not been sufficient rain there. The Ground water level has gone down to 600 feet. Moreover, the water that is available contains fluoride which may cause bone cancer, dental decay and other diseases. Neither there is a river nor a dam. Hence, there are no irrigational facilities throughout the district. The farmers are facing many other problems.

There are about four thousand tanks throughout my district. But unfortunately, all the tanks are dry. Water is not available to the cattle. Even drinking water has become a major problem for the people particularly for the farmers who live in villages and other remote areas. A central team may be sent to Karnataka to find out the districts affected like Kolar, Chitradurga, Tumkur, Bangalore and all other affected districts in Karnataka.

I have represented to the Centre on several occasions to take up desilting of all the tanks in Kolar District. Financial

[Shri K.H. Muniyappa]

assistance can be obtained from the World Bank and other organisations.

I, therefore, urge upon the Union Government to look into this matter immediately and to release at least Rs.1000 crore for desilting of all the tanks in Karnataka and especially in Kolar district without any further delay and to save the farmers of my district from distress.

(v) Need to Expedite Forest Clearance to Baijhal Nalla Minor Irrigation Project in Gajapati District in Orissa.

SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK (Berhampur) (Orissa) : Sir, a number of irrigation projects proposed to be executed in Orissa are pending for forest clearance since long. Baijhal Nalla Irrigation Project is one of them. It is located in Gajapati district in my parliamentary constituency. Once completed, this project would irrigate 810 Hq. of Kharif crop and 618 Hq. of light Rabi crop. It will have the catchment area of 34.05 Sq. Kms. The villages around the proposed project are rainfed and situated in the border of Andhra Pradesh where there is no other employment opportunity available for the local people. So, this Project will provide employment to the local people in the field where they will be able to grow more than one crop.

As such, I urge upon the Union Minister of Environment and Forests to expedite the forest clearance to Baijhal Nalla Minor Irrigation Project so that it is implemented during the current financial year.

(vi) Need for Immediate Release of Funds for 1998-99 Under Members' of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme

SHRI KONIJETI ROSSAIAH (Narasaraopet) : Sir, the funds for the Parliament Local Area Development have not been released in the year 1998-99 so far for some constituencies since the expenditure reports of previous years have not been Communicated to GOI from Collectors of such districts. This is causing a lot of inconvenience. Any delay in release of funds will hamper the development and ultimately lead to hardship to the people of the constituency. It will become difficult for the executives also to book the expenditure properly and purposefully.

Hence, I request the Government of India to release the funds immediately for this financial year and later on they can get the reports from Collectors.

(vii) Need to Entrust the Responsibility of Modernisation of Indian Iron and Steel Company to Steel Authority of India

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY (Calcutta North-West) : Indian Iron and Steel Company (IISCO), Burnpur, West Bengal is to be modernised.

In 1993, it was decided to modernise IISCO but no action seems to have been taken so far. People of West Bengal are very much keen to know the present Government's decision about modernisation of IISCO. It is learnt that foreign investors are also taking interest to take up this project. But we demand that Government of India should entrust the responsibility to the most prestigious organisation of our country SAIL as a priority project.

(viii) Need to take up the Proposed New Railway Line between Bandra (Western Railway) and Kurla (Central Railway) on Priority Basis

SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR (Mumbai North-West) : In my constituency, Bandra Station is an important railway junction. A couple of years back, laying of a new railway line between Bandra Railway Station (Western Railway) and Kurla Railway Station (Central Railway) was proposed. Necessary technical and feasibility survey was also conducted and Budget Estimates were drawn up. Since the proposed route passed through thickly populated area with large number of hutments and pucca buildings, negotiations were held between the Railway Board and the government of Maharashtra to map an alternative route. A new route has already been approved in principle and proposal thereto has been sent by the MMRDA (Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority) to the Railway Board.

It may be mentioned that commuters who travel between Bandra and Kurla via Dadar Junction face problems. In fact, they have to deboard the train at Dadar in one section and reboard another train at Dadar in the second section to reach their place of work. This is highly cumbersome and risky. The direct route between Bandra and Kurla is the only solution to ease the problems of the commuters.

In view of the above, I request that the proposed new railway line between Bandra and Kurla be laid on top priority basis as already agreed between this Railway Board and the MMRDA.

(ix) Need to provide Financial Assistance to the State Government of Maharashtra for New Drainage System in Mumbai.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE (Mumbai North Central) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, After heavy rain life gets paralysed in Mumbai city. Due to water logging on all roads traffic gets jammed. Due to stoppage of trains, the commuters find it difficult to reach home in the evening. Heavy rain results even in loss of life. This problem is faced every year by this city whose population is more than one crore. This problem cannot be solved until renewal of drainage

system is done. Mumbai city is country's financial capital. Government of India gets a lot of revenue from there in the form of taxes. But the Government of India does not provide any help for the development of Mumbai. To solve this problem I demand from Government of India to sanction Rs. 200 crores.

[English]

14.51 hrs.

GENERAL BUDGET 1998-99 DEMANDS
FOR GRANTS*

Ministry of Agriculture

MR. CHAIRMAN : The House will now take up discussion and voting on Demand Nos. 1 to 4 relating to the Ministry of Agriculture for which five hours have been allotted.

Hon. Members present in the House whose cut motions to the Demands for Grants have been circulated

may, if they desire to move their cut motions, send slips to the Table within 15 minutes indicating the serial numbers of the cut motions they would like to move. Those cut motions only will be treated as moved.

A list showing the serial numbers of cut motions treated as moved will be put up on the Notice Board shortly. In case, any Member finds any discrepancy in the list, he may kindly bring it to the notice of the Officer at the Table without delay.

Motion moved :

"That the respective sums not exceeding the amounts on Revenue Account and Capital Account shown in the fourth column of the Order paper be granted to the President out of the Consolidated Fund of India, to *complete* the sums necessary to defray the charges that will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1999, in respect of the heads of demands entered in the second column thereof, against Demand Nos. 1 to 4 relating to the Ministry of Agriculture."

*Demands for Grants-Budget (General) for 1998-99 submitted to
the vote of the Lok Sabha*

No. of Demand	Name of Demand	Amount of Demand for Grants on Account voted by the House on March 26, 1998		Amount of Demand for Grants submitted to the vote of the House	
		Revenue (Rs.)	Capital (Rs.)	Revenue (Rs.)	Capital (Rs.)
1	2	3		4	
Ministry of Agriculture					
1	Agriculture	1201,26,00,000	6,38,00,000	3,209,72,00,000	13,49,00,000
2	Other Services of Dept of Agri. & Cooperation	39,43,00,000	80,56,00,000	135,81,00,000	194,22,00,000
3	Department of Agricultural Research and Education	297,06,00,000	-	709,13,00,000	-
4	Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying	125,33,00,000	20,30,00,000	343,67,00,000	37,59,00,000

[Translation]

SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR (Bikaner) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, the essentiality, priority and strategy of giving preference to agriculture is different. It is a subject in itself, and have to ponder seriously over it. The country is faced with new challenges in the aftermath of nuclear test, and it is our duty to face these challenges, and we are also prepared for it. But, after taking into account all the facts we should chalk out a strategy and consider as to which section should be given priority.

*Moved with the Recommendation of the President.

I do not want to land into the controversy whether we should have done this or not. I am leaving that on you. The question is whether we are prepared to combat this new situation, because if agriculture sector is weak, the whole country will become weak. To satiate one's hunger is most important. Sant Kabir had said :-

"Na Kuchh Dekha nem dharm mei, na kuchh dekha pothi mei Kah Kabir suno bhai Sadho, jo kuchh dekha roti mei."

The food is prior to everything. It has also been said "Bukhe bhajan na hoi gopala". We have to think about

[Shri Balram Jakhar]

measures to satiate hunger. The development of agriculture can play an important role in this regard. We have to make efforts in this direction. We have to see how we can work and whether our point of view is right or wrong. I want to give some suggestions in this regard.

I know that Shri Som Palji has just taken the charge of the Ministry. That is why I am not in a position to accuse him neither I want to accuse him. I generally want to look into that how we can work unitedly for the progress of this country. I want to say in this context that the 58% more allocation in the budget for the country is good. It was essential to allocate more, but how should we deal with the every increasing population. Would we be able to do this? Therefore, I want to state that what type of matter it is and whether we would be able to accomplish it.

Nobody can deny the importance of agriculture, but alongwith it allocation is also necessary. The figures before us, are calculated by Shri Sompalji and myself. Perhaps these are correct but I want to repeat that if the income of the country is Rs.8, then Rs.7 out of it are distributed among 26% of the people and balance one rupee is given to 76% of the people. This is an unfair distribution. I am at loss to understand as to how we shall be able to remove it. We should do something about it. As the situation is grim, we shall have to think seriously to tackle it. This type of unfair distribution is not right. Due to overeating rich are getting sick and the poor are dying of hunger. To satiate their hunger, the people would indulge in crimes and nobody can stop them. If you go to villages you will observe that the new generation wants to work alongwith their studies. Everybody wants a means of livelihood. But from where would you provide all this. The number of unemployed is continuously increasing. What should we do about it? This problem can't be solved even if we work collectively. We have to see whether the money which we are giving to the villages is sufficient to run the school, to build the road, to build the hospital. Whether all facilities can be provided? Therefore, I feel that the increase of 58% in budgetary allocations is not sufficient to fulfil our needs. Therefore, I want to say that we have seen what you have allocated. We have also seen the present agricultural production.

Recently, I took part in the Lok Sabha debates and discussed as to why we imported wheat. Barnalaji said that the Government are thinking not to import. I have also written in this regard. You people also said that there is no need to import it. I think there is no shortage of wheat in our country. When I had said, 59 lakh tonnes of wheat was in our godowns, and now they are saying that probably it will not be sufficient. The figures were shown to people. I don't know how these figures were calculated.

We have procured twelve and half million tonnes of foodgrains. Now, we are having 19 million tonne wheat in our godowns. Then what was the need? The imported wheat has become rotten 20 thousand tonne foodgrains imported at Kandla was damaged. The F.C.I. has written that they do not have capacity to store. Then why have we imported the wheat? Why we have wasted the money? You have promised to conduct CBI inquiry in this regard. What has happened to that promise? Why that promise has not been fulfilled? I would like to ask Shri Rajveer Singh to discuss this matter. Why you are delaying it?

SHRI RAJVEER SINGH (Aonla) : The promise made, has to be fulfilled.

SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR : Very good, at least there is one gentleman. I want to say another thing. I have observed a strange thing. The hon'ble Minister for Finance has given the status of industry to the cinema. But what has happened to the agriculture. Why the agriculture is not given the status of industry? The hon'ble Minister is present here. In my opinion, many Members were in its favour, and even today are in its favour.

SHRI RAJVEER SINGH : When, you presented the agricultural policy it was decided that Agriculture will not be accorded the status of Industry but the facilities of Industry shall be given to it. Then, it was decided that the industry. This was decided by you only.

SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR : Please let me come to that point. Why you are jumping to the conclusion? I was talking about the status. At that time also I was against giving equal status to it. Even today my stand is the same. It was the 15.00 hrs. matter of facilities. I had said that after giving status to it, there should be no system to impose taxes on them. I had written about tax-free status. When capital gains was mentioned, I asked what are you doing? This land belongs to us. We do not want to sell it. We do not want to part with it. You are forcibly trying to acquire this land and there after you are imposing capital gains tax. We will not tolerate this injustice. We will not agree with it. It was agreed upon that capital gains tax and wealth tax will not be imposed, the income tax officers will not go to the houses of farmers. What do they want from us? Some one will say a farmer is wearing a suit. It is peculiar in India that ceiling is imposed only on agriculture land. In U.P. probably it is on twelve and a half acres of land and in my state it is on seventeen and half acres of land. What has happened to the seventeen and a half acres of land in the last 50 years. In this span of time the land has been fragmented among three generations. (Interruptions) It has been seen, what will happen to us and our children? After three generations, the owner of twelve and a half acres of land or seventeen and a half acres of land, will be in possession of one-two acres. What

can be cultivated in it? What will these people do? You are imposing tax on them. When I was speaker somebody has said. . . . (Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura) : Sir, I am on a point of order. At three o'clock, the Minister of Communications was to make a statement.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You may permit him to finish his speech. The Minister is already present. Water in the well will not go anywhere. The Minister may make the statement after the hon. Member has completed his speech.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (Hoogly) : What about the Private Members' Business?

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : The statement will take only five minutes.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I hope, the hon. Member will finish his speech in another fifteen minutes.

SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR : How can I do justice within such a short time? I will need much more time.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL) : Sir, I do not think that Shri Balram Jakhar will be able to finish his speech within such a short time. He can continue on the next day when this discussion is taken up.

SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR : All right. I will continue on Monday.

