

(c) and (d). No specific directions to the State Government of Bihar have been given in this regard. However, the need to provide employment to as many ex-Servicemen as possible and making reservations in jobs in their favour (if not done already) has been impressed upon various State Governments, including the Government of Bihar from time to time.

(e) No, Sir.

Operation Black Board Programme in Rajasthan

6971. SHRIGULABCHAND KATARIA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the financial assistance provided by Union Government to the state of Rajasthan under the Operation Black board programme;

(b) whether most of the schools in Rajasthan are without buildings, black boards and tat-patties and most of such schools are in the Adivasi areas; and

(c) if so, the steps being taken by Government to improve the condition of these schools?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA): (a) The following amounts have been released to Rajasthan under the scheme of Operation Blackboard:-

| <i>Year</i> | <i>Amount (Rs. in lakhs)</i> |
|-------------|------------------------------|
| 1987 - 88 | Rs. 1175.55 |
| 1988 - 89 | Rs. 1123.68 |
| 1989 - 90 | Rs. 1568.63 |

(b) and (c). According to information furnished by the State Govt., there are 27014 primary schools in the State, of which 2091 are buildingless and 5104 have only one room.

Almost all schools require essential teaching learning equipment including black-boards and tat-patties. Action is being taken to cover all primary schools under Operation Blackboard and provide them with at least two teachers, a all weather two room building and a set of essential teaching learning equipment including maps, charts, black-boards, tat-patties, a small library, games equipments etc. 17198 schools have been covered under the scheme in 1987-88 and proposals for covering the remainder are being taken up.

[English]

Progress on 'ARJUN' Tank

6972. SHRI M. M. PALLAM RAJU: SHRI DILIP SINGH JU DEO:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of Government has been drawn to the press report appearing in Times of India dated 6 April, 1990 under the caption "MBT project runs into rough weather";

(b) if so, the facts thereof;

(c) the latest stage of development and progress on 'Arjun', the main battle tank;

(d) the date by which it is expected to commence production as per the original specifications; and

(e) the main reasons identified to be the causes of delay in the project's progress?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (DR. RAJA RAMANNA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The report published in the newspaper is based on dis-information and contains a number of gross inaccuracies. As the project is of sensitive nature, it will not be proper to discuss its details in order to contradict these inaccuracies. However, it needs

to be emphasised that MBT ARJUN is being developed as per the original General Staff Qualitative Requirements, as updated from time to time by the Army. Admittedly, there has been some delay in the past in the development of the project due to initial teething problems. However, this is quite common to weapon system programme of this nature. The Project is now in an advanced stage of development and users trials.

(c) 12 prototypes including 2 fully integrated prototypes of tank 'ARJUN' have been fabricated. More than 12500 Kms. track mileage has been accumulated as part of R&D and Users-cum-R&D evaluation. As part of Weapon System trials a total number of 754 rounds of different types of ammunition have been fired for evaluation of range, accuracy and consistency of the system. The immunity has already been tested to our satisfaction. Two fully integrated prototypes are undergoing mobility and firing trials in desert area of Rajasthan. These tanks will be subjected to user's MBT Cell proving trials during ensuing summer of 1990.

(d) The production of the tank is expected to commence by 1992.

- (e)
- (i) Change in qualitative requirements.
 - (ii) Requirements of additional prototypes by Army.
 - (iii) Requirement of pre-production series tanks.
 - (iv) More realistic assessment of technical and user trials.

Assistance for Development of Western Ghat

6973. SHRI SURESH KODIKKUNNIL:

SHRI T. BASHEER:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have given any financial assistance to Kerala for development of various schemes under Western Ghat; if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether Government of Kerala have submitted any proposal for the development of Western Ghat;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether Government have given more financial assistance in 1990-91 to the development of Western Ghat; and

e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI BHAGEY GOBARDHAN): (a) to (e). Special Central Assistance is being provided to the Government of Kerala under Western Ghats Development Programme to supplement the efforts being made by the State Government for the development of the Western Ghats Areas with special emphasis on the programmes relating to ecological development, which is the main theme of the programme. The State Government submit the proposals under the programme to the Planning Commission every year. For 1990-91 the Government of Kerala have furnished Annual Plan proposals amounting to Rs. 568 lakhs against an anticipated expenditure of Rs. 567.95 lakhs during 1989-90. The proposals have been approved by the Planning Commission, scheme-wise allocations of which are given in the Statement below.