

(b) whether any irregularity/misappropriation of funds has been noticed by the Government in utilising the said funds;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether any inquiry has been initiated in this regard; and

(e) if so, the action taken/proposed to be taken by the Government against those who found guilty?

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 funds allocated (revised estimates) under both Plan & Non-Plan to the Department of Ocean Development for the past three years are as under :

(in crore rupees)

1995-96	1996-97	1997-98
57.79	64.38	102.11

(b) and (c) There is no case of utilisation/reappropriation of funds for a purpose other than for which they were allocated without approval of the competent authority. The audit inspection report of the Department for the year 1995-96 and the audit report of National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT), an autonomous body funded by the Department, for the period from 1993 to 1997 have, however, made certain observations on the accounts & activities of the Department/NIOT. These have been taken note of.

(d) No inquiry has been warranted.

(e) Does not arise.

[English]

Welfare Schemes for Small Fishermen

2222. SHRI RANJIB BISWAL : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have formulated any scheme for the welfare of the small fishermen;

(b) if so, the names of the States where such scheme has been implemented;

(c) whether the scheme has been implemented for small fishermen living around Paradeep, Nuri and Konark in Orissa; and

(d) if so, the benefit provided to the fishermen living around those places during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL) : (a) The Government of India is implementing the Centrally Sponsored National Welfare of Fishermen Scheme for the welfare of fishermen. The scheme has the following three components:—

(i) Group Accident Insurance for Active Fishermen;

(ii) Development of Model Fishermen Villages; and

(iii) Saving-cum-Relief for Marine Fishermen.

(b) The names of the States and Union Territories where one or more components of the scheme are being implemented are given below:—

States—1. Andhra Pradesh, 2. Assam, 3. Bihar, 4. Gujarat, 5. Himachal Pradesh, 6. Jammu and Kashmir, 7. Karnataka, 8. Kerala, 9. Madhya Pradesh, 10. Maharashtra, 11. Manipur, 12. Orissa, 13. Tamil Nadu, 14. Rajasthan, 15. Tripura, 16. Uttar Pradesh, and 17. West Bengal.

Union Territories—1. Andaman Nicobar Island, 2. Lakshadweep, 3. Pondicherry, and 4. Daman & Diu.

(c) and (d) Fishermen living around Paradeep, Puri and Konark have been provided benefit under the Saving-cum-Relief and the Development of Model Fishermen Villages Components of the National Welfare of Fishermen scheme, during the last 3 years.

Betel Leaves

2223. SHRI LAKSHMAN CHANDRA SETH : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have declared betel leaves as one of the agricultural commodities; and

(b) if so, the steps taken to improve the cultivation of betel leaves?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Under all India coordinated research project on betelvine of ICAR, researches on various aspects including pest and disease of the crop is being conducted at 10 research centres to improve the cultivation of betel leaves. Besides some of State Governments are also providing assistance to improve the cultivation in their States.

[Translation]

Prisoners of War

2224. SHRI DATTA MEGHE : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian soldiers/citizens are imprisoned in China;