CUT MOTION

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura) : I beg to move :

"That the demand under the head Agriculture be reduced to Re. 1"

[Failure to ban the procurement of "TERMINATOR SEED" with weed killing chemical substance from the multinational companies in the interest of agriculture.] (24)

"That the demand under the head Agriculture be reduced to Re. 1"

[Failure to provide adequate funds to the State Governments of Orissa and West Bengal for the Tornado victims.] (25)

"That the demand under the head Agriculture be reduced to Re. 1"

[Failure to make the country self-sufficient in oil seed production.] (26)

"That the demand under the head Agriculture be reduced to Re. 1"

[Failure to provide financial assistance to the small and marginal farmers who have suffered heavy loss due to havoc caused by cyclone in Orissa and West Bengal.] (27)

"That the demand under the head Agriculture be reduced to Re. 1"

[Failure to provide quality seeds and fertilizers at a reasonable price to the farmers of the country.] (28)

"That the demand under the head Agriculture be reduced to Re. 1"

[Failure to provide seeds and fertilizers to the poor farmers free of cost.] (29)

"That the demand under the head department of Agricultural Research and Education be reduced to Re. 1"

[Failure to consider the Social Audit Committee report on "Potato improvement and breeder's seed production" for self-sufficiency in potato production and employment generation.] (32)

"That the demand under the head department of Agricultural Research and Education be reduced to Re. 1"

[Failure to set-up Potato Board.] (33)

"That the demand under the head department of Agricultural Research and Education be reduced to Re. 1"

[Failure to set up more Krishi Vigyan Kendras in West Bengal.] (34)

"That the demand under the head department of Agricultural Research and Education be reduced to Re. 1"

[Failure to allot more funds for Agricultural Research and Education for the development of farmers of West Bengal.] (35)

"That the demand under the head department of Agricultural Research and Education be reduced to Re. 1"

[Failure to set up a Betel leaf Research Institute in West Bengal.] (36)

"That the demand under the head department of Agricultural Research and Education be reduced to Re. 1"

[Failure to set-up a Potato Research Centre in West Bengal.] (37)

[Shri Basu Deb Acharia]

*That the demand under the head department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying be reduced to Re. 1.

[Failure to establish the Indian Council of Veterinary Research Centre in West Bengal.]
(40)

15.04 hrs.

STATEMENT BY MINISTER

Reg : Strike by Postal Employees

[*Translation*]

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATION (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, today during the zero Hour some Hon. Members raised the issue of strike by postal employees. At that time Hon. Parliamentary Affairs Minister had given the assurance that I will give a statement on this subject in the afternoon. I beg your permission to give the statement.

Postal Unions affiliated to National Federation of Postal Employees and Federation of National Postal Organisation have decided to go on indefinite strike from 6.00 AM of 9.7.98 for realisation of their 10-Point Charter of Demands. These demands include implementation of all positive recommendations of Justice Talwar Committee on Extra Departmental Agents and rejection of all adverse recommendations thereof, improvement of pay scales for Postal Group D in entry, TBOP and BCR grades, upgradation of pay scales of Postmen/Mailguards/Head Mail Peons in the entry, TBOP and BCR grades, upgradation of pay scales of LSG, HSG II and HSG I, upgradation of pay scales of Drivers and Workshop staff, Stenographers and finalisation of Bonus formula. The other demands are grant of special pay for all qualified Jr. Accounts Officers, awaiting promotion, restructuring of cadres of Postal Accounts, upgradation of pay scales of JAOs, regularisation of Part Time/Contingent paid/Casual labourers and grant of all benefits including bonus at par with regular employees.

It would be seen that majority of the demands relate to implementation of recommendations of the 5th Central Pay Commission last year. It is relevant to state here that the Government had held threadbare discussion with the joint Consultative Machinery representing the Staff side on various aspects of the 5th Central Pay Commission's recommendations and thereafter implemented these recommendations granting substantial improvement to these recommendations. One of the main issues which had remained unresolved related to grant of upgraded pay scale to Postmen and Mail Guard of the Department of Posts

and this item had figured in the Agreement signed with the Staff Side on 11th September, 1997. This issue has since been resolved by the Government by granting the upgraded replacement pay scale of Rs. 3050-4590 at the entry level with correspondingly higher scales of pay Rs. 3200-4900 and Rs. 4000-6000 respectively at the two successive stages of promotions which are now provided under the Time Bound Promotion scheme of the Department. This has ensured parity in the pay scale of Postman/Mail Guard with that of Constables of Central Police Organisations. In respect of ED Agents also the Government had earlier issued orders on 12th November, 1997 to enhance the fixed basic monthly allowance by 3.25 times with effect from 1.1.96, pending consideration of the recommendations of Justice Talwar Committee. But these orders were held in abeyance at the behest of Staff Federations.

The other two major issues relating to revision of bonus formula and implementation of Justice Talwar Committee recommendations are under active consideration at the highest level of the Government. The Government is also considering sympathetically the other demands mentioned in the Charter of Demands and a decision in these cases will also be taken, keeping in view the wider implications of these demands on similarly placed employees in other Government Departments/organisations. The position of Government with regard to these demands were fully explained to the Staff Side in meetings held at official level and at my level. They were urged not to precipitate the matter, particularly in view of the positive stance of the Government, by resorting to indefinite strike, which is not in public interest nor in the interest of the Department or the Postal employees themselves. The Bharatiya Postal Employees Union and the SC & ST Welfare Association have already disassociated themselves from the postal strike. The issues relating to strike are also pending conciliation with the Conciliation Officer of Govt. of India and the conciliation proceedings are being attended both from the Government side and the Staff side. Section 22(1) of the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947 precludes the unions from going on strike in a public utility service like Postal Department while the conciliation proceedings are in progress.

[*English*]

During conciliatory proceedings, you cannot go on strike, section 22 of the Industrial Dispute Act, 1947 is very clear about that.

[*Translation*]

The Government on its part will make all out efforts to maintain the postal services in the country and has made detailed arrangements in this regard. The Government

ropes that better sense will prevail on the striking postal employees particularly when I have given as assurance on more than one occasion of the Government's firm intention to protect the interest of employees and to sympathetically consider their legitimate demands and resolve them in a just manner. It is, therefore, essential that the Postal Unions representing postal employees appreciate the efforts of the Government and maintain an atmosphere of understanding and cooperation, which will help in amicable settlement of all the issues.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I want to say one more thing with your permission. These of my friends who have raised this issue of reasonable demands of postal employees have raised it with intense agony in their bosom. My personal I would personally request those members to use their good offices. While talking to employees yesterday I had said that out of ten demands three demands are such on which department has to take decision. With regard to the issue of parity in pay scales of postman/mailguard with the constables of Central Police Organisations and secondly the issue of bonus and thirdly, demand of ED., I had requested that I am not only considering these issues sympathetically but I had also requested you to allow me to move forward in a cordial atmosphere. I would like to tell that the parity between postman/and mailguard in postal service was disturbed by that Government which was supported by you and Congress. Once the parity was disturbed, postmen made a great struggle. They demanded to restore that parity. But that government took the stand that as they had disturbed the parity after taking constitute decision, so they will not restore your parity. After the assumption of portfolio by me and the office by this Government, we not only considered but also made the same scale available to the postmen by restoring their parity with C.P.O. constables which was rejected by the Cabinet and the Committee of Secretaries of the previous Government. Thereafter I appealed them to understand my credibility that I have accepted one demand out of three, and to give a chance to resolve the remaining issues and not to vitiate the atmosphere by indulging in strikes. I once again urge you to help me in maintaining the Cardial atmosphere. I would like to assure them that the Government are sympathetically considering those two demands also. Give us a chance to take a few steps in this direction. If a strike takes place in between, then it interrupts the proceedings. Therefore, I would like to conclude by enhorting my friends to prevail upon them and take back the strike and allow me to move forward.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The hon. Speaker had asked the Minister to make a statement and as per the direction of the Speaker, the Minister of Communications has delivered the statement. Under Rule 372, Members are not entitled

to ask further clarifications. So, further clarifications are not allowed.

(Interruptions)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura) : Sir, Postal services are completely paralysed. . . *(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : We have to pass on to other business.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Balram Jakhar may continue the debate on 'Agriculture'.

(Interruptions)

SHRI K. KARUNAKARAN (Thiruvananthapuram) : It is not a normal situation. The people are suffering. . . . *(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : The Rules in the House are not permitting it. Nothing will go on record.

*(Interruptions)**

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (Hoogly) : Sir, there is a convention. . . . *(Interruptions)*

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : On an important issue, the hon. Members have been allowed to seek clarifications.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The hon. Members must cooperate to conduct the House. The Members from all the parties have elaborately discussed the matter during Zero Hour in the forenoon. Now, as per your request, the hon. Minister was directed to give a statement. She has broadly covered ail your demands.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The employees' strike must be settled with the Employees' Association only

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : It cannot be settled with Shri Basu Deb Acharia in the House itself.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : You have all expressed whatever you liked in the morning itself. Now, under Rule 372, you have to hear the reply only. You are a senior Member. I cannot entertain any clarification more than what is contained in the statement of the Minister of Communications.

(Interruptions)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : By what time will the recommendations of the Talwar Committee be imple-

*Not Recorded.

[Shri Basu Deb Acharia]

mented? . . . (Interruptions) The Government is not at all serious. . . . (Interruptions) It is very unfortunate. The postal services have been completely paralysed. Ninety per cent of the employees have gone on strike. . . . (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : You go through the statement.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL : Please allow us to seek a clarification.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : The Talwar Committee was appointed by the Government of India. That Committee submitted its Report long back. . . . (Interruptions)

MAJOR GENERAL BHUVAN CHANDRA KHANDURI, AVSM (Garhwal) : The Talwar Committee submitted its Report when you were in the Government.

SHRI VAIKO (Sivakasi) : They have no say on this.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The Government has taken all possible steps to settle the issue with the striking staff.

SHRI P. C. CHACKO (Idukki) : That is not the business over there. . . . (Interruptions) You please allow us to seek clarifications.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You are not entitled for any clarification more than what is contained in the statement of the hon. Minister.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : There is also a convention.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The hon. Members are bound by these Rules.

(Interruptions)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Sir, a convention is also there (Interruptions) Sir, there are precedents in the past that on such an important, on such a vital issue concerning the common people of our country, where the postal services have been completely paralysed, Members have been allowed to seek clarifications (Interruptions)

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL : Sir, the Members should be allowed to seek clarifications on the statement made by the hon. Minister (Interruptions) Why is the Government so afraid to provide clarification? (Interruptions)

SHRI VAIKO : Sir, they did not do anything for all these years (Interruptions)

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL : Sir, the Government is not at all serious (Interruptions)

SHRI PRAMOTHES MUKHERJEE (Berhampore) (WB) : Nobody will forgive them in history (Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI RAJVEER SINGH (Aonla) : Sir, the issue pertaining to farmers was being raised in the House (Interruptions) They are creating disturbance so that this issue is not raised.

[English]

SHRI PRAMOTHES MUKHERJEE : This Government is anti-Government and anti-people (Interruptions) This is a *mala fide* statement (Interruptions)

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL : Sir, the Government is not sympathetic to the justified demands of the employees (Interruptions)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Sir, what is the difficulty of the Government in accepting the recommendations of the Talwar Committee (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : If it is within the rules everything will be settled. The hon. Members must cooperate with the Chair to conduct the House.

(Interruptions)

SHRI N.K. PREMCHANDRAN (Quilon) : Sir, it has affected the whole country (Interruptions) This Government is anti-people (Interruptions)

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL : The people have been very seriously affected (Interruptions) And this Government is sleeping (Interruptions) The Government is not at all serious (Interruptions)

SHRI VAIKO : Sir, nothing was done by the previous Government and these people were keeping quiet then. It is a pity (Interruptions)

SHRI P.C. CHACKO : Sir, it is very unfortunate (Interruptions)

SHRI A.C. JOS (Mukundapuram) : The recommendations of the Talwar Committee should be accepted by the Government (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Nothing, other than the comments from the Chair, will go on record.

(Interruptions)*

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL : Sir, there is nothing in the statement. . . . (Interruptions)

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE (Mumbai North-Central) : Shri Vaiko, please tell your Minister to accept the recommendations of the Talwar Committee (Interruptions)

*Not Recorded.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Sir, on important issues the Members are allowed to seek clarifications (Interruptions) There are precedents (Interruptions)

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL : Sir, we are walking out in protest of this (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Acharia, this is not a place to canvass. You please take your seat.

(Interruptions)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Sir, it is very unfortunate. The postal system in the country has been totally paralysed (Interruptions)

SHRI VAIKO : The Government is very serious to solve this problem (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Nothing will go on record.

(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH (Vaishali) : Today public life is being disturbed in the country due to the policies of this Government. Hence this Government should be dismissed.

[English]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : The Government has not been able to restore normalcy. In protest, we are walking out.

15.26 hours

At this stage, Shri Basudeb Acharia, Shri Raghuvansh Prasad Singh and some other Hon. Members left the House.

(Interruptions)

SHRI K. KARUNAKARAN (Thiruvananthapuram) : The Government has not been able to control the situation. . . . (Interruptions) We are also walking out in protest.

