

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE) : (a) and (b) The Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina, paid a working visit to New Delhi on 16 June 1998 and held discussions with the Prime Minister. The talks covered bilateral relations, regional and international matters.

Both sides agreed on the need to intensify the excellent relations that exist between the two neighbouring countries, to increase exchanges at various levels including Parliamentary delegations, students and cultural groups and to step up commercial and economic interaction.

Border and security-related issues were reviewed. Both sides reiterated their commitment to SAARC in view of the important role it could play in promoting regional cooperation.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

#### **Qualifying Marks in Tests For SCs/STs**

3166. SHRI SANDIPAN THORAT : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the relaxation in qualifying marks in written test and viva-voce has been withdrawn with immediate effect vide O.M. No. 36012/23/96-Estt. (Res.) dated July 22, 1997;

(b) whether the posts reserved for SCs/STs in Group A, B, C, and D after July 22, 1997 have been filled up by the candidates of these communities;

(c) the number of posts of Group A, B, C, and D could not be filled up due to the fact that reserved category candidates of SCs/STs failed to achieve the prescribed qualifying marks; and

(d) the number of posts in Group A, B, C and D reserved for SCs/STs remaining unfilled have been permanently/temporarily deserted and filled up by the general category candidates?

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 implementation of the Supreme Court Judgement in the S. Vinod Kumar's case, instructions were issued vide the said O.M. Withdrawing relaxation in qualifying marks and

standards of evaluation in favour of SCs and STs in matters of reservation in promotion.

(b) to (d) The information is not centrally maintained.

[Translation]

#### **Sea Pollution**

3167. SHRI DATTA MEGHE : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that the Arabian Sea near Mumbai has become polluted to a great extent; and

(b) if so, the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to check the same?

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 data collected under the programme, "Coastal Ocean Monitoring and Prediction System" of Department of Ocean Development have indicated that the creeks of Mumbai particularly Versova, Mahim and the Ulhas estuary are severely polluted; and Bassein, Dharamtar and Thane creeks are moderately polluted. However, it has been found that the levels of pollutants decrease towards offshore and the sea beyond 5 km is found to be clear.

(b) The Government of Maharashtra has taken the following steps for controlling pollution in the coastal waters of Mumbai:

(i) Implementation of a project by the Municipal Corporation of Greater Bombay for sewage collection, treatment and disposal with World Bank assistance.

(ii) Implementation of restrictive industrial location policy in the Mumbai Metropolitan Region for the last two decades for controlling discharge of untreated industrial effluents into the Arabian sea near Mumbai. Accordingly the polluting industries are not allowed to be set up in the zone-1 of Mumbai Metropolitan Region and the existing industries are also not allowed to expand, if the pollution load is likely to increase.

(iii) Encouraging the setting up of Common Effluent Treatment Plants (CETP) for small and medium scale industries.