

(c) the further steps taken by Government in this regard for full utilisation of foreign aid?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI ANIL SHASTRI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) A number of factors have contributed to less than anticipated utilisation of external loans/credits. These include delay in securing mandatory approvals, resolution of technical issues, procurement and implementation delays and inadequate availability of counter-part funds.

The progress of projects financed with foreign assistance are constantly being reviewed. Procedures for approvals have been simplified and progress of projects is being monitored with a view to improving the disbursement of loans/credits already committed.

Waiver of agricultural loans in Andaman and Nicobar Islands

1609. **SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKATA:** Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the agricultural loans advanced to the farmers in Andaman and Nicobar Islands would be written off;

(b) if so, the total amount involved in nationalised banks and co-operative banks, separately;

(c) whether the entire amount for Andaman and Nicobar Islands would be borne by Union Government, it being a Union Territory;

(d) if so, whether necessary directions have been issued in this regard;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI ANIL SHASTRI): (a) to (f) The Agricultural and Rural Debt

Relief (ARDR) Scheme, 1990 formulated by the Central Government covers the whole country including Union Territory of Andaman and Nicobar Islands. While the burden of debt relief to be provided under the scheme by public sector banks will be borne by Central Government, that in respect of co-operative banks will be shared equally from the Central Government budget and the budget of Union Territory. All the State Governments and Union Territory Administrations including Andaman and Nicobar Islands have been requested to formulate a scheme for borrowers of Cooperatives on the lines of Government of India's Scheme. The exact number of beneficiaries and quantum of relief provided bank-wise under the Scheme will be known only at the final stage of implementation of the Scheme.

Promotion of adventure tourism

1610. **SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKATA:** Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Union Government have laid emphasis on the need for promoting adventure tourism so as to make people aware of environmental protection;

(b) if so, the steps taken by Government in this regard; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI SATYA PAL MALIK): (a) to (c) The Central Department of Tourism is fully conscious of the need to make people aware of environmental protection and for that purpose all tourism related schemes are approved after ensuring that all requisite formalities are complied with and necessary clearances are obtained from concerned authorities. These include factors relating to environmental protection.