

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

(f) the details of the total investment of Suzuki Motor Corporation in MUL?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAJAJ) : (a) to (c) Government felt that the dispute was purely commercial and could be tackled administratively as a matter of difference of opinion between the two share holders. In order to settle the differences quickly and concentrate on the more vital questions of business development, technology upgradation in MUL and to maintain its place at the top of the automobile industry, the Memorandum of Understanding and Settlement for resolving the dispute has been signed between Government of India (GOI) and Suzuki Motor Corporation (SMC) who are the two principal share holders in MUL.

(d) There is no proposal at present.

(e) In view of (d) above, does not arise.

(f) Rs. 103.41 crores, out of which Rs. 66.15 crores is equity, and the balance is premium paid while enhancing equity of Suzuki Motor Corporation from 40% to 50%.

[Translation]

Schemes of Spice Board

2774. SHRI RAMESHWAR PATIDAR :
SHRIMATI SHEELA GAUTAM :

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Spice Board has prepared any schemes to give incentives to the processed spice packing units and the oil resin units;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any assistance is being given by the Government to such small scale units; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) to (d) Spices Board provides financial assistance to processed spice packing units and oil resin (oleoresins) units as under :

- (i) assistance for packaging development/bar coding registration, to the exporters of spices in packed forms with brand names and where brands are registered with Spices Board;
- (ii) assistance for development of suitable packages for exports through Indian Institute of Packaging or private consultants;
- (iii) reimbursement of part of cost of packaging for exports of spices in "Logo" packs; and
- (iv) grant-in-aid for technology transfer and process upgradation.

[English]

Financial Assistance to State Handloom Development Corporations

2775. SHRI MANIKRAO HODLYA GAVIT :
SHRI D.S. AHIRE :

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government provide financial assistance to the State Handloom Development Corporation and Handloom Co-operative Societies under various ongoing schemes such as Project Package Schemes, Integrated Handloom Village Development Schemes and other schemes;

(b) if so, the details of financial assistance provided under each scheme during the last three years, State-wise and year-wise; and

(c) the criteria adopted for providing such assistance?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RANA) : (a) Yes, Sir. The Project Package Scheme which provides assistance to Handloom Corporations and Co-operative Societies has, however, been modified and its scope has been enlarged to incorporate the elements of Integrated Handloom Village Development Scheme also which has since been discontinued during 1997-98.

(b) A Statement of central assistance released to various States during the last three years under various schemes is enclosed.

(c) The various schemes in handloom sector have laid down guidelines for providing central assistance. Proposals received from State Governments are approved for release of central assistance in accordance with the guidelines of the schemes.

Statement

Financial Assistance to State Handloom Development Corporations

(Rs. in Lakhs)

Sl. No.	Name of the States	Group Insurance Scheme		
		1995-96	1996-97	1997-98
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Arunachal Pradesh	-	-	-
2.	Andhra Pradesh	14.01	16.00	-
3.	Assam	-	-	-
4.	Bihar	4.04	-	-
5.	Gujarat	-	4.13	-