15.27 hours

At this stage, Shri K. Karunakaran and some other Hon. Members left the House.

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, staging a walk out is their right and they can use it but I am unable to understand that when Congress Party, CPM or any other party, which was supporting the previous government, and some of the Members were Ministers also in the previous government

*Not Recorded.

all of them could not solve this problem by during last 1 1/2 years and now they expect us to solve this problem in 100 days. I would like to ask as to why this problem was not solved during that period. It is not good to create such a drama here and shirk their responsibility. For the last 1 1/2 years their party was in power and they had the full authority but this problem could not be solved. Our Government has come to power just 100 days ago and they have staged a walk out. I condemn this step.

SHRIMATI JAYABEN BHARAT KUMAR THAKKAR (Vadodara) : Postal system is in shambles and it was their duty to improve it they have not taken any measure to improve it rather they have vitiated the atmosphere.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Already enough discussion has taken place in the morning and the Minister has made a detailed statement. So far, we have not been able to discuss the Demands for Grants, as per the decision of the BAC. The Members should cooperate. In the circumstances, clarifications should not be claimed as a right.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJVEER SINGH : Jakharji, How did you stage a walk out?

[English]

SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR (Mumbai North-West) : Sir, this is very important. The people outside should know that the Congress and the CPI(M) are working together.

SHRI K. KARUNAKARAN : We had requested a response from the Government. . . . (Interruptions) If this is the attitude of the Government, what else can we do?

MR. CHAIRMAN : The House will now take up Private Members' Legislative Business.

15.30 hrs.

BILLS

Constitution (Amendment) Bill* (Amendment of article 327)

[English]

SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE (Solapur) : I beg, to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Constitution of India.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

*Published in the Gazette of India Extraordinary Part-II, Section-2 dated 10.7.98.

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Constitution of India."

The motion was adopted.

SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE : Sir, I introduce the Bill.

15.30½ hrs.

Constitution (Amendment) Bill*
(Amendment of article 171)

[English]

SHRI K.C. KONDAIAH (Bellary) : Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Constitution of India.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Constitution of India.

The motion was adopted.

SHRI K.C. KONDAIAH : Sir, I introduce the Bill.

15.31 hrs.

Constitution (Amendment) Bill*
(Amendment of article 51A)

[English]

SHRI K.C. KONDAIAH (Bellary) : Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Constitution of India.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Constitution of India.

The motion was adopted.

SHRI K.C. KONDAIAH : Sir, I introduce the Bill.

15.31½ hrs.

Constitution (Amendment) Bill*
(Insertion Of new article 150A)

[English]

SHRI K.C. KONDAIAH (Bellary) : Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Constitution of India.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Constitution of India.

The motion was adopted.

SHRI K.C. KONDAIAH : Sir, I introduce the Bill.

*Published in the Gazette of India Extraordinary Part-II, Section-2 dated 10.7.98.

15.32 hrs

Constitution (Amendment) Bill*
(Amendment Of Article 80)

[English]

SHRI K.C. KONDAIAH (Bellary) : Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Constitution of India.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Constitution of India."

The motion was adopted.

SHRI K.C. KONDAIAH : Sir, I introduce the Bill.

15.32½ hrs

Punjab Municipal Corporation Law (Extension To Chandigarh) Amendment Bill*
(Amendment Of The Schedule)

[English]

SHRI SATYA PAL JAIN (Chandigarh) : Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to amend the Punjab Municipal Corporation Law (Extension to Chandigarh) Act, 1994.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to amend the Punjab Municipal Corporation Law (Extension of Chandigarh) Act, 1994."

The motion was adopted.

SHRI SATYA PAL JAIN (Chandigarh) : Sir, I introduce the Bill.

15.33 hrs.

Abolition Of Death Penalty To Women, Children And Indigent Persons Bill*

[English]

SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE (Solapur) : I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to abolish death penalty to women, children and indigent persons.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to abolish death penalty to women, children and indigent persons.

The motion was adopted.

SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE : Sir, I introduce the Bill.

*Published in the Gazette of India Extraordinary Part-II, Section-2 dated 10.7.98.

15.34 hrs.

Abolition Of Begging Bill**[English]*

SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE (Solapur) : Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to provide for abolition of begging and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to provide for abolition of begging and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto."

The motion was adopted.

SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE : Sir, I introduce the Bill.

15.35 hrs.

Technology Bank Of India Bill**[English]*

SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK (Berhampur) (Orissa) : I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to provide for the establishment of a Technology Bank to assist professionals engaged in research work in various disciplines.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to provide for the establishment of a Technology Bank to assist professionals engaged in research work in various disciplines."

The motion was adopted.

SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK : I introduce the Bill.

15.35½ hrs.

Women Welfare Bill**[English]*

SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK (Berhampur) (Orissa) : I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to provide for comprehensive measures for all-round development of women and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to provide for comprehensive measures for all-round development of women and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto."

The motion was adopted.

SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK : I introduce the Bill.

15.36 hrs.

Prevention Of Sexual Harassment Bill**[English]*

SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK (Berhampur) (Orissa) : I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to prevent sexual harassment of women employees at their work places.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to prevent sexual harassment of women employees at their work places."

The motion was adopted.

SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK : I introduce the Bill.

15.36½ hrs.

Constitution (Amendment) Bill*

(Insertion of new chapter V-A, etc.)

[English]

SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK (Berhampur) (Orissa) : I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Constitution of India.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Constitution of India."

The motion was adopted.

SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK (Berhampur) : I introduce the Bill.

15.37 hrs.

Cigarettes (Regulation Of Production, Supply And Distribution) Amendment Bill*

(Amendment of Long Title, etc.)

[English]

SHRI P.S. GADHAVI (Kutch) : I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to amend the Cigarettes (Regulation of Production, Supply and Distribution) Act, 1975.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to amend the Cigarettes (Regulation of Production, Supply and Distribution) Act, 1975."

The motion was adopted.

SHRI P.S. GADHAVI : I introduce the Bill.

15.37½ hrs.

The Constitution (Amendment) Bill*
(Amendment Of Article 51A)

[Translation]

SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA (Outer Delhi) : I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the constitution of India.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Constitution of India."

The motion was adopted.

[Translation]

SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA : I introduce the Bill.

15.38 hrs.

The Constitution (Amendment) Bill*
(Amendment Of Article 239 AA)

[Translation]

SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA (Outer Delhi) : I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Constitution of India.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Constitution of India."

The motion was adopted.

[Translation]

SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA : I introduce the Bill.

15.38½ hrs.

The Prevention Of Insults To National Honour (Amendment) Bill*
(Amendment Of Section 3)

[Translation]

SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA (Outer Delhi) : I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to amend the Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1971.

*Published in the Gazette of India Extraordinary Part-II, Section-2 dated 10.7.98.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to amend the Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1971."

The motion was adopted.

[Translation]

SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA : I introduce the Bill.

15.39 hrs.

Abolition Of Child Labour In Hazardous Employment Bill*

[English]

SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE (Solapur) : I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to provide for the abolition of child labour in hazardous employment and for matters connected therewith.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to provide for the abolition of child labour in hazardous employment and for matter connected therewith."

The motion was adopted.

SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE : I introduce the Bill.

15.40 hrs.

Income-Tax (Amendment) Bill*
(Amendment Of Section 10)

[English]

SHRI SATYA PAL JAIN (Chandigarh) : I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Income-Tax Act, 1961.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Income-Tax Act, 1961."

The motion was adopted.

SHRI SATYA PAL JAIN : I introduce** the Bill.

*Published in the Gazette of India Extraordinary Part-II, Section-2 dated 10.7.98.

**Introduced with the recommendation of the President.

15.41 hrs

CONSTITUTION (AMENDMENT) BILL-Contd.

(Insertion of New Article 51B)

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now let us take up further consideration of the motion moved by Shri Mohan Singh on the 12th of June, 1998.

SHRI C.P. RADHAKRISHNAN (Coimbatore) : Respected Speaker, Sir, I once again thank my beloved friend and most generous Opposition Member, Shri Mohan Singh for bringing this Amendment so as to express the views of the young people of this nation to this august House. So far, the elders have not made any effort in bringing out the past mistakes that were committed in the history of India. There are people and leaders who are much worried about Bihar. They always say that I am from Bihar. What has happened in Bihar? Nalanda University is one of the richest university with all subjects being widely taught to the people from the ancient days. That is the history. There were a lot of books about astrology, medicine, agriculture, building and everything. There was a book with which the richness of this country had been revealed to the World. Ghauri came to Nalanda. He asked his soldiers what was there in the book. He said, 'whatever is there in the book, if it is already there in Quran, then there is no need for this book. It is because it is already there in Quran. If anything that is said in this book is not in Quran, then it cannot be true'. So, he ordered the soldiers to destroy those books.

Sir, you cannot forget the history that those invaders had destroyed the cultural richness, the educational richness and every other richness of this country in a very systematic manner. That is why, by forgetting the history or when you are ashamed of revealing the real history to the young people, building a strong nation will never be possible.

My conclusion on this Bill is that since casteism is weakening the country, the people are divided on caste basis and there are sinister forces which are always behind the casteist forces and they want to divide the country into so many sects. This is the real danger to the country.

So, I request Shri Mohan Singh as a socialist and as a generous man to bring an end to casteism. Political gains should not be allowed on caste lines.

So, I oppose this Bill. With this I conclude my speech.

[Translation]

*SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM (Thanjavur) :Hon'ble Chairman, the Bill we are discussing about seeks to put

*Translation of Speech originally delivered in Tamil.

an end to the practice of the political parties to seek votes in the name of religion. This Private Members's Bill is to amend the Constitution of India seeking to insert a new clause 51B as part of Article 51. I feel happy and proud to participate in this discussion. I deem it fit and feel duty bound to congratulate my esteemed colleague Shri Mohan Singh who has moved this Bill at an opportune time at this juncture

During the freedom struggle, our freedom fighters rose above religion and other social barriers and unitedly fought for our independence. Now those freedom fighters would be only pained to note that religion and caste play a dominant role in our Indian politics especially during the elections. Elections are fought on these lines. Electorate are lured to think in those lines. Such sentiments are being exploited. Such tassions are often sought to be whipped up. We have such a situation prevailing now and it is only disheartening, disappointing and painful.

Whoever be the candidate and whatever be the political party, if they want to win an election they seek refuge and umbarge under the easily luring religious and casteist sentiments. Whipping up such passions, they feel could be a last resort to woo or lure the poor and the illiterate. They feel that the downtrodden people be they Scheduled Castes, Backward Classes or Most Backward Class may easily fall a prey to their nets so cast. That is why people make use of religion; they use any religion for that reason and that too even when they are not genuine followers of that religion. With a narrow attitude of winning elections they exploit religious sentiments. Elections are so held under these circumstances. Once elections are over the trails of the whipped up passions either in the form of fanaticism or a committed feeling continue to remain. This affects the very basis of our social existence. These clashing interests percolate down to the illiterate mass and these ill feelings continue even till the next elections. We are rendered helpless to find a solution.

Our constitution would like us to avoid the name of religion, religious symbols and religious feelings during the elections. It has not been made a punishable offence and it does not even put a bar on such political parties or candidates. It only puts it a 'moral responsibility'. so it is not binding on anybody.

What we find today is quite the contrary. The political parties half-heartedly adhere to the principles enshrined in the Constitution. They do not like very much the moral responsibility impressed upon them. In order to get the short term gain, they have a tendency to make use of religion in a subtle way if not openly. That is why a need has arisen now to introduce a Bill like this to desist political parties to make use of religion in any form during the elections.

[Shri S.S. Palanimanickam]

Children as they are born and grow do not have religious feelings or sentiments. They do not have discriminations among themselves and are not dividing themselves on religious lines or caste lines. Wherever they are, Whether in school or in any play field, they want to come together based on their age group. No other consideration comes in the way. Only when they grow up. They try to find out the religion of the people when they want to befriend. They segregate themselves either through religion or through caste. They divide themselves as they grow in to adults.

Our great leaders who wanted to put an end to the evils of casteism be it E.V.R. Periyar from the South or Mahatma Gandhi who led Indian freedom movement or Dr Ambedkar who wanted to break the shackles of casteist hegemony or our great leader Perarignar Anna, they all spent major part of their life to make the people live with dignity, self respect, humanism and human values. They wanted to do away with casteism backed up by religion which mostly comes in the way of peaceful co-existence of all the people.

Even Vivekananda came forward to uphold Indian ethos and values. He brought out the best that his religion gave. At the same time he wanted to cherish and amalgamate the best that came from other religions. But he was misunderstood and criticised for that. He laid stress on humanism in human endeavours. He led a life to unite the humanity with all the cherished ideals. He dedicated his life to this goal and he strived despite the criticism he had to face. That is why religion faded away and humanism came to the forefront in his mission.

