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			DSB on 31st March, 1998 and India made its counter submission on 1st May, 1998. The first substantive meeting was held on 7th and 8th May, 1998. Second submissions have been made by India and USA on 5th June, 1998 and the second substantive meeting has been held on 22nd and 23rd June, 1998.
5.	European Communities	India: Restrictions on export of products including raw hides and skins.	The European Communities requested consultations on 19 November 1997, pursuant to Article XXIII.1 of the GATT and Article 4 of the DSU with regard to the provision of the Exim Policy (1997-2002), which sets up a negative list for the export of several commodities, in particular raw hides and skins, the export of which require an export licence granted by the DGFT. The EC has alleged that licences for these products however are systematically refused and that there is no evidence that such restrictions are temporary nor that they have the objective of relieving a critical shortage of products essential to the exports of India. The EC has, therefore, contended that this practice violates the obligation of India under GATT 1994 and in particular though not necessarily exclusively, the provision of Article XI of GATT 1994. A first round of consultation was held in January, 98.
6.	India	European Communities: Application of Cumulative Recovery System (CRS) for India's exports of rice.	India requested for consultations with the European Communities pursuant to Article 19 of the Agreement on Impelmentation of Article VII of the GATT, 1994, Article 6 of the Agreement on Import Licensing Procedures, Article 19 of the Agreement on Agriculture, Article 14 of the Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade (IBT) and Article 11 of the Agreement on the application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures, concerning the applications of the Cumulative Recovery System (CRS) introduced by Commission Regulation No. 703/97 of the 18 April, Consultations were held recently in Geneva on 23rd June, 1998.

*[English]***Autonomy to Banks**

2698. SHRI R. SAMBASIVA RAO : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Reserve Bank of India actively considering for granting greater autonomy and more flexibility to the banks;

(b) if so, the details thereof and other changes proposed by RBI for efficient working of banks; and

(c) the time by which it is likely to be implemented and to what extent the greater autonomy to banks is likely to help in the working of banks and also checking the frauds that are increasing in the banks?

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

*[Translation]***Memorandum by Opium Growers**

2699. DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the opium growers of Mandsaur District of Madhya Pradesh have submitted any memorandum to the Union Government regarding their problems; and

(b) If so, the action taken by the Government thereon?

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

(b) the grievances stated by the opium growers would be kept in view while formulating the Opium Policy for the crop year 1998-99.