

(c) The power sector outlay for Andhra Pradesh during the last 3 years was as under :-

1992-93	:	Rs. 532.62 crores
1993-94	:	Rs. 550.03 crores
1994-95	:	Rs. 639.15 crores

Employment Opportunities in Rural Areas

14. SHRI DEVI BUX SINGH :
SHRI CHHEDI PASWAN :
DR. RAMESH CHAND TOMAR :
SHRI SATYA DEO SINGH :
SHRI KUNJEE LAL :
SHRI VILASRAO NAGNATHRAO GUNDEWAR :

Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware of the non-availability of the employment opportunities in rural areas of the country;

(b) if so, the details of the policy formulation by the Government to create more employment opportunities for the educated unemployed youths in the rural areas and to check migration to cities;

(c) the percentage of the educated unemployed rural youths to whom employment has been provided so far under the said policy; and

(d) the present population of the rural areas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT DEPARTMENT OF RURAL EMPLOYMENT AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMEN-TARY AFFAIRS (SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR) : (a) Govern-ment is fully aware of the status of employment opportunities in rural areas.

(b) To create more employment opportunity for the poor educated unemployed youth in the rural areas various pro-grammes are being implemented by the different Ministries. This Ministry is implementing the scheme of Training of Rural Youth for Self-employment (TRYSEM) Under this scheme technical skills are imparted to poor rural youths to enable them to take up self/wage employment. Such youths are also provided loans/subsidy under Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP).

(c) Since inception of the scheme of TRYSEM, a total number of 19.32 lakhs (upto 1994-95) trained youths have gained wage employment as a result of this scheme.

(d) The population of rural areas as per 1991 census is 62.715 crores.

[English]

Freight Equalisation Scheme

15. SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA :
SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE :

Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to announce the complete dismantling of the freight equalisation scheme;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV) : (a) to (c). After deregulation of pricing and distribution of steel, the main producers are charging actual freight upto the stockyard or freight element as existed under the earlier Freight Equalisa-tion Scheme (now Rs. 1510/- per tonne of steel and Rs. 945/- per tonne of pig iron) whichever is lower. The extra burden on this account is being borne by the main producers themselves. In doing so, the freight disadvantage to the States/areas located near the steel plants of the main producers has been removed. At the same time the advan-tage of lower freight under the Freight Equalisation Scheme to the distant States/areas has been protected. At present there is no proposal to discontinue this system because it benefits the iron and steel consumers in distant States/ areas.

Denial of Visa By Pakistan

16. SHRI PANKAJ CHOWDHARY :
SHRI RAMPAL SINGH :

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Pakistan Government had denied per-mission to the Sikh pilgrims of Jammu-Kashmir to visit Nankana Sahib in Pakistan on the occasion of Guru Nanak Dev Birth anniversary;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Union Government have lodged its protest in this regard with Pakistan : and

(d) if so, the reaction of that country thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R.L. BHATIA) : (a) to (d). Government recommend to the Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi lists of Indian pilgrims desirous of visiting Sikh gurudwaras located in Pakistan under the bilateral Protocol on visits to Religious Shrines, 1974. Government are aware that Pakistan has not granted visas to pilgrims from many states including Jammu and Kashmir for the jatha visiting Pakistan in November, 1995.

Pakistan claims that it reserves the right to grant or refuse visas to the pilgrims/visa applicants 'as per its visa-policy.'

Government have repeatedly urged Pakistan to fulfil its commitments under the Indo-Pak Protocol on Visits to Religious Shrines, 1974 and have also specifically proposed that Indo-Pak Joint Commission including its Sub-commission IV, which deals with visa-related matters, be reconvened.

NTPC

17. SHRI VIJAY NAVAL PATIL : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news item appearing in the Financial Express on October 31, 1995 under the caption "Top Brass continues to desert NTPC for MNCs"; and

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto and the steps being taken or proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI URMILABEN CHIMANBHAI PATEL) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The resignation of Executives at senior level is a normal phenomenon in any Enterprise. There has been slight increase, because of the opening of the power sector to the private sector. However, the resignation of Executives has, in no way, affected the functioning of the Corporation, which continues to perform exceedingly well. The Corporation is engaged in various ways to deal with the problem by way of appropriate wage revision, other incentives and undertaking exercises to fill the resultant vacancies, expeditiously.

National Drug Authority

18. SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA : Will the MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the New Drug Policy announced in September 1994 and the Drug Price Control Order (DPCO) issued in January 1995 have resulted in a steep rise in drug prices and also failed to bring rationality in the country's drug market;

(b) if so, whether the Government propose to set up National Drug Authority with the objective of both decision making and enforcement including power to root out banned and irrational drugs from the market; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS, AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ELECTRONICS AND DEPARTMENT OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO) : (a) No, Sir. To the extent information is available, there has been no steep increase in the drug prices in general. The change in prices as reflected in wholesale price index number (base 1981-82=100) shows that the increase in the prices of medicines since the announcement of Modification in Drug Policy, 1986' in September, 1994, on a point to point basis has been lower than that for all commodities.

(b) and (c). 'Modifications in Drug Policy, 1986', already provide, vide para 22.8.1 that a National Drug Authority (NDA) would be set up by an act of the Parliament, to be steered by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. This Authority will look after the Quality Control aspects, Rational use of Drugs and related matters. As per available information, action in regard to setting up of NDA has been initiated by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

[Translation]

Arms Purchase by Pakistan

19. SHRI GUMAN MAL LODHA : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn has been drawn to the newsitem appearing in the "Daily Observer" dated 10th August, 1995 under the caption, 'Pakistan among top 10 arm purchasers';

(b) if so, whether it is a fact that Pakistan have procured