Mahakavi Subramania Bharathi said that there cannot be casteism and cast-division in the society. He wanted to impress upon the children of tender age, impressionable age that we must rise above casteist tendencies. He even went to the extent of calling it a sin to have caste based discrimination hailing one a high-born and condemning the other a lowly-born. But now we are in an era where even teachers begin to discriminate among their students. The children who belong to the same caste as that of the teacher is encouraged and the others are discriminated against. The seeds evil are thus sown even at a time when children are young. That is why Bharathidasan exclaimed that even now people are there to say that there is a caste-based society. If we are going to have caste-divisions even now, when are we going to progress? When can we have our nation prospered?

Who or what should be kept away now? It is only the attitude that that promotes casteism that needs to be uprooted. Those who are found promoting them should be kept away. Religion is but an instrument to inculcate certain

noble values and ideals. But unfortunately this is forgotten. We must have to rise above religious and casteist considerations. Cutting across the party lines we must have to embrace and cherish these noble ideals. We want to bar the political entities that sow the seeds of dissensions for narrow political considerations. We do not want to see them divide the society on religious and caste lines.

We are happy to note today the discussion on this Bill. We find political parties competing with one another in choosing the colours of their flags and symbols which may have some religious undertones. They vie with one another in subtly adopting them and lure the people. Their intention is to draw people towards them somehow. They also camouflage it to ensure that people are not wounded. Subtle moves are so effectively made that people are finally befooled.

No political party can deny the fact that religious passions are subtly used for political gains in all the elections right from the Parliamentary elections to Panchayat elections. They are led by this consideration to win somehow. They do not realise the impact of seeding dissensions. We must allow our conscience to have a fair play. We cannot but accept that we are guilty. With a sense of guilt we would accept the ground reality. We cannot bring about a change by mere legislation. There must be a change of heart.

We are now celebrating the fiftieth year of our Indian independence. We must be really pained to note that it has become necessary to dwell at length on this point at this juncture. We have not got an allround growth in this country even after 50 years. I cannot buy the argument that we have really progressed. It will then be giving a lie to the reality.

All those dedicated themselves to win freedom for this country and bring about social reforms in this country wanted to put an end to social divisions based on religion and caste. We must dedicate ourselves at least to this minimum expectations of those great souls. Let us rededicate ourselves to those noble ideals to rise above religion and caste considerations. The proposed legislation and a change of heart in us should bring about harmony in this country.

With this, I conclude.

SHRI VIRENDRA SINGH (Mirzapur) : Mr. Chairman, Sir. Shri Mohan Singh has introduced this Bill, but his intention is not very clear. He is sitting with me still I am doubting his intentions, because their politics is based on all those things which are being negated in this Bill.

This is a country of 'Sanatan dharma'. Even today Ram Rajya is described as the ideal administrative system and it is considered to be great, supreme and the best

administrative System. The Head of this administrative system was Lord Rama and we are his followers. In this country of Lord Ram and Lord Krishana, administrative system is not linked with religion. Lord Rama united the country from North to South and Yogiraj Yudhishtira linked the culture and civilization of East and West.

Before discussing the issue of linking religion and politics, one should know the definition of religion. Religion is not defined by the method of worship. Since olden time also there have been several methods of worship but it is not proper to link them with religion. That is not the definition of religion. At the time of Independence, it was the duty of every citizen of India to strive for independence of the country. Today it is our duty to save the country from foreign culture and civilizations.

Mohan Singhji has brought this Bill. The party leaders get funds from Muslim countries. I have got proof that they get funds from Muslim countries and use it for political purposes. But in this country of Sanatan dharma, where majority of population believes in Hindu religion. I am not saying that Muslims cannot live here, but they launch attack on that majority community only. Some such elements try to mislead muslims brethren to bring them under the banner of Shri Mulayam Singh's Party. The strongest Muslim mafia is active in Mumbai, Muslims who are able to influence and get money from foreign countries, become leaders of their party. Now on what basis you say that politics should be separated from religion when you link it with the method of worship.

I would like to say that Hindutva is our way of life. It does not denote communalism but it expresses a way of life. The way farmer lives in a village and adopts method of farming to earn livelihood, in the same way Hindutva is the way of life of people living in Hindustan and we cannot leave it simply because someone dubs us as communal. Therefore, I would like to request Shri Mohan Singh not to create disturbance in the name of religion.

16.00 hrs.

In this country of Sanatan Dharma, we can take the country forward by adopting this way of life. When Father of the Nation, Mohan Das Karamchand Gandhi started the freedom struggle he had stated that in this country of Lord Rama we will have to invoke the power of Hinduism. People like you had called Bal Gangadhar Tilak a Communalist, when he had launched Swadeshi Movement on the occasion of Ganesha Utsav. Such persons should be given some advices by the Chair also that they should not try to change the definition of religion. The way religious way of life leads the country to the path of progress and our polity should also not deviate from the path of religion. This policy should not be influence by Muslim or Christian religion or by any method of worship of Hindus. You are

not concerned that other countries of the world are hatching a conspiracy to destroy our culture and civilization. Foreign countries are sending funds here which is being used to destroy our culture and civilization. You talk of Dr. Lohia, Acharya Narendra Dev and Patvardhanji and your leader Mulayam Singh talks of Lohiaji day in and day out but he is not following the ideology of Lohiaji. How do you say that religion should not be linked with politics. Your leader plays politics in consultation with Ali Miyan and Christian Missionaries, you say that politics should not be linked with religion. Your leaders do not say that advise of Shankracharya should also be taken. You should talk not only to the Sankracharya, but also Ali Mian and the Christian Missionaries in the interest of taking the country on the path of unity. Then only you can say that politics should not be mingled with religion in the country.

A religion which propagates a dangerous message and decimates the culture and civilization of the country : which is governed and sponsored by foreign companies and obstructs the path of country in attaining self reliance and making it strong : which tries to divert the direction of politics and dissuade it from its objectives; which adversely affects the social sphere and curtails the freedom of our farmers and which tries to divest our youth of their valour and the country of its potentiality, should not be juxtaposed with politics. Shri Mohan Singh ji I think your leaders resort to all such activities as mentioned above. Until two days ago I had developed a misnotion from the speeches delivered by you that you were a follower of Dr. Lohia but two days before you said that these people who were in close pronimity with your leader, Shri Mulayam Singhji were killed in his Constituency. Earlier I thought that you were a follower of Dr. Lohia but two days ago you revealed that you are a follower of Shri Mulayam Singh. Mulayam Singhji has never been a follower of Dr. Lohia. I am also an admirer of the deeds and the words of Dr. Lohia. I do not admire him for his doctrine of freedom of speech. He was an elderly person, so I do not want to discuss about him. The message of freedom of speech was given by him which paved way to indiscipline in politics.

SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH (Vaishali) : So are you against the freedom of expression?

SHRI VIRENDRA SINGH : The freedom of speech and expression culminates into general scuffle and shoe-beating, therefore, I am definitely against that. Politics should be conducted within the realms of discipline, dignity and gallantry.

SRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH : You say that you are against the freedom of speech and you are exercising the same freedom now.

SHRI RAJENDRA AGNIHOTRI (Jhansi) : The freedom of speech does not mean to indulge in cheap politics and uproars.

SHRI VIRENDRA SINGH : The freedom of speech should be restrained and disciplined and I have at no point of time shown indiscipline. I am addressing Shri Mohan Singhji only through you, Mr. Chairman.

Therefore, Mr. Chairman, Sir the only thing, I would like to convey through you, is that he should issue such sermons like segregating politics from religion; and preventing politics from fomenting religious fanaticism; to his own leaders who are trying to pollute the political atmosphere of the country on the instruction of persons belonging to other countries. You should express your concern to the person who you have accepted as your leader, two days ago after shunning the leadership of Dr. Lohia, the person who wants to change the direction of country's politics on the dictates of Ali Mohammed, Dawood Ibrahim and the Christians Missionaries. If such politics is followed, the country is not going to gain by spreading such religions fanaticism.

Through you, I would like to express my concern about it in the House. I would have surely supported this Bill if it were presented before the House after making suitable amendments to it.

[English]

SHRI P.S. GADHAVI (Kutch) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to oppose the Amendment Bill brought forward by the hon. Member, Shri Mohan Singh. I oppose this Bill for the reason that the fundamental Duties are given in part IVA of our Constitution. Sir, if you read article 51A, it says :

"It shall be the duty of every citizen of India...."

This is the Chapter which concerns with the duty of every citizen of India.

Sir, On page one of the Bill it is mentioned :

"Duty of candidates and political parties during elections."

Now, for the political parties and candidates, there are provisions in the special Acts. If you read article 51A, it says :

"It shall be the duty of every citizen of India...."

- (c) to uphold and protect the sovereignty, unity and integrity of India...
- (e) to promote harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood amongst all the people of India transcending religious, linguistic and regional or sectional diversities; to renounce practices derogatory to the dignity of women;"

So, the provision is there. Sir, I would like to invite your attention to section 123 of the Representation of the

People Act, 1951 where the corrupt practices have been mentioned. Section 3 says;

"The appeal by a candidate or his legion or by any other person with the consent of a candidate or his election agent to vote or refrain from voting for any person on the ground of his religion, race, caste, community or language or the use of or appeal to a religious symbol or the use of or appeal to national symbols such as the National Flag or National Emblem for the furtherance of the prospects of the election of that candidate or for prejudicially affecting the election of any candidate."

Sir, there are provisions concerning this. Therefore, there is no need to amend the Constitution as suggested by the hon. Member and for that reason I oppose this Bill.

[Translation]

DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY (Mandsaur) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, in fact the Bill presented by Shri Mohan Singh ji in the House barely needed to be presented at all. This Bill envisages to add article 51(b) to the principle article of the Constitution in order to carry out our fundamental duties. I think that there is no need to insert such an article and to bring forward such a Bill. Our constitution clearly demarcates our duties and our rights.

Our duties and our sights have been interpreted separately. As far as religion and separation of religion from politics are concerned, the nation of separation-religion from politics is definitely right. But the apprehension with which this Bill has been brought forward is not commensurate with the provisions contained in the Representation of the People Act, which very clearly enumerate and interpret the Do's and Dont's to be followed by a candidate contesting our election and the code of conduct he should follow. It has been very clearly defined that no candidate shall try to seek votes on the basis of religion I would like to quote the relevant para :

"The appeal by a candidate or his agent or by any other person with the consent of a candidate or his election agent to vote or refrain from voting for any person on the ground of his religion race, caste, community or language or the use of or appeal to religious symbols or the use of, or appeal to national symbols, such as the national flag or the national emblem, for the furtherance of the prospects of the election of that candidate or for prejudicially affecting the election of any Candidate."

The objects and reasons underlined in it reveal that :-

[English]

"It has been observed that during elections some political parties and candidates are seeking votes in the name of religion or by inciting religions feelings. It will have an adverse effect on society if such trend continues. It is, therefore, necessary to check such moves by amending the Constitution."

[Translation]

The learned Hon. member who has presented this Bill is a very senior member of the House. I would like to submit to him that there was no need to present this Bill. Still the apprehension expressed by him often comes to the fore during the elections. But there is a solution to it. We are free to file elections petitions in the High Courts and process them within the parameters of the procedure adopted thereunder.

[Translation]

Many elections have been declared null and void when a candidate had tried to seek votes in the name of religion or caste or any other feeling. However, there is a provision in this regard. Therefore, it would not be proper to make a separate provision in the Constitution or to insert it under the duties because duty is a social obligation. Even though keeping in view the society, fundamental rights and duties have been defined separately in the Constitution. It is a separate issue that what more a person can do. Individual forms a part of society, even then he has been clearly defined. In such circumstances, I would like to say as Shri Mohan Singh has stated here-

[English]

"It is accordingly proposed to make it the fundamental duty of every political party."

[Translation]

Political party has been separately defined in the Constitution. Duties and rights are different from each other. Duties involve not a single political party rather the whole society or group is involved in it. The word party has not been used in the Constitution. Therefore, in my view it is not proper to add (51B) with (51A) as mentioned here. I hope you will reconsider it. It is always stated like.

[English]

"fundamental duty of every political party"

[Translation]

However, whatever has been mentioned in the Constitution is not about a political party rather it says about every individual or society. Therefore, I think that such type of amendment in the Constitution is not required.

[English]

". . . to ensure that votes are not sought by them in any election in the name of religion. ."

[Translation]

I feel surprised that as to why such an amendment has been brought when it can not be implemented. Such provisions have been clearly made in people's Representative Act. Therefore, no new amendment is needed when elections are declared null and void. I do not want to go into the definition of 'Dharma'. 'Dharma' has a broad definition. It should not be viewed from the content of the religion.

I would request Shri Mohan Singh to withdraw this bill. We already have such provisions under which we can definitely take actions.

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE (Mumbai North-Central) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would not like to create enmity among people instead I would like to spread harmony among them. I do not want to make people fight in the name of religion. I want to unite the people belonging to all the religions. We are equally strong, this Government is not capable to act properly. . . . (Interruptions)

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I welcome the bill presented by Shri Mohan Singh in this House. Politics should not be linked with religion. The Constitution of our country gives equal rights to the people belonging to all religions i.e. Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Parsi or Buddhist. Every thing goes wrong when we try to link religion with politics. I believe in Buddhism but I am of the opinion that Lord Budha should not be involved in politics. Different people have different religions and have their own sentiments. It is a matter of personal faith. However, when religion is linked with politics, the disputes crop up. Therefore, I believe that the bill introduced by Shri Mohan Singhji is an excellent and all the members of the House should support it. We should get rid of the convention of opposing such bills.

