

start than has been the case in the past, in absolute terms as well as relative to the advanced States and, to achieve this objective, as many of the poorer States as possible should be left with surpluses on the revenue account which could be ploughed back for fresh development. These recommendations of the 7th Finance Commission have been accepted by the Government. The Government have also decided that modalities will be worked out to see that the States with relatively weak financial resource base are enabled to implement adequately the revised minimum needs programme, covering rural water supply, house sites for the homeless, rural roads, rural electrification, rural health care, bonded labour and elementary/adult education.

The Central assistance for the State Plans is allocated in accordance with the criteria commonly known as the Gadgil Formula. Under this formula, a lumpsum provision is made for Assam, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura, keeping in view their requirements for Plan expenditure. In the distribution of the balance amount of Central assistance, weightage is given to backwardness as indicated by the *per capita* income of the States. In addition to the Central assistance under the Gadgil Formula, additional assistance is allocated for development of hill and tribal areas. The Gadgil Formula is currently being reviewed by a Committee of the National Development Council.

American Writer's Report on Tourism in Andamans and Nicobar Islands

*485. SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that some top travel writers of America have recently visited the Union territory of Andamans and Nicobar Islands to study the tourism potential of the Islands;

(b) whether they have submitted any report on their studies to Government; and

(c) if so, what are their recommendations to promote tourism and what steps are proposed in this regard by Government as a result thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PURUSHOTAM KAUSHIK): (a) to (c). No, Sir. Two US travel writers, delegates to the Society of American Travel Writers Convention held in Delhi in September 1978, visited Port Blair to see the tourist attractions and facilities available there. This was done with a view to gather material for writing articles on Andamans. They did not undertake any study of the tourism potential of the Islands.

Introduction of Tea Production in States

*486. SHRI M.V. CHANDRA SHEKHARA MURTHY:

SHRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE, CIVIL SUPPLIES AND COOPERATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Union Government have approached U.P., M.P. and Maharashtra Governments for introducing tea production in their States;

(b) if so, the reactions of the State Governments; and

(c) whether other States have also been approached?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND CIVIL SUPPLIES AND COOPERATION (SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR): (a) and (b). The Tea Board has been in touch with State Governments including U.P., M.P., and Maharashtra to explore the possibility of introducing tea cultivation in the States. Actual introduction of the same will, however,

depend on suitability of soil, availability of land and climatic factors, surveys for which are being undertaken.

(c) The Governments of Nagaland, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Manipur have also been approached by the Tea Board for introduction of tea plantations. The Government of Kerala and Sikkim have similarly been approached for extension of tea plantation in these States.

श्रीरियप्टल फायर एण्ड जनरल इन्स्योरेन्स कम्पनी

* 487. श्री ज्ञानेश्वर प्रसाद यादव : क्या वित्त मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या श्रीरियप्टल फायर एण्ड जनरल इन्स्योरेन्स कम्पनी के राष्ट्रीयकरण के बाद बिहार के पूर्वोत्तर जिलों पूणिया, कटिहार तथा सहरसा को 'सिलीगुड़ी' डिवीजन में शामिल किया गया है ;

(ख) क्या यह सच है कि उक्त तीन जिले पहले बिहार में पटना तथा मुजफ्फरपुर डिवीजन में थे; और

(ग) यदि हां, तो क्या सरकार बिहार के लोगों को सुविधा देने के लिए उपरोक्त तीन जिलों को बिहार के किसी डिवीजन में शामिल करेगी ?

वित्त मंत्री (श्री एच० एच० पटेल) : (क) और (ख). पहली जनवरी, 1975 से पहले कम्पनी की पूणिया शाखा, जो पूणिया, कटिहार और सहरसा जिलों के लोगों को जरूरतों के लिए काम करती थी, पटना डिवीजनल कार्यालय से सम्बद्ध थी। पहली जनवरी, 1975 से इस शाखा कार्यालय का नियंत्रण मुजफ्फरपुर डिवीजनल कार्यालय को अन्तर्गत कर दिया गया, जो अभी खोला गया था। मार्च, 1976 से पूणिया शाखा कार्यालय के तीन जिलों तथा पश्चिम बंगाल के दो जिलों अर्थात् कुछ बिहार और जसपाईगुड़ी को प्रभावी नियंत्रण तथा प्रशासनिक सुविधा के बिचार से सिलीगुड़ी में नए खोले गए डिवीजनल कार्यालय के अन्तर्गत अन्तर्गत कर दिया गया।

(ग) पूणिया शाखा कार्यालय को सिलीगुड़ी डिवीजन कार्यालय से प्रलग करने के सवाल पर तक कोई निर्णय नहीं लिया जा सकता जब तक बिहार के पूर्वी अंश में भीमें का काफी इन्फ्रार मिशन नहीं शुरू होजाता और कम्पनी उक्त क्षेत्र में नया डिवीजनल कार्यालय खोलने का फैसला नहीं कर लेती।

Recruitment Policy in Subsidiary Banks of State Bank of India

*488. PROF. P. G. MAVALANKAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have modified the status and any of the rules and regulations and recruitment policy in respect of officers and employees of the various subsidiary banks of the State Bank of India;

(b) if so, what are they;

(c) whether Government propose to merge these subsidiaries into the main channels and organisation of the State Bank of India;

(d) if so, main indication thereto; and

(e) if not, why not?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI H. M. PATEL): (a) and (b). No, Sir. Government have not made any modifications recently i.e. in last year or so—in either the status or rules and regulations concerning officers and employees of the various subsidiary banks of the State Bank of India. In respect of recruitment policy, however, the State Bank is considering the proposal that its Recruitment Board, which is concerned with recruitment of officers for the State Bank and its subsidiaries, be entrusted also with the task of recruitment to the clerical cadre in the Group.

(c) to (e). There is no proposal with the Government for the merger of State Bank subsidiaries into the State Bank of India.

Progress regarding D.A. Merger, D.A. etc. referred to Arbitration

489. SHRI SUKHDEO PRASAD VERMA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether three issues relating to Dearness Allowance i.e. merger of