

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 KODIKKUNIL:

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.

STATEMENT*Kerala - Annual Plan 1990-91**Western Ghats Development Programme - Approved Outlays*

<i>S. No.</i>	<i>Sector/Sub-Sector</i>	<i>Approved Outlay</i>
1.	Agriculture	131.00
2.	Dairy Development	27.00
3.	Fisheries	8.00
4.	Forestry and Wild life	160.00*
5.	Minor Irrigation	77.00
6.	Western Ghats Cell	5.00
7.	Roads and Bridges	78.00
8.	Sericulture/other Agriculture Programmes	44.00
9.	Science & Technology	6.00
10.	Misc.	32.00*
<i>Total</i>		<i>568.00</i>

*Subject to re-allocation of funds for schemes under this sector providing funds for stall feeding out of Rs. 40 lakhs intended for stone wall fencing etc.

Medical Check up of Scientists going to Antarctica

6974. SHRI D. PANDIAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the practice of medical check up by Army doctors for the members to be selected to the Antarctica Expedition had been liberalised or terminated, which had led to the death of four scientists due to heart attack and also led to other losses in 1989; if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether Government propose to take necessary steps to rectify the lapses and ensure proper safeguards for the scientific personnel?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (PROF. M.G.K. MENON): (a) The death of four persons in Antarctica, who were members of the 9th Expedition, has been attributed to accidental poisoning by carbon monoxide. All members of an expedition are medically examined by doctors of the Armed forces or by a government civil hospital before leaving on the Expedition.

(b) Government provides for proper safeguards for members joining Antarctic expeditions.

[Translation]

Development and Preservation of Temple at Bodh Gaya and Adjoining