We all have come here to make our country strong. Therefore, it is necessary to remove religion from politics for making our country strong. We all are discussing this issue in the House. I, on behalf of my party, request Shri Mohan Singh not to withdraw this bill.

16.19 hrs.

[DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY in the Chair]

If we want to strengthen our country religion should be kept at bay from the politics. One can work for Vishwa Hindu Parishad or one can work for Babri Masjid or for Buddhism but religion should not be brought into the politics. It is the politicians who provoke the people in the name of religion. Regarding Ayodhya dispute, I want to say that

[Shri Ramdas Athawale]

when Muslims are prepared to accept the Supreme Court's verdict, Hindus should also accept it.

Hon'ble Shri Atal ji and the Government also have stated that Ram Mandir will not be constructed till the judgement of Supreme Court. Till such time, we demand from DSP, Faizabad, the Indian Army and the Government to protect the land. It is the responsibility of DSP Faizabad. It is a disputed site. The administration has the great responsibility to protect it. Shri Kalyan Singh ji's or Home Ministry's order will not be effective there. Legally, it is the responsibility of the police to protect that site. We have to sort out our differences to strengthen the country. I am not opposed to Ram Mandir. It can be constructed at some other site in Ayodhya. I mean to say that the issue should be considered properly to solve the dispute. Though we are in politics, but we follow socialistic views also. Whether you believe or not, I do not know.

[English]

SHRI C.P. RADHAKRISHNAN (Coimbatore) : Do you know why these political parties are opposing the building up of Lord Rama's temple there? It is because of the fact that the first foundation-stone was laid by a scheduled caste man. . . . (Interruptions) he is yielding. So, the first foundation-stone was laid by a Scheduled Caste man. That is why all these political parties are opposing the construction of Lord Rama's temple there. That fact must be taken into consideration.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE : Your second question is that as to why it is being opposed. If a temple was there on 15th August, 1947, then it should be there. If anybody tries to demolish it, then it is our responsibility to oppose it. To strengthen the national integrity and secularism, it should be taken into consideration. The construction of Ram Mandir is being opposed because its foundation stone was laid by a Scheduled caste. This issue. . . . (Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI M. MASTER MATHAN (Nilgiris) : You are saying that *status quo* has to be maintained from 15th August, 1947. In 1950, the Somnath Temple was completely rebuilt. Why? Our famous Sardar Vallabhai Patel started constructing the Temple. Dr. Rajendra Prasad inaugurated it. So, 15th August, 1947 cannot be taken as the base year.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE : We will give the reply when we will come to that side. We are not used to give reply. . . . (Interruptions)

AN HON'BLE MEMBER : It will remain a dream.

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE : I do not agree that with the change in Government, there is change in system also. We are not against the construction of Ram Mandir. We all together will construct the same. We will provide space for it. . . . (Interruptions) We will collect money for it. We shall construct it at some other site.

SHRI CHANDRASHEKHAR SAHU (Mahasamund) : Instead of giving another place for its construction. You should have a place for it in your heart.

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE : I myself am Rama. I do not need to have another Rama in my heart. The name of Rama is on our lips and we are followers of Bhim Rao Ambedkar. He has done justice to all communities in the Constitution. He had to face many problems due to untouchability but even then he never told to keep the Hindu religion apart. He realised the problem of untouchability because social justice was not done to him. Therefore, we converted our religion. I mean to say concerted efforts are required to solve all these disputes. I hope all the members of the House will ponder over the issue to solve the dispute. You people should not stick to the point that Ram Mandir should be built on that particular site. You have skipped your agenda but if R.S.S. people will compell to construct the Mandir on the same site, it will be against the judgement of Supreme Court. The preventive action from Government side is necessary. I was thinking that you have already dropped the issue of Ram Mandir. It is a good thing. It means that you are also adopting secular views. Religion should not be mixed with politics.

By moving this Bill you are coming closer to us. It would be better if you come further closer to us.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Government should remain firm on the national agenda which it has adopted. Hon'bel Atalji has a national agenda but Shri Ram Jethmalani has a hidden agenda. It is the general opinion that Atalji is a very good person. He has prepared a very good national agenda; even then some people are trying to provoke others. It is not a good thing. You have been in power for last three and a half months. If you want to stay in power for some more days, then you have to announce in this House that Ram Temple will never be constructed.

SHRI CHANDRASHEKHAR SAHU : Mr. Chairman, Sir, Shri Ramdas has distorted Shri Mohan Singh's Bill and has stretched it too long.

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE : I have not introduced the Bill. I only tried to do 'aisi-taisi' of your government while supporting this Bill.

SHRI CHANDRASHEKHAR SAHU : Mr. Chairman, Sir, the word 'Aisi-Taisi' is unparliamentary. This should be expunged from the records.

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE : I have not said this. You have said this.

SHRI CHANDRASHEKHAR SAHU : Mr. Chairman, Sir, he has said this. You may please expunge this word from the records. You can see the records.

MR. CHAIRMAN : It will be expunged if it is unparliamentary.

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE : I fully support this Bill. I make an appeal to all the party leaders to make efforts to keep religion off politics. We will be deceiving our country if we link religion with politics. Therefore, I demand that religion should be kept apart from politics and casteism should be eliminated. I fully support the Bill presented by Shri Mohan Singhji.

PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I was in no mood to speak over this Bill but I am happy that so many members are present in this House to discuss this Private Members' Bill. While demanding quorum in the Eighth Lok Sabha, I had got a sitting postponed because our hon'ble members do not pay much attention towards Private Members Bills. When I listened to the speeches of our members, I thought I should also submit some points. When Dr. Pandey was saying that there is no need for this Bill. I thought that I should also speak over this Bill because it is very much required. The reason is that though we have enacted laws but there are many people who violate this law. When Shri Ramdasji mentioned the provisions of this Bill, I thought I should also participate in this discussion for 2 to 4 minutes. I support this Bill because I agree with what has been stated in section 51B. He wants to say that it is the duty of every individual and every political party to see that no such candidate gets ticket who tries to seek vote on the basis of religion and somehow manages to become Member of Legislative Assembly or of this esteemed House.

This Bill is very brief Bill. I have seen its objects. These too are quite brief. Sometimes a far-reaching things are said in a moment. Initially, I doubted that this Bill was introduced on the someone else's instructions but later on, I recollected that Shri Banatwalla too had introduced a similar Bill earlier but the then government had converted that Bill into a Government Bill because it agreed with the contents. Today, like Ramdasji many more members will also strongly support this Bill. If B.J.P. extends its support, then I am confident that India which is a great country, will gain its rightful place in the world as envisaged by Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru. He had perhaps spoken from the same seat. He had said that in future India can become as

powerful as U.S.A. and China. Other countries got prominence because they secured place in Security Council or United Nations. But India is great because of its inner strength and it will gain rightful place because of that only. If we evolve a consensus and decide that we will not link religion and politics together and politics will run on certain principles, then this Bill is an important step to achieve that goal. I would request the Hon'ble Member sitting on my left do not think it a small Bill. It has been brought by a big man. Though its scope is not very wide, its subject matter is quite forceful which can make India a great country. Therefore, I request the Hon'ble Members sitting on my left to support this Bill. I know this Bill is not going to be passed but a Resolution can be sent to the Government to bring forward a Bill on these lines. We will support such a Bill which will separate politics from religion. Then nobody will be allowed to represent the people in the name of religion.

SHRI CHANDRAMANI TRIPATHI : Hon'ble Chairman, Sir, I do not think that there was any need of the Constitutional (Amendment) Bill that has been brought forward by Shri Mohan Singh. He has mentioned that both religion and politics should be separated. I would like to remind him. Dr. Lohia's words because he too understands Dr. Lohia very well. If there is no harmony between religion and politics, then politics will become a fighting arena and religion will become hypocritical. In today's situation, if a person of normal intellect had talked of separating religion and politics, I could have understood, but Shri Mohan Singh understands the above interpretation of religion and politics better than me because it was Dr. Lohia who had written—“Short-term politics is long-term religion and short-term religion is long term politics”. Pseudo Secularists do not understand what is secularism. . . . (Interruptions)

SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH : Tell me whether 'Mandir-Masjid' dispute is a religious or a non-religious act?

SHRI CHANDRAMANI TRIPATHI : I am coming to that point. I thank Shri Raghuvansh Prasad because atleast he has not said that Dr. Lohia has not written this at all. I am coming to the issue of temple and mosque also. It is misfortune of the country that in the name of secularism, some people are bent upon discarding the basic elements of the country. I would like to say politely that temple will run according to Hindu religion, Mosque will function according to Islamic tenets and Church will run according to the commands of the Bible but this country will not run according to Manusmriti, or Shariat or Bible. It will run only according to the Constitution of India.

[Translation]

The people who talk of common civil code as required by the constitution are called communalist by other people.

[Shri Chandramani Tripathi]

When Dr. Lohia used to talk about common civil code, he was also criticised. In public meetings, even stones were pelted at him. Today, when we talk of this code, even people, who call themselves as Dr. Lohia's followers also criticise us. Some people even talk of making different laws for different religions, and call themselves as secular. But in reality, they are narrow minded and their conduct goes against the constitution. The constitution of India already provides in the People's Representation Act that nobody shall spread feelings of communalism, casteism and sectarianism. I do not think that after the proposed amendment people will not dare to violate the law. I would like to state that we should avoid unnecessarily entangling the people of the country on this question. Therefore I would request Shri Mohan Singh to withdraw the constitutional amendment bill and to synthesise religion and politics for the betterment and development of India. In Taitriya Upanishad the definition of 'Dharma' (religion) in given "Yotoabhyuday nihshreys sidhi sa dharma." all round development of a human being is 'Dharma'. Dharma has got nothing to do with act of worship. It is a mistake on our part that we think that english translation of 'dharma' is religion. There is a great difference between religion and 'dharma'. Therefore, I want to state that there is no need for this bill. I would request hon'ble Shri Mohan Singhji to withdraw this constitutional amendment bill. Its importance lay in its discussion in the House and that is all. I too got an opportunity to speak on this.

SHRI PARAS NATH YADAV (Jaunpur) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am grateful to you for having given an opportunity to debate on such an important bill. I support the bill introduced by hon'ble Shri Mohan Singhji. Today, there is a great need for such a bill. Just now, my hon'ble friend was saying that this secular country is having different religions and castes. While making the constitution, it was kept in mind that the constitution of the country having people of different religions and castes should be such that it should have respect for every religion. Therefore, the biggest secular constitution of the world came into force in this country. Even before the independence, before the constitution was made, it was said that India comprised of people of different castes and religions. Here, nobody will have a right to destroy the religious place of another religion and nobody will have a right to prevent anybody from following any religion. The country is having such a unique constitution but our hon'ble friends are saying that there is no need for this bill. We do agree that the constitution of the secular India is supreme and there was no need to bring forward such a bill, but today the need for it has arisen. Why such a need has arisen? Hon'ble Members are aware that our constitution provides liberty to every citizen to follow the religion of his or her choice.

If the constitution is linked with faith, it will become meaningless. Today, people are shedding blood on the name of religion. Clashes are being instigated in the name of caste and community. Therefore, as stated by hon'ble Shri Mohan Singhji, it is essential to separate religion from politics. I fully support it and I request all hon'ble Members that if they want to see the country prosperous and above religion, then they must support this bill. Today, we are deprived of basic amenities. Even after fifty years of independence we are not getting potable drinking water. Since we are paying more attention to issues like religion and caste, our country is not progressing. Therefore, I want to request the hon'ble Members, who are sitting in the opposition to support the bill introduced by Shri Mohan Singh. Today, we are having this position, tomorrow we may not be having this position. Tomorrow, you and me may not be there even in this world. The world keeps on changing. We also have to pay attention towards what we are leaving behind for our coming generation.

In the end, I once again support this bill.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Three hours were allotted for this bill. The time is already over, but still some hon'ble Members are left to speak. If the House permits, the time can be extended. Today, the House will sit up to 5.30 p.m., therefore can it be extended upto 5.30 p.m.?

SOME HON'BLE MEMBERS : The time for this should be extended.

MR. CHAIRMAN : With the approval of the House, the time for it is extended upto 5.30 p.m.

