

Government employees who had rendered not less than 20 years qualifying service and were eligible for pension were allowed the benefits of family pension. The family pension in such a case is normally at the rate of 50 per cent of the superannuation pension subject, however, to a minimum of Rs. 40 and a maximum of Rs. 150 per month. This family pension is non-contributory in nature and is payable for a maximum period of 10 years from the date following the date of death of the employee but not exceeding beyond the period of 5 years from the date on which the Government servant would have retired on superannuation. The family for this purpose includes widow/widower, sons, daughters, father, mother, brother below the age of 18 years and unmarried and widowed sisters. A new scheme known as the Family Pension Scheme, 1964, which is contributory in nature, was introduced with effect from 1st January, 1964 and Government employees who were in service at that time were given an option to choose between the two schemes.

Finance Minister's visit to U.S.A. and other Countries

*93. SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR
DHARA:

SHRI D. D. DESAI:

Will the Minister of FINANCE AND REVENUE AND BANKING be pleased to state:

(a) what are the possibilities of improvement in financial and economic relations of India, with the countries visited by him in the beginning of last month, particularly the United States of America; and

(b) whether there is possibility of further improvements in Indo-American relations as a result of his visit?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND REVENUE AND BANKING (SHRI H.M. PATEL): (a) and (b). The Finance Minister visited only U.S.A. in April 1977. He halted at

London on his way to Washington and also on his return journey, but he had no official engagements in the U.K.

2. The Finance Minister's visit to USA was primarily to attend ministerial meetings of the Development Committee and the Interim Committee of the IMF and the IBRD. The deliberations in these Committees are in the nature of a continuing dialogue between the developed and developing Countries on questions relating to the reform of the international monetary system and improvements in the operational policies and instruments of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

3. The Finance Minister also availed of the opportunity presented by these meetings to establish bilateral contacts with his counterparts from major countries (including U.K., Canada, France and West Germany) and to discuss matters connected with India's share of the IDA funds.

4. The discussions with U.S. Treasury Secretary and U.S. Secretary of State centred on the question of India's share in IDA lending, and the issue of bilateral aid from USA to India was not discussed. Such discussions do however, help to create the conditions for increasing co-operation and cordial economic relations between the two countries.

Uniformity in Rates of Sales Tax

*94. SHRI SHAMBHU NATH CHATURVEDI: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND REVENUE AND BANKING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received representation from the States and Business and Trade Associations for bringing about uniformity in the sales tax rates throughout the country and its collection by the Central Government as additional excise duty; and

(b) if so, what progress has been made in giving effect to these proposals?