

ments thereon during 1997-98 was Rs. 6885.50 crore and Rs. 4150.12 crore, respectively as reflected in the revised estimates of 1997-98.

(d) Government is following a prudent strategy for managing country's total external debt. The ratios of external debt to GDP and debt service to current receipts have been declining.

[English]

Integrated Rural Development Programme

1570. SHRI SADASHIV RAO DADOBA MANDLIK: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the nationalised banks in Maharashtra have adopted some villages under Integrated Rural Development Programme to meet their credit needs;

(b) if so, the achievements made by these banks during the last three years;

(c) whether any difficulties have been experienced by above banks in implementing the programme;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the credit plans of the nationalised banks for Maharashtra during the current plan period?

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) and (b) As reported by Bank of Maharashtra, the Convenor Bank for State Level Bankers' Committee in Maharashtra, all villages in Maharashtra have been allotted to banks, including nationalised banks under Service Area Approach for intensive development. The achievements made by these banks i.e. financial assistance during the last three years are indicated below:

(Rs. in crores)

Year	All Banks		Nationalised Banks (Including State Bank Group & RRBs)		
	Target	Achieve- ment %	Target	Achieve- ment %	
1995-96	178.82	160.00	89	134.67	120.49 89
1996-97	200.00	174.64	87	150.70	136.42 90
1997-98	226.30	188.37	83	170.90	143.62 84

(c) and (d) Banks have experienced certain difficulties in implementing programmes like Integrated Rural Development (IRDP). These includes—

i) inadequate sponsoring of proposals in phased manner resulting in bunching of applications towards the end of a financial year;

ii) Sponsoring of applications covering traditional activities, which are found to be not viable and bankable; There appears to be a lack of coordination among the implementing agencies to identify innovating activities to avoid concentration on the same traditional activities;

iii) Infrastructural deficiencies in forward and backward linkages; Non-availability of market tie up for finished products has also been one of the major difficulties;

iv) Poor recovery.

(e) The credit projection for Maharashtra, based on potential linked plan of NABARD, under the Annual Credit Plan 1998-99, are as follows:-

(Rs. in crores)

	Annual Credit Plan 1998-99	
	All Banks	Nationalised Banks (including State Bank Group & RRBs)
Maharashtra	4939.75	1921.57

Imposition of New Duty Rate by European Union for Import

1571. SHRI ASHOK NAMDEORAO MOHOL : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have sought United Kingdom's support to tackle the issue of European Union's new duty which is hitting badly the export of basmati rice from the country;

(b) if so, the details of new duty imposed by European Union;

(c) whether any meeting with U.K. Government has been held in this regard;

(d) if so, the outcome of the meeting; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government to protect the interests of the rice exporters?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) and (b) The Govt. of India has made its position