SHRI CHAMAN LAL GUPTA (Udhampur) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, it has been mentioned in this bill that the provision should be made in the constitution that nobody should seek votes in the name of religion. I understand that this provision is already there in the constitution. The symbol under which we are sitting today is the symbol of Ashoka. History stand testimony to the fact that if at all there was a ruler in India who ruled according to 'dharma' it was the rule of Ashoka. We have accepted Ashoka's symbol as our national symbol. It means we are already firm and clear on this issue. Again and again the name of Dr. Ambedkar is being taken. He also has clarified in the constitution in the chapter of fundamental duties and rights that religion cannot be used in the elections. As my hon'ble friend has said trouble starts when people try to mix 'dharma' with religion. Till now, the rulers of this country were serving their own political interests in the name of religion. Muslim was told that his religion was in danger and Hindus were used wherever necessary. Gradually, pseudo-nationalism was exposed. All these problems began to surface with the change in the political set up of the country.

On the one hand, my hon'ble friend has said that we should wait for the decision of the Supreme Court and on the other hand he has given the message that mosque should be built there only and that temple can be constructed at some other place. Then why it is being said that we should wait for the decision of the Supreme Court. I understand that when you are talking about waiting for the decision of the Supreme Court, you should also agree with it. . . . (Interruptions)

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE (Mumbai North-Central) : What I said was that as the Muslim community was ready to accept the judgment of the Supreme Court, Hindu Community should also accept it. The mosque should be built at the place where it was on 15 August, 1947 and temple should be built, where it was earlier.

[Translation]

SHRI CHAMAN LAL GUPTA : The case is with the Supreme Court for deciding on the issue as to what was there earlier. Therefore, you have to wait for the Supreme Courts' decision. However, Hon'ble Atalji has said in very clear terms that whatever would be the decision of the Supreme Court, that would be implemented. At least we should wait for that decision. If we start giving our version and express our concerns before the decision it will not be helpful.

[Translation]

I just want to tell you that there is no need for this bill. The intention of this bill is already there in the constitution. As you have yourself said that the Supreme Court has given not one or two but many decision about it and whoever used religion to further his election his election was declared as null and void. This basic thing is already there in the Constitution. Therefore I feel that to bring this question again or to talk about it is not necessary. Our constitution gives full guarantee that nobody should arouse religious sentiments of the people. But at the same time nobody should be permitted to hurt the feelings of the people belonging to other faith. There are different ways to worship, some people go to offer Namaaz in Masjid, while some others go to temple to worship Lord Rama. Therefore, one should not interfere in the working of other's faith.

My submission is that there is no need for this bill. It should be withdrawn and we all should resolve to firmly act according to the intentions of the Constitution. This is all I want to submit.

SHRI SHAILENDRA KUMAR (Chail) : Hon'ble Chairman, Sir, I am grateful to you for having given me an opportunity to speak. The bill brought forward by Shri Mohan Singh is a bill to further amend the Constitution by adding sub clause (B) to Article 51. I strongly support

this bill. It is well known that earlier statement among them the name of Dr. Bhim Rao Ambedkar is unforgettable, took special care while drafting the Constitution that a secular nation takes shape in which all citizen get equal rights.

There are some political parties which want to play politics in the name of religion. They should be given special attention. We should never mix religion with politics and there should be brotherhood, communal harmony, mutual love and affection in whole of the country. This is what should be our intention. Nobody should be allowed to challenge the country's unity. It has been said in our old scriptures that :-

"Servei Bhavantu Sukhina, Serve Santu Niramaya,
Servai Bhadrani Pashyant, Maakaschit
Dukhbhagbhaver"

With this slogan we can make India strong and good Nation. We talk about rights but we totally overlook duties. We must remember about duty while we look towards our rights. Religion should be entirely kept separate from politics. This is my personal view. Everybody should think likewise.

India has given slogans of 'Panchsheel' and 'Sarva Dharma sam bhav' and hence, attention should be paid to ensure that religion and politics remain separate. But I would like to say one thing that all Hon'ble Members, whether they belong to the ruling party or to the opposition, should have one objective that they should never mix politics with religion. If we do that, it will be dangerous for our nation and democracy.

With these words I strongly support the Bill brought forward by Shri Mohan Singh and conclude.

SHRI SRIRAM CHAUHAN (Basti) : Hon. Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to thank you for having given me the opportunity to speak on this Private Member's Bill. Everything has its own distinctive characteristics. It is the property of water to keep flowing. If one tries to check the flow or collect it, it begins to stagnate and give out foul smell. However if water keeps on flowing, it remains clean because it is the property of the water to keep flowing. Similarly, it is the distinctive characteristics of fire to burn. Fire will always burn because if it stops burning, it won't be called fire. Similarly politics has its own principles. Serving the nation in good faith and with high moral conduct is the principle required to be followed in politics. Infact people having the mentality to create distinction between politics and religion do not miss a chance to link politics with religion and indulge in corruption. If they had even scant respect for religion, corruption and looting won't have been rampant today. The politicians have forgotten their responsibilities and that is why politics has lost respectability. This bill favours that mentality. The name

[Shri Sriram Chauhan]

of Lord Rama was taken during discussion. I know Shri Mohan Singhji. His name has its roots in religion. Mohan means a person who remains unaffected by worldly illusions. Mohan is also the name popular among people for Lord Krishna. Lord Krishna is a deity of Hindus. The issue of development of Krishna Janmabhoomi is also discussed from time to time. If we ponder over it, Mohan Singhji is associated with religion. He has introduced this bill with a view to get it passed by the House, so he should consider changing his name. Similarly the name of Ramdas Athawaleji is also associated with Rama. My name is Sriram. When I contest the elections, the villagers welcome me by saying Jai Sriram. If this bill is passed, I shall have to consider changing my name. Hence, the name of Lord Rama is unnecessarily mentioned during the discussion in the House. Now that the Bharatiya Janata Party has not included the issue of Ram Janmabhoomi in its National Agenda and started some other work, even then the Members of the Opposition keep on dragging the issue of Ram Janmabhoomi and Rama temple during discussion. Maryada Purushottam Rama is worshiped in our country. He is an integral part of our culture and civilization and without Him, our culture and civilization will be incomplete. His life serves as an example for our way of living and our interaction with our siblings, parents and teachers. It was Gandhiji's dream to bring Ram Rajya in the country as he was a devotee of Lord Rama. Today the persons who envisage to turn Gandhiji's dream into reality are called communalists and allegations are levelled against them. I would like to submit that the life of Rama exemplifies ideal way of life. It serves as a perfect example and model of Indian lifestyle. Jesus and other Gods are alien to our culture. Our culture does not stand to gain anything by following foreigners. Rama was the epitome of dignity. Hence construction of Rama temple is like building our nation.

Hence this bill is totally irreligious. This provision already exists in the constitution. The Election Commission has kept such a provision in the election process. Hence there is no justification or use of passing such a bill. In fact such a bill gives rise to wrong impression and otherwise also, the tendency of eschewing the path of religion is rising amongst people politicians are also becoming unruly and are indulging in corruption and misconduct. Hence politics should also follow certain principles and the principled politicians can lead the country towards a new path and materialise the concept of Ram Rajya.

With this, I thank you for having given me time to speak.

[English]

SHRI K.S. RAO (Machilipatnam) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I admire Shri Mohan Singh, hon. Member of Parliament, for bringing a Private Member's Bill which is not only for him but also for the entire nation. I have gone through the Bill. Particularly having come from Uttar Pradesh and possibly seeing the damage that is being done in the name of religion, he must have come forward and given this Bill which applies not only to Uttar Pradesh but also throughout the country.

A democratic country like ours has always felt that no competent person can ever think in terms of seeking votes in the name of religion. It is only cowards, it is only the incompetent people, and it is only the people who do not have confidence in their own abilities for service to the people and the nation, who can only seek votes in the name of religion or caste. These tendencies are to be curbed to whichever party we many belong to.

For a while, it may be that we get a few votes in the name of religion. But we are doing extensive damage to the nation and the people and we are also cheating ourselves. Shri Mohan Singh, I would have been happy seeing the latest trends in the country, particularly, in electioneering, if you could have used, along with the religion, the caste also. It does not make any difference whether an individual has used the religion or the caste. And the recent tendencies are more particular in using the caste than the religion.

I just seek your indulgence in this matter. Shri Mohan Singh has referred it only in asking to prevent religion to be used in seeking votes. Sir, can you please tell me what would be the impact if a national leader were to tour throughout the country in the name of *Rathyatra* and seeking or expecting a lot of the people belonging to a particular religion or community to come and give slogans in the name of the religion? As a Member of Parliament or as a Member of the Legislative Assembly, he might limit asking his votes to a constituency. But if a leader of a national party uses the same thing throughout the country, from Kashmir to Kanya Kumari, is it not doing damage to the nation? More damage will be done than what is being done in a constituency. We must answer our conscience legitimately, morally, ethically and make a promise in the House. We have been making promises also.

17.00 hrs.

That obviously means that we do not have faith. As the Constitution guides us and wants us to do, we take the oath verbally but we do not take it to our heart. I do not know whether I can say this here or not but many of us are cheating our conscience more than the nation. We are taking the oath here but the moment we go out of the House we do all those things which should not be done.

This change cannot be brought by Shri Mohan Singh or by some other ten Members of Parliament or by one Party alone. This cannot be done unless all the Leaders and all the Parties sit together and take a conscientious decision-irrespective of whether it is incorporated in the Constitution or not-that any person who indulges in using religion or caste for seeking votes, whether it be for the elections to the Parliament or to the Assemblies or to the Municipal Bodies, he or she would immediately be debarred by all the Parties from contesting elections. If we could prevent such people and such tendencies then, there would not be any need for Shri Mohan Singh to bring in a Private Members' Bill of this kind in this manner.

This issue is being discussed for the past several decades in the Parliament. Everyone of us is discussing about it but none of us is taking a real action in the matter. I, once again, appreciate the feeling of Shri Mohan Singh, the feeling which everyone of us has, for having brought this Bill. Let us all join together and ensure that these things are implemented not only through a constitutional provision but by sincere efforts and sincere intentions to do so.

[Translation]

SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA (Kheri) : Hon. Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank you for having given me the opportunity to speak on this very important bill. The bill introduced by Shri Mohan Singh for separating politics from religion is indeed a very important bill. The religious traditions and political conventions being followed in our country are not of recent origin, rather they date back thousands of years. A glance at the history of our country reveals that democratic system has been followed here from time to time and it is seen that there has been a great difference in terms of values depending on whether democracy or monarchy was being followed at a particular point of time. Religion, which is being discussed today, has addressed and guided our polity because it gave an outlet to the viewpoint of people. As regards the democratic values, we have to ensure that religion and politics are confined to their own realms so that one does not overlap the other.

Sir, politics is guided by certain principles. In a democratic system, the principles of the opinion of the people, welfare of the people and the rule of the people are followed. Those who view a certain period of the history in a biased manner, cannot ensure welfare of society and clearly such colleagues of mine who are viewing a certain period of the vast history of our country in a prejudiced manner and those who are using religion in order to further their political interests, are perhaps not aware of the difference between dogma and religion whenever dogma has had the upper hand in the history, it has never been in the interest of the people. In fact it has given

rise to disharmony and excesses have been Committed on people. Today when politics and religion are being discussed, one can see as to how political mileage is being derived by fanning communal tension. Disharmony is being created in the society, which is weakening the nation.

Sir our democracy has survived for 50 years and we have a very important instrument to protect and promote the objectives and interests of such a large population. The guiding principle of our constitution and our democracy is secularism, welfare of the people and ensuring well being and promotion of democratic forces. Whenever a state of conflict is created in the society and an attempt is made to control the political situation through it, certain consequences are bound to follow. the shape of our country thus determined right now is there before us.

I do not wish to say much at present. As we are the Members of the House, we cannot avoid our commitment towards strengthening the democratic forces. We shall have to reiterate those commitments and fulfill them. We will have to ensure that politics is not affected by dogmatic nature of religion so that sentiments of people are respected.

VAIDYA VISHNU DATT (Jammu) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, the term 'secularism' should not be used to denote merely equal respect for all religions, rather if it denotes equal respect for all castes and communities. the doubts assailing the minds of the people will be removed. It is not appropriate to base politics on the pillars of caste and community however politics totally show of religion can assume inhuman dimension. The term 'religion' is used in much wider sense. Work is worship for human beings. A family man has responsibilities towards his family. As a member of society, certain social obligations are to be fulfilled and what is done in the interest of the country is one's responsibility towards the nation. However, there is a paradox involved therein. Religion is a comprehensive term which cannot be defined in brief. I would like to submit that, there should be equal respect for all castes and communities in politics and that is why India has introduced the concept of secularism in its Constitution. The public life and history of our country is witness to the fact that no discrimination was ever made on the lines of caste and community. People were treated in a humane manner. With regard to the bill moved here, I would like to submit that there is equal respect for all castes and communities. Such a provision has been made in the electoral system that nobody can seek vote in the name of a particular caste or community. However, since this issue has been raised, a doubt has arisen in my mind that we may not seek votes in the name of caste or community but if any of our political organisation is based on the name of a particular caste or community and seeks vote on those grounds. how did

[Vaidya Vishnu Datt]

it get the right to seek votes and how could they find their way into the Parliament by winning elections. Detailed information should be given in this regard. If we cannot seek votes in the name of a community, how could the political organisations based on the name of a community gain an entry in the House? When we say that since you held a 'Rath yatra', hence you cannot be called secular, I would like to ask as to why an objection was not raised at nomenclature of some parties which are based on the names of certain castes and communities?

