

	Direct Taxes	Indirect Taxes
(b) Approximate number of cases pending in Courts	35,000	20,000

(c) to (e). The Government is planning to set up an Appellate Tribunal for Customs and Central Excise for adjudication of disputes relating to determination of the rates of duties of Customs and Central Excise and the value of goods. The details of the proposal are being worked out. As regards the time frame, it is not possible to indicate it at present.

The Finance Minister has also given an assurance in his Budget Speech on 29.2.92 that the Government is planning to set up the National Court of Direct Taxes. Necessary steps would be taken to fulfil this assurance at an early date.

Jet Trainers

5026. SHRI R. SURENDER REDDY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have asked the British and the French companies to submit proposals from the supply of advanced jet trainers to be inducted by the Indian Air Force;

(b) if so, the reasons for inviting fresh proposals and the fate of earlier obtained proposals in this regard; and

(c) the time schedule fixed for acceptance of the proposals and decision to be made in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b). Fresh proposals for the acquisition of Advanced Jet Trainers for meeting the requirement of the IAF have been invited from the short-listed foreign suppliers, as earlier proposals ob-

tained several years ago have become invalid.

(c) It is not possible to fix any time-schedule for a final decision in the matter.

Assistance for Development of Jute Sector

5027. SHRI R. SURENDER REDDY: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have urged the Food and Agricultural Organisation and other Multilateral organisations to provide more assistance for the development of the jute sector; and

(b) if so, the details of the assistance sought for this purpose during 1991-92 and 1992-93?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT) (a) and (b). A National Programme for the development of the jute sector in India envisaging an assistance of US\$ 23 million during Eighth Five Year Plan from UNDP has been formulated and submitted to UNDP.

Trade with French Businessmen

5028. SHRI PARATAPRAO B. BHONSLE: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether French businessmen are keen to have trade with India;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken or proposed to be

taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) to (c). There is constant interaction between French and Indian businessmen to enhance bilateral trade. With this objective a delegation of French businessmen visited India in October, 1991. The French Government would also be sponsoring trade and industry delegations to assess prospects of increased trade between the two countries.

[*Translation*]

Seizure of Ivory and Ivory Products

5030 DR. LAL BHADUR RAWAL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the cases of seizure of ivory and ivory products have increased during the last one year;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the names of the states where such cases have come to light;

(d) whether the export and marketing of the seized ivory and ivory goods is permissible;

(e) if so, the details in this regard; and

(f) the quantity and the value of these items exported during the last year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) to (f) The required information is being collected from various Departments of the Government and concerned field formations, and the compiled information will be laid on the Table of the House.

Export of Spices

5031 DR. LAL BHADUR RAWAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the export of spices has decreased during 1991-92;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and the value of loss of foreign exchange due to this;

(c) the steps being taken by the Government to boost the export of spices;

(d) whether the prices of spices produced in the country are very high; and

(e) if so, the steps being taken to make them competitive in the international market?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHID): (a) No Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Steps taken by Spices Board for increasing the export of spices include sending delegations abroad arranging buyerseller meets participating in important international fairs & exhibitions promoting export of spices in value added forms such as spice oils & oleoresins consumer packed spices upgrading the quality of Indian spices Brand Promotion Logo promotion and other regular publicity measures.

(d) the prices of most of the spices produced in the country are high compared to the spices from other producing countries.

(e) For increasing the production and productivity of spices a Central Sector Scheme for integrated development of spices is being implemented in various states during 1991-92 with an outlay of Rs. 5 crores