

A total number of 2711 licences have been granted by the Department. These licences are issued in form No. 24 where the licensed capacity and other terms and conditions under which the licence is issued, are stated.

(c) and (d) The transport of fireworks is exempted from transport licence under Rule 32 (v) of the Explosives Rules, 1983. As such, the fireworks' manufacturers do not submit their reports to the Explosives Department regarding the quantities despatched. However, Rule 127 of the Explosives Rules, 1983 takes care of the stock of fireworks, stored in excess of the licensed quantity.

(e) and (f) During the last 3 years, the number of inspections carried out by the Department were 550 in 1994-95, 587 in 1995-96 and 833 in 1996-97. Section 6E(3) of the Explosives Act, 1884 and Rule 167 of the Explosives Rules, 1983, empowers the Licensing Authority to suspend the licence for violations, if any.

#### I.T. Limit

2771. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR :  
PROF. P.J. KURIEN :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is resentment among the salaried class income tax payers over the fixation of income tax limit from Rs. 40,000 to Rs. 50,000;

(b) whether the cost of maintaining a family is taken into account while fixing the rate of income tax on the salaried class income tax payers;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether the Government have received requests to raise the limit upto Rs. 1,00,000 instead of Rs. 50,000;

(e) if so, whether the Government are further considering to lowering the rates of income tax for the salaried class tax payers; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

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

(b) Yes. Due regard is paid to the hardships being faced by salaried income-tax payers in the lower-income groups.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) No, Sir.

(f) A raise in the standard deduction from Rs. 20,000 to Rs. 25,000 is proposed for those having salary income upto Rs. 1 lac income. After availing of standard deduction

and rebate on tax-savings those having income upto Rs. 1 lac will have to pay no tax or nominal tax.

Any lowering of tax rates only for the salaried class is neither equitable nor practicable. The tax-rates are already low. Further lowering of tax-rates is likely to erode the tax-base and affect adversely revenue mobilisation efforts.

#### Cotton Ginning

2772. SHRI MADHAV RAO PATIL :  
SHRI VITHAL TUPE :

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) whether facilities for cotton ginning are not upto the mark and are inadequate;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to provide better ginning facilities?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RANA) : (a) and (b) While the facilities for cotton ginning are adequate in terms of the installed capacity, they lack in terms of quality parameters, mainly on account of obsolete machinery, poor maintenance and improper handling practices, etc.

(c) The Cotton Corporation of India Ltd., (CCI) has been implementing an Action Plan to encourage modernisation and adoption of improved practices in the existing ginning and pressing units, and offers a package of financial incentives for this purpose. Modernisation of cotton ginning and pressing units is also one of the objectives of the proposed Technology Mission on Cotton Development.

#### Maruti Udyog

2773. SHRI MULLAPALLY RAMACHANDRAN :  
SHRI NRIPEN GOSWAMI :  
SHRI P.R. KYNDIAH :  
SHRI SUSHIL CHANDRA VARMA :

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Maruti Udyog Limited was taken into confidence and opinion of Attorney General was sought before reaching a settlement between the Government and the Suzuki Motor Corporation;

(b) if not, the reasons therefor;

(c) the reasons for over-ruling the decision of the previous Government in the matter of appointment of Chairman and Managing Director of MUL by turn;

(d) whether the Government propose to further dilute its stake in the joint venture by 10%;

(e) if so, the reasons therefor and the steps taken by the Government to prevent the joint venture; and