[English]

SHRI P.C. CHACKO (Idukki) : It is a pleasure and my privilege to participate in this discussion. Shri Mohan Singh has presented not only before this House but before the conscience of the people of this country, very important aspect which is very often both violated and accepted by all the political parties. It is considered as an ideal thing, but it is more observed in violation. The religious symbols and the religious sentiments are being used and exploited for the sake of votes, for the sake of furthering the individual party interests. What is proposed here is a Constitutional amendment. I would have gladly welcomed it - I still welcome it - if this had been made mandatory.

There is an article in Part 4(a) of the Constitution. Under article 51A-what is proposed by Shri Mohan Singh-one more clause, that is, 51B is to be inserted to make it a duty of candidates and the political parties to see that religion or religious symbol is not used or religious feelings are not incited for political purposes.

In the Statements of Objects and Reasons, it is mentioned and it is accordingly proposed to make it as a fundamental duty of every political party and candidate. Violation of this duty is not punishable under the existing system. Political parties and candidates will be morally bound by such a provision of the Constitution. But, I do not say that political parties are facing this moral prick or moral problem. It is probably an irony of fate that in our 50th year of Independence, this country is being ruled by a party which is basically based on religion and religious sentiments.

Shri K.S. Rao has mentioned here about the *Rath Yatra*. Any kind of propaganda based on religion is a violation as per the Representation of People Act or as per any election law in this country. But the same is being nakedly violated for furthering the interests of political parties. We have seen that in the past. Before every election, top leaders of the party who is going to adorn the place of the Prime Minister or important positions in this country, take *Rath Yatras* through out the length and

breadth of the country. They incite passion, religious feelings and sentiments to further their political interests. This is happening right under our eyes and this is not being taken objection to by many because unfortunately we are given to understand and believe that we are all helpless. So, it is done to incorporate a clause and make it a duty of the political parties and candidates to follow it. When there is a violation and if the guilty is not punished under any law, it will be treated as a legislation without any teeth.

I appreciate the sincerity of Shri Mohan Singh. He is always very clear in his thinking. Probably, he is a lone fighter. This system is being violated. We have seen that. I had the privilege of working with my colleague. Shri Mohan Singh in the previous Lok Sabhas also. He is a person who is completely in calamitous situation, in a callous situation who always keeps his cool and balance. He has come out with a proposal. I wish that it should be made as a mandatory provision in the Constitution so that whenever there is a violation, it is punishable under law. Otherwise, we cannot expect that kind of high standards and moral principle from all the political parties in this country.

Today, the major controversy before us is the temple and the stand of the *Sangh Parivar* on the temple. I am not blaming any party. I know, including your goodself, there are many good people and many seasoned people in the ruling party who probably do not subscribe to the extreme viewpoints of the ruling party. There are some people who toe the line which is probably not acceptable even to the moderates of the ruling party. But, Sir, what we see is that this country has faced this problem during its freedom struggle. We are facing the same problem today in a more crude form. This country was divided on the 15th of August, 1947 on the basis of theocratic State. At that time, the religious sentiments were whipped up by a section of people who divided this country. We have that bitter experience in our hearts and in our eyes. We believed that a good portion of the country is severed, and the head was severed from the body. With tears in our mind we decided that the rest will be a secular country. Now, new definitions are given to secularism. I am not going into those details. Secularism is not a negation of religion. That is not the Indian secularism. If anybody opposes me also, I am prepared to argue with him.

Sir, in India the concept of secularism is *Sarva Dharma Sambhava*. We respect all religions. Anybody can use religion but that does not mean that anybody can use religion for furthering his political interest. The hard reality, the unfortunate and the unpleasant fact is that this country was divided in 1947 on the basis of religion. That itself should prompt us and that itself should tell us that we should not further use this dangerous weapon for the interest of any political party.

Today, the party which is in power, they may be in Opposition tomorrow. Even today, without this Constitution (Amendment) Bill as per the Representation of People's Act, using of religious symbol, using of religious campaign and inciting religious sentiments for furthering the electoral prospects is taken as an offence by the Representation of People's Act. . . . *(Interruptions)* I know that the campaign of Shri Radhakrishnan in Coimbatore was mainly on religious basis.

SHRI C.P. RADHAKRISHNAN (Coimbatore) : I would like to ask only one question from Shri P.C. Chacko, Shri Chacko told us that in 1947, the country was divided on religion. I want to know from him, who divided the country on religious. Was it the Muslim League or the Congress? It was only the Muslim League which divided the country on the religious lines in 1947. We are against it. My propaganda in Coimbatore was also against dividing the country on religion lines. We want to bring back the path which has gone away from us on religious basis. That is all.

SHRI P.C. CHACKO : Sir, I wish young people like Shri Radhakrishnan should get some more feel of the history, whether it is Hindu fundamentalism or Muslim fundamentalism. It is equally objectionable. If a young man like Shri Radhakrishnan cannot object to it then where is the future of this country? I would like to know this from Shri Radhakrishnan. He won from Coimbatore this time on the basis of inciting some communal feeling. That may boomerang next time. . . . *(Interruptions)*

SHRI C.P. RADHAKRISHNAN : I am not worried about that.

MR. CHAIRMAN : We have a very limited time, no such discussion please.

SHRI C.P. RADHAKRISHNAN : Sir, I have won because my people have sacrificed for me. Sixty of my people, including school-going children-one child along with here mother died on the spot-died. Why? It was due to the appeasement of the Muslim fundamentalism in the country, due to the appeasement of the Muslim terrorism in the country.

MR. CHAIRMAN : No, please, I am not allowing.

SHRI P.C. CHACKO : All right, Sir, I am not going into this controversy.

We understand that a communal clash and a communal tension or some unfortunate incidents happened in a particular part of the country and that altered the political scenario of that place considerably and I am saying that Shri Radhakrishnan is a product of that process. I am not blaming him. Shri Radhakrishnan has got his view point. He has done an exemplary job. That is how he could

sell his idea. But, Sir, a constituency which has got a political character, against that political character, a people's will or a people's decision came this time because something happened there and the advantage that Shri Radhakrishnan got was the net result of the communal holocaust which happened there. I am not blaming anybody.

I come from a place where probably not only this Hindu fundamentalism but many other communal fundamentalisms are playing their games. We have started a youth movement opposing all these things. You can blame me. I can accept with both hands that we have also done this mistake of fielding communal groups and communal parties in the past. Here is a situation, probably, Shri Radhakrishnan may not know Shri Mohan Singh that when a person like him say something, we have to take it with an open mind. It has not come from the Congress' side, it has not come from the BJP's side. But, let us see that here is a situation probably, the political parties have to do some introspection. What is happening every day and what we are giving is that we have also become part and parcel of this kind of a heinous crime which has perpetuated election after election. If we were, at any point of time not called for to rethink and to correct our own follies, then, the future generation will have to pay the fine for that.

Coimbatore may repeat in many other constituencies next time. But this should not happen. What happened in Coimbatore, probably, you oppose, but that should not happen in other places. But I feel that the moral pressure on the political parties or the moral pressure on any leadership in this country may not work. We are working in an environment which is highly pressurised by all kinds of forces and probably our moral pressure has become very much neutralised because we are living in a society where this Mandir-Masjid issue is waging a war every day. That war is having a psychological impact on our mind and we do not know what we are doing. We are easily succumbing to this kind of pressure in the society.

So, probably, a Private Member's Bill like this is not going to affect the Government. It is not considered as a prestigious issue or anything like that. Our young dynamic Law Minister is sitting there. After all he is not a party to this or that. Actually he happens to be on that side. That is all. He was with us for a longer time. Tomorrow also, his party will be with us. So, there is no problem. I have a feeling that some clear thinking should come. There has to be some legislation from the Government side itself. It is because now a consensus is emerging.

I am quite happy that many of the BJP Members were also contributing very positively to the suggestion which Shri Mohan Singh has made. If BJP Members can come

[Shri P.C. Chacko]

to this level, then I feel that there is some future for this country. It is because what is happening in Ayodhya and what I heard today here are very much in variance. So, I think, at some point of time, everybody has some kind of a balanced thinking. Probably, here, we could make some changes in the minds of the people. Here we are putting an idea. What Shri Mohan Singh has done is, he has given food for thought. We have to think of this whole country. All the political parties will have to think of this whole country. Now, this is being made only as a recommendation. This is being made only as a duty of the political parties. It is because the political parties and their candidates do not discharge their duties properly.

If we examine the election petitions pending before various High Courts in the country, after the last General Election, more than 50 per cent of cases relate to the violation of the Representation of People Act. All of them are pending because of violation of election code on use of religion and religious symbol. That means, it has become a daily practice. By doing this so regularly, it has become a regular style of functioning. So, here is a different situation. I suggest that if the expression from that side is sincere, why can't we agree to a legislation where it is statutory, mandatory and punishable under law? Wherever and whenever it is being used, we should go to the extent of disqualifying a political party or a candidate. If the opinions expressed in this House from all the sides are sincere, then we should come together for a more serious and stern step so that anybody or any political party or any candidate resorting to this kind of a practice is disqualified. They all should be disqualified. The parties should be disqualified. We should come to that kind of an understanding. Anyway, something is better than nothing.

Everyday, it is polluted by the communal campaign, communal speeches and so on. Here, at least, a thinking or this kind of a thought that this is not good for the country, for the society and that we should refrain from all kinds of such things, is being provided by this Resolution. I fully support this Bill. If we, the major political parties in this country, can come to some kind of an understanding, we can give more teeth to this legislation. This can be accepted because this year is a Golden Jubilee year of our Independence. Let us try to forget, at least, what happened in the past. It is an opportunity for us to forge a future which is more brighter and to hand over something which is good to our future generation. As Shri K.S. Rao has said, probably, caste and religion are influencing us. Caste is also another danger. It is because both caste and religion are playing havoc in the Indian politics today. There are parties which are taking political advantage of the caste campaigns.

This is a continuation of our efforts for making people rethink of the extremely unacceptable situation. So, I congratulate Shri Mohan Singh and whole-heartedly support the Bill brought forward by him.

[Translation]

SHRI CHHATTRA PAL SINGH (Bulandshahar) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak on the bill presented by Shri Mohan Singhji. Some political leaders of the country are following the policy of escapism. They are behaving like an ostrich. They think that by closing their eyes, they can escape from the danger. In reality, the partition of the country was done on the basis of religion.

In 1947, the leaders of the country had admitted that one party of the country would be for Hindus and other for Muslims. Wasn't this partition on the basis of religion? Today, there are many political parties in the country, which represent the causes of a particular religion. Whether it is Muslim League and Muslim Majlis etc. . . . (Interruptions) Nobody can say that the name of Bharatiya Janata Party is linked with a particular religion or community. . . . (Interruptions) An atheist can never think about the welfare of the country. The religion of politics is public welfare and every religion also talks of public welfare. Whether a person is Muslim, Christian, Bodh or Sikh if he follows the teachings of his religion, he will definitely afraid of sins. and in politics, he will think about the welfare of the people. When he will treat the right path, then he will definitely do public welfare. Public service is the religion of politics and the goal of politics cannot be achieved without the public welfare Shri Mohan Singh has said that the votes should not be seeked in the name of the religion. This is true and all of us agree with it. But being religious is other thing relating politics with religion is another. Every person of this country should be religious minded.

[English]

SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH (Uluberia) : I draw your attention to the plight of some nurses from Haryana who are on strike for the last five weeks. About two thousand of them came here to meet the Health Minister. They are on a *dhama*. There has been a brutal lathi charge by Police and about to dozen of them have been injured. Many of them are in the police custody. I request that their problems may be treated humanely and they may be released.

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. M. THAMBI DURAI) : Mr. Chairman, I am grateful to all the Members who participated in the discussion and contributed valuable suggestions to see that the political parties do not used religion or caste for their political ends. Elections have been conducted successfully in the country

during the last 50 years which have provided the country a strong democratic base. Based on the experience, our friend Shri Mohan Singh has brought a Bill to amend the Constitution.

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN : The time for this bill was extended upto 5.30 p.m. but still hon'ble Minister has to reply and Shri Mohan Singh too has to speak. Therefore, the time of the House is extended till both of them give reply.

SHRI G.M. BANATWALA (Ponnani) : Mr. Chairman, I would like to request that a time of one minute be given to me so that I could move my bill.

[English]

DR. M. THAMBI DURAI : In the discussion most of the Members have taken the opportunity to express their views about the existing conditions in our political system and in our country. I am very thankful to them for contributing their ideas in this.

But most of the political parties and the candidates are trying somehow to succeed in the elections. That is their aim. Even the candidates when they are filing their nominations are going to the temples to conduct *pujas*. Afterwards, they are filing their nominations. That is also taking place. They are praying for their success also. That is how it is happening. Casteism is also one of the factors which plays a vital role in the elections. It is practically happening everywhere. If you take the case of South, especially in Tamil Nadu and in other States, due to our Dravidian movement, casteism and communalism, to some extent, are being suppressed. If you see the names also, we are not having the titles. It was created in the South especially in Tamil Nadu and other States. For instance, among the forty Members who are elected from Tamil Nadu including Pondicherry and some parts of Kerala, you can see that names are not carrying any castes. However, Shri Mohan Singh is having some title called 'Singh'. I do not know what it denotes. That is why, casteism somehow still prevails. When a person is even contesting the election, the title itself shows to which caste he belongs. Therefore, he may try to influence in such a manner to get votes.

That is what is going on in our country. We are also thinking something about it. But what is happening is somewhat different. The name is different. The titles like Choudhary, Yadav are still prevailing in the North, but it is not so common in the South, especially in Tamil Nadu and in some parts of Kerala. People are not having such kinds of titles. That is the impact which has been created due to our movement there and most of the people are not interested to use their caste. But in practical terms, now a days, it is changing. Even when the political parties are putting up their candidates, they are selecting a

particular dominating community or caste. So, that kind of people are putting. It has become a fashion. . . .
(Interruptions) Therefore, that may have prompted Shri Mohan Singh to bring this kind of a Private Member's Bill.
(Interruptions)

I am talking about a new generation. If you take the young people, they are not having this type of titles in Tamil Nadu. The old people may be having them I am not denying it. However, in most of the cases, no one is using his title. If you see the 40 Members of the present Lok Sabha who are coming from Tamil Nadu, you can see it. Our political movement has created the impact that the candidates must not use their caste names for their benefits. That is one of the impacts about which I am telling this august House. It is not prevailing in certain parts and which may come up in due course of time.

Shri Mohan Singh seeks to amend the Constitution by insertion of a new article 51(b) and that is to make it a fundamental duty of every political party and candidates to ensure that votes are not sought by them in any election in the name of religion or by inciting religious feelings. His intentions are good and we have to appreciate them. I am not denying that. Our forefathers framed the Constitution with good intentions. They have made all kinds of provisions to avoid this kind of religious fundamentalism or casteism. That was their intention. They wanted to have secularism in the country. But in course of time, we also changed the Constitution. In 1976, we changed our Constitution to make India a secular State. Originally there was no such provision but we did it afterwards to strengthen our Constitution.

There are a lot of existing provisions which will help to implement what Shri Mohan Singh intends to. Whatever he wants the candidates to follow in the elections, for that there are a lot of provisions already available in our Constitution. The Election Commission also has made a model code of conduct for the guidance of political parties and candidates. So that provision is already there.

Under Section 123(3) of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, the appeal by a candidate or his agent or by any person with the consent of a candidate or his election agent to vote or refrain from voting for any person on the ground of his religion, race, caste, community or language or the use of, or appeal to religious symbols or the use of, or appeal to, national symbols, such as the National Flag or the National Emblem for the furtherance of the prospects of the election of that candidate or for prejudicially affecting the election of any candidate, is a corrupt practice. So, already the provision is there.

Apart from that, under Section 123 (3A), the promotion of, or attempt to promote, feelings of enmity or hatred between different classes of the citizens of India on

[Dr. M. Thambi Durai]

grounds of religion, race, caste, community, or language, by a candidate or his agent or any other person with the consent of a candidate or his election agent for the furtherance of the prospects of the election of that candidate or for prejudicially affecting the election of any candidate, is also a corrupt practice. A person found guilty of a corrupt practice may be disqualified for a period up to six years under section 8A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951. The election of a returned candidate can also be challenged on grounds of the corrupt practices having been committed by him vide Section 100(1)(b) of the Representation of the People Act, 1951.

Under Section 125 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, any person who promotes or attempts to promote on grounds of religion, race, caste, community or language, feelings of enmity or hatred between different classes of the citizens of India, shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to three years, or with fine, or with both.

Also, under Section 153A of the Indian Penal Code, promoting enmity between different groups on grounds of religion, race, place of birth, residence, language, etc., and doing acts prejudicial to maintenance of harmony are penal offences.

So, a lot of provisions are already given in the Constitution to see that the candidates or the political parties cannot be used for success in the election. But anyhow, the hon. Members have used this opportunity to express their views on how we have to amend the Constitution for conducting the elections in a fair manner. For that, the Government has already decided to bring electoral reforms and in the electoral reforms, we will definitely take into consideration the ideas expressed by the Members and we will bring a comprehensive Bill for that. We have already conducted an all-party leaders meeting and we have also constituted a committee under the Chairmanship of Shri Indrajit Gupta. That committee is going to recommend so many things to bring electoral reforms. At that time we will definitely take into consideration whatever our friend Shri Mohan Singh has said.

Therefore, I request Shri Mohan Singh to withdraw his Bill. We will definitely try to implement whatever he wants. The ideas expressed by other Members will also be incorporated in the Bill that we are going to introduce soon.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE : Sir, the hon'ble Minister has said nothing about Ayodhya.

[English]

DR. M. THAMBI DURAI : Ayodhya is nowhere connected with this. . . (Interruptions)

SHRI P.C. CHACKO : The hon. Minister can also give an assurance.

DR. M. THAMBI DURAI : As a Law Minister, I cannot give assurance regarding temple.

SHRI P.C. CHACKO : Anybody on behalf of the Government can give an assurance.

DR. M. THAMBI DURAI : As a Law Minister, I can bring a comprehensive Bill on electoral reforms. Whatever you want can be included in that Bill. That is the assurance I can give.

SHRI MOHAN SINGH (Deoria) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am grateful to all the hon'ble Members of all parties for giving importance to this bill and taking part in the discussion on it. All hon'ble Members have given very good suggestions and have expressed their feelings in very impressive manner. All hon'ble Members, including the hon'ble Minister have praised the noble intentions with which this bill has been presented in the House. I am happy that all hon'ble Members have expressed their view on first private members bill of 12th Lok Sabha. I would not like to take the much time of this august House by delivering a long speech because the hon'ble Members have already discussed every aspect of it. We already have such legislations as to deal with the tendency of political parties to seek votes at the time of elections by diverting the attention of people from real political and social issues by provoking their religious sentiments. Today, the problems in our country are continuously increasing and we are not able to find political solution of these problems. The main reasons behind this is that the new tendency of gaining political power with the help of short sighted slogans has developed. Due to this the politics of the country has failed to provide political solution to the problems of the country.

The main purpose of introducing this bill is that the real and important issues in the interest of the country should be linked with politics and religion should be treated as one's personal faith. Both of them should not interfere with each other. I am happy that the hon'ble Ministers has given assurance that when the Government of India and all major political parties are talking about appropriate election reforms, a comprehensive bill in this regard will be presented in the House. In these circumstances, I have full faith in the assurance given by the hon'ble Minister in the House and I firmly believe that the views expressed by hon'ble Members will also be taken into account. The committee constituted for this will also

take into account the important views expressed in the House, while discussion on this bill. With this belief on the assurance of hon'ble Minister. I am prepared to withdraw the Bill.

[English]

I beg to move for leave to withdraw the Bill further to amend the Constitution of India.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That leave be granted to withdraw the Bill further to amend the Constitution of India."

[Translation]

The motion was adopted.

SHRI MOHAN SINGH : Sir, I withdraw this bill.

[English]

CONSTITUTION (AMENDMENT) BILL

(Amendment of Article 15, Etc.)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Hon. Members, the House will now take up the Bill regarding the Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 1998 (*Amendment of article 15, etc.*). Before I call upon Shri G.M. Banatwalla to move the motion for consideration of his Bill, we have to fix time for discussion of this Bill. Shall we fix two hours?

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS : Yes.

SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA (Ponnani) : Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Bill further to amend the Constitution of India, be taken into consideration."

Mr. Chairman, Sir, reservation is a key element in any policy directed towards securing social justice for various sections of the society. This practice of reservation has a long history, particularly in the South. We have, at several times, discussed this question of reservation. Only yesterday, we were concerned with the continuance of the reservation for our Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes because of certain vague pronouncements that were made. Any very rightly, the House was assured that there is no question of any dilution or ending the reservation for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

Similarly, we are also agitated and are going to consider the question of reservation for women. We also demand that a policy of social justice must not be fractured by considering one section of the society and ignoring others and that reservation must be extended to other backward classes, Muslims and other minorities both men and women. However, I will not dilate on this point because we are going to consider all this, later on.

My particular Bill is with respect to some other points. The Bill that I have moved here, I am sure, will be an incontrovertible Bill without any controversy whatsoever.

Sir, we have this policy of reservation as an instrument in our policy of securing social justice for various sections of the society. As I said, we have a very long history with respect to reservation particularly in the South. In the South, I must say Tamil Nadu, in particular, is the leader in the field of reservations as a key factor for promotion of social justice. These reservations are: reservation of seats in educational institutions of higher learning and reservations in posts as also appointments in services.

Now, Mr. Chairman, Sir, certain judicial pronouncements have created certain difficulties. These difficulties are of the nature that they impair and fracture the policy of social justice.

My Bill seeks to draw the attention to these difficulties created by judicial pronouncements and, in order to save our policy of social justice, there is need for legislative action and amendment of the Constitution.

I will, at the very outset, briefly mention the difficulties that have been created by judicial pronouncements. In the first place, in the Indira Sawhney and other *versus* the Government of India and other. AIR 1993. SC 477, the Supreme Court has limited the total reservations under Article 16 (4) as not to exceed 50 per cent. So, the Supreme Court has put certain restrictions that the field of reservations should not exceed 50 per cent. That is one difficulty arising from the judicial pronouncements.

A second difficulty arises on the question that certain sectors shall be outside the purview of reservations. The Supreme Court has held that certain sections of employment like medicine, teaching etc., will be outside the purview of reservations. It is not only the question of restriction restricting to 50 per cent but also exclusion of certain sectors of employment from reservation.

There is also a third difficulty created by the judicial pronouncement. Unfortunately, the judiciary came out with a very vague and an illusory concept of what is called the 'creamy layer' and the judiciary has held that the so-called 'creamy layer' among the other Backward Classes must not have the benefit of reservation.

Now, my Bill here is restricted to the removal of these three difficulties and certain solutions have been given in my Bill. In the first instance, as I said, it is an encroachment upon the powers of the Central Government, State Governments, the ambit of the legislatures and the Parliament for judicial pronouncements to restrict the extent of reservation.

[Shri G.M. Banatwalla]

In the case of Tamil Nadu, as I said, we have a very long history. They have been the leaders in the field of reservations and we now have reservations there to the extent of 69 per cent, and there is on difficulty about it. But the judicial pronouncements create the difficulties. A situation gets created in Tamil Nadu in particular.

I think, almost every party is alive to this particular problem, and almost every party including the Government, those who are in the Government today, have said that the extent of reservations will be protected. I am thankful to all of them and to the present Government also. The Government have, what they call a 'National Agenda for Governance'. Now, I will not go into what this National Agenda is all about and all that because that will be digressing from my point. But the National Agenda for Governance also assures that the extent of reservations in a State will be protected.

These assurances are being given to us repeatedly, but I see no sign of action. Since the day of judicial pronouncement till now, there is no sign of any action. Whatever action was there was taken by the Tamil Nadu Government by passing a Bill there and the Tamil Nadu Assembly passed the Bill, Tamil Nadu Backward Classes, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Reservation of Seats in Educational Institutions and of Appointments or Posts in the Services under the state Act, 1993." This Act was promulgated by the Tamil Nadu Government in order to remove the hurdle or the difficulty created by the judicial pronouncement of restricting the extent of reservation.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri G.M. Banatwalla, you can continue your speech later. Now let me make an announcement.

SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA: You can make the announcement.

17.56 hrs

ANNOUNCEMENT RE: BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

MR. CHAIRMAN : Hon. Members, I have to inform the House that in the combined meeting of Hon. Speaker with Leaders of parties and groups and members of Business Advisory Committee held today, the following decisions were taken :-

- (i) Further discussion and voting on the Demands for Grants relating to Ministry of Agriculture would be taken up on Monday, the 13th July, 1998 from 12 noon to 8 p.m.
- (ii) Discussion and voting on the Demands for Grants relating to Ministry of External Affairs would be taken up on Tuesday, the 14th July, 1998 from 12 noon to 5 p.m. and the Prime Minister might reply to the discussion at 5 p.m.
- (iii) All questions necessary to dispose of all outstanding matters in connection with the Demands for Grants might be put to vote at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, the 14th July, 1998; and
- (iv) In order to enable more Members to participate in the discussion on the Demands for Grants on the said Ministries, there will be no 'Zero Hour' on Monday, the 13th July and Tuesday, the 14th July, 1998.

As already decided, the House will sit during Lunch Hour and up to 8 p.m. daily till the passage of Finance Bill, 1998.

Now the House stands adjourned to meet on Monday, the 13th July, 1998 at 11 a.m.

17.59 hrs.

*The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of
the Clock on Monday, July 13, 1998/
Asadha 22, 1920 (Saka).*