

has been an increase, in indigenous availability of DAP, there have been sporadic shortages of DAP and MOP due to late arrival of imports.

During Rabi, 1998-99, temporary shortage of DAP was experienced in the States of Punjab, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. Shortage of MOP was reported for a brief period in West Bengal in November, 1998.

For tackling these shortages which were localised, Government had taken the following measures :

- (a) Priority was accorded in berthing of DAP vessels at the ports.
- (b) Priority was accorded for movement of DAP by rail both from plants and ports.
- (c) Additional imports of nearly 55,000 MTs of DAP were arranged from Jordan through Indian Potash Limited (IPL). *61213*

SC/S1/062

Financial Assistance to backward People

*7. **SHRI PRADEEP KUMAR YADAV** : Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are providing financial assistance to the backward people for their higher education through National Backward Class Finance and Development Corporation;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of persons benefited thereby during the last three years, year-wise, and the amount provided to them, State-wise;

(d) the criteria being adopted to select the persons for such assistance; and

(e) the number of applications received during 1996-97 in this regard, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI) : (a) Yes. The National Backward Classes Finance & Development Corporation had formulated a pilot scheme called 'Askanksha' in 1996-97 for providing education loan to eligible members of the Backward Classes for technical and professional education.

(b) The details of the scheme are in statement-I.

(c) As per statement-II attached.

(d) As per statement-I.

(e) As per statement-III attached.

Statement-I

Details of the scheme of 'Aakanksha'

This scheme was formulated in 1996-97 by the National Backward Classes Finance & Development Corporation (NBCFDC) for providing educational loans to the eligible members of Backward classes for technical and professional education. Persons below double the poverty line are eligible. The applicant should have obtained admission for the particular academic year to a course in an institution recognised by Govt. of India. Priority was to be given to women and physically disabled. Courses covered under the scheme are MBA or equivalent, Master of Computer Applications, Graduation courses in Engineering, Medicines Programmes including Ayurvedic, Homeopathy and Unani, recognised by Medical Council of India and Diploma courses in Hotel Management. The entire loan is repayable with 4.5% per annum interest in 96 instalments commencing after 6 months from the successful completion of course or three months after getting job whichever is earlier.

Statement-II

Statement showing the number of persons benefited and the amount sanctioned to them year-wise and State-wise.

S.No.	Name of the State/UT	1996-97		1997-98		1998-99	
		No. of Benf.	Amt. released to SCA	No. of Benf.	Amt. released to SCA	No. of Benf.	Amt. released to SCA
1.	Madhya Pradesh	-	-	-	-	2	59.130
2.	Tamil Nadu	-	-	-	-	9	245.348
	Total	-	-	-	-	11	304.478

Statement-III

Statement showing the number of applications received during 1996-97 State-wise.

S.No.	Name of the State/UT	No. of the applications received
1.	Andhra Pradesh	9
2.	Bihar	1
3.	Chandigarh	1
4.	Delhi	3
5.	Gujarat	1
6.	Kerala	8
7.	Karnataka	6
8.	Madhya Pradesh	5
9.	Maharashtra	14
10.	Orissa	1
11.	Pondicherry	2
12.	Rajasthan	4
13.	Tamil Nadu	115
14.	Uttar Pradesh	2
15.	West Bengal	4
Total		176

[English]

113 115

Boost to Housing Industry

8. SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK :
SHRI RAMESH C. JIGAJINAGI :

Will the Minister of URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government have asked the State Governments to take measures for the simplification of Registration procedure and reduction of Stamp-duty to boost the housing industry in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the comments of the Ministry of Finance in this regard;

(c) whether the State Housing Ministers/Chief Ministers Conference have been organised for this purpose;

(d) if so, the recommendations made therein; and

(e) the steps being taken to boost the Housing Industry?

THE MINISTER OF URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI RAM JETHMALANI) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The States have been asked to rationalise and simplify procedures for registration of documents and execution of mortgages. Reduction of registration duty will give a boost to housing activity by facilitating documentation. Reduction of stamp duty on securitization has also been recommended, to enable setting up of a secondary mortgage market which will ensure flow of more funds into the sector.

The Ministry of Finance has furnished the following comments :-

"A conference of State Finance Ministers on Stamp Duty Reforms was held on 4.7.97. Consequent to the conference, a State Finance Ministers' Committee recommended simplification of Indian Stamp Act 1899. A group of experts has already drafted model legislation simplifying the Act. This model legislation has been communicated to all the States for their comments.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) This Ministry has taken several steps to give a boost to housing :

(i) Fiscal incentives under the Income Tax Act and in customs and excise duties have been secured in last year's budget. More concessions have been sought for this year.

(ii) Legal reforms have been initiated to facilitate housing. The Urban Land Ceiling Act has been repeated through an ordinance. Model Rent Control legislation has been prepared and circulated among State Governments. States have been advised to adopt it. States have also been advised to amend town planning and building laws to encourage housing. This ministry is also pursuing amendments to foreclosure laws to facilitate easy foreclosure.

(iii) The Government through greater interaction with the National Housing Bank and housing finance institutions is seeking to ensure greater private sector participation in the sector. Government is