

which requires state-of-the-art technologies besides new approach/strategy towards exploration of such areas.

- (iii) The exploratory efforts were hitherto concentrated mainly in 6 petroliferous Cat. I basins with little efforts in other basins.

To boost the exploration activities, ONGC has drawn a recast programme for the IX Five Year Plan. Significant changes in physical inputs and the approach are:

- Inducting state-of-the-art processing and interpretation hardware/software.
- Much higher inputs in terms of 3D acquisition.
- Additional inputs for 2D seismic and wells over the original IXth Plan.
- About 298 new prospects are proposed to be probed out of a total inventory of 367 prospects.
- Intensified exploration activities are planned in the deep water areas and new frontier basins.
- Adopting state-of-the-art technologies to enhance sub-surface imaging in geologically complex areas like thrust fold belts, sub-trappean sequences and deeper prospects in known basins.

[Translation]

#### Bonded Labour

3976. SHRI HARI KEWAL PRASAD:  
SHRI RAMPAL UPADHYAY:  
SHRI MULLAPALLY RAMACHANDRAN:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the number of children below the age of 14 years are working as bonded labour, in each state;

(b) the action taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to free and rehabilitate those bonded child labour; and

(c) the details and number of bonded child labour freed and rehabilitated during each of the last three years, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA) : (a) The following State Governments have reported identification of children below the age of 14 years working as bonded labour:

(1) Andhra Pradesh	-	29
(2) Maharashtra	-	4
(3) Tamil Nadu	-	1942

The children have been released and restored to their parents.

(b) Under the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976, the identification, release and subsequent rehabilitation of the freed bonded labourers is the direct responsibility of the State Governments concerned. Under the Act, no distinction is made between child and adult bonded labour. Therefore the guidelines issued to the State Govts. for rehabilitation of bonded labour are applicable to bonded child labour also.

Under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme for rehabilitation scheme as assistance upto the ceiling limit of Rs. 10,000/- is given to each released bonded labour. The expenditure is equally shared by the Centre and State Government concerned on (50:50) basis. The State Govts. have also been advised to integrate/dovetail the Centrally Sponsored Scheme for rehabilitation of bonded labour with other anti poverty schemes such as IRDP, JAY, JRY, TRYSEM, DWCRA, Special Component Plan/ Sub-plan so as to pool the resources for the effective rehabilitation of bonded labourers.

(c) Age-wise and year wise break-up of bonded labourers is not available. However, in the survey conducted by the State Governments in December, 1996 the following number of bonded labourers have been reported to be identified:

1. Arunachal Pradesh	3517
2. Bihar	106
3. Karnataka	19
4. Madhya Pradesh	18
5. Maharashtra	2
6. Uttar Pradesh	237
7. Tamil Nadu	25008

Total	28907
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[English]

#### Dental Degrees provided by unrecognised Universities

3977. SHRI AJAY KUMAR S. SARNAIK: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether dental degrees of some Universities are not presently treated as recognised/registered;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether these degrees have since been recognised;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) if not, the fate of graduates from those Universities; and

(f) the steps taken by the Government to recognise them ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI DALIT EZHILMALAI) : (a) to (f) Under Section 10(2) of the Dentists Act. Universities have been to apply to the Central Government for inclusion of the BDS Degree granted by them in the Part I of the schedule of the Dentists Act 1948. At present applications received from Amrawati University, Shivaji University Kolhapur are under consideration of the Government. Bomaby High Court *vide* its interim order dated 3.12.97 in Writ Petition No. 4657 of 1997 filed by some students of Shivaji University Kolhapur, has directed that provisional registration to the petitioners be granted.

#### Domestic Processors of Edible Oils

3978. SHRI K.P. NAIDU: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether excessive edible oil imports flooding the market have resulted in domestic solvent extraction plants plagued with excess idle capacity; and

(b) if so, the steps proposed to be taken to protect the domestic processors?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI SATYA PAL SINGH YADAV) : (a) and (b) Domestic solvent extraction plants are working to well below their installed capacity due to shortage of oil bearing material and not due to edible oil imports. The short-fall between demand and supply is currently estimated at between 14-15 lakh MTs. Against this, the import of 11.3 lakh MTs of edible Oils in the financial year 1997-98 cannot be considered as excessive.

#### Strengthening the PDS/RPDS

3979. SHRI SATNAM SINGH KAINTH:

SHRI T. GOVINDAN:

SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH:

SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK:

SHRI GEORGE EDEN:

Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government propose to strengthen the RPDS in the country;

(b) whether any suggestions have been received from the State Governments to improve the PDS/RPDS a fool proof system for the relief of the common man;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Union Government thereto;

(d) whether the Government propose to constitute a monitory agency to ensure that poor families are getting the facilities of ration;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI SATYA PAL SINGH YADAV) : (a) With the introduction of Targetted Public Distribution System (TDPS) in June, 1997 with its focus on the poor in all areas the Revamped Public Distribution System (RPDS) with its emphasis on "all in the poor areas" has become redundant.

(b) and (c) Following the introduction of TDPS various suggestions/representations were received mainly regarding the reduction in allocation of foodgrains, inadequacy of entitlement of 10 kg. per month for families below poverty line (BPL) and variation in poverty estimates. The implementation of TPDS was reviewed in a Conference of the Chief Ministers held on 30th September, 1997 and broad consensus emerged on the following issues:

- (i) The allocation of foodgrains to the States may be reviewed on the basis of their need. Additional allocations over and above TPDS quota may be made at subsidised rates applicable to families above poverty line (APL); and
- (ii) While the allocation for the BPL families may be increased, there should be no reduction in the allocation to the APL families;

The following action has been taken on these issues:

- (i) With effect from 1.12.1997 the additional allocations are being made to the States/UTs at APL prices keeping in view the availability of stocks in the Central Pool and constraints of food subsidy;
- (ii) There is no proposal to reduce allocation to APL families. The present level of allocation for BPL families is maintained in view of the constraints of stocks of foodgrains as well as the high level of subsidy involved.

(d) to (f) There is no proposal to constitute a separate monitoring agency for TPDS. But, setting up of Vigilance Committees at Fair Price Shops (FPS), Taluk, District and