

*[English]***Delay in Patenting**

5477. SHRI CHANDU LAL AJMEERA: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state the steps taken to cut delay in patenting inventions and innovations of Indian scientists?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT): The Government has been taken steps to reduce delay by attempting to modernise the patents system in the country. Steps are underway to modernise and strengthen the patent office through a plan which would provide the required qualified personnel, infrastructural facilities, optimisation of available resources through reorientation of functions between offices, computerisation of procedures and elimination of backlog of patent applications.

*[Translation]***Tourist Places in Delhi**

5478. SHRI VIJAY GOEL: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

- whether Jama-Masjid of Delhi is also included in the development schemes of tourism-department;
- whether the Government propose to formulate any scheme to give a facelift to Chandni Chowk for tourists which is historically important; and
- if so, the efforts being made by the Government in this direction?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI OMAK APANG): No, Sir. The scheme for development of tourists attractions are formulated by State Governments. Union Ministry of Tourism provides financial assistance to select projects for which State Governments seek assistance.

(b) and (c) The Government of Delhi has constituted a Task Force headed by the Commissioner, Municipal Corporation of Delhi to give a facelift to Chandni Chowk.

Unemployment Allowance

5479. DR. PRABHA THAKUR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

- whether there are thousands of unemployed youths in the country inspite of having graduation or post graduation degrees or diploma;
- if so, whether the Government have prepared any scheme to provide employment to such unemployed youths;
- if so, the details thereof;
- if not, whether the Government has any scheme to provide unemployment allowance to such youths until they get employment; and
- if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA): (a) to (e) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Loss Due to Demurrage

5480. PROF. RITA VERMA : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

- the amount of loss suffered by B.C.C.L. on account of payment of demurrage during each of the last two years;
- the details of grounds on which the demurrage is being imposed;
- the total amount spent by BCCL on making of payment different demurrage during the last two years;
- the action taken against the officials found responsible for such demurrage during the last two years; and
- the measures taken to minimise the demurrage?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI DILIP RAY): (a) and (c) The amount paid by BCCL on account of demurrages during the year 1996-97 and 1997-98 is as under:

Year	Rs. in crores
1996-97	6.43
1997-98	7.64

(b) The railways levy demurrages if wagons are not loaded within the time allowed. No specific details are indicated by the railways and delayed wagons are termed "left behind wagons" and demurrages charged.

(d) In June, 1998, action has been initiated against six officers upto the level of General Manager and chargesheets have been issued for acts of omission and commission leading to demurrages.

(e) There are several reasons why wagons may not be loaded within the time allowed. The railways have systematically reduced the time allowed for loading of wagons. Sometimes, the wagons are sent in bunches and also at odd hours. Loading is also inhibited due to inclement weather, strikes and bandhs, power failures and machinery breakdown. Appropriate measures are taken to tackle these situations.

*[English]***Setting up of Five Star Hotels by Foreign Companies**

5481. SHRI AJAY KUMAR S. SARNAIK: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

- whether the Government have allowed certain foreign companies to set up Five Star Hotels in the country;
- if so, the details thereof;
- the location at which these hotels are likely to be set up, State-wise;
- whether the Government propose to hand-over some five star hotels to private companies to run; and
- if so, the details of the Government's policy in this regard?