

(c) whether the working and production of these companies have been adversely effected and their reputation has suffered from public and commercial point of view as a result of delay in taking a decision;

(d) whether the Government propose to take some steps to revive these companies so as to improve their management and to make them profitable; and

(e) if so, the details thereof

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMEN-

TARY AFFAIRS (DR. ABRAR AHMED) (a): The Board for Industrial had Financial Reconstruction (BIFR) does not provide any economic assistance for revival of sick industrial companies. The assistance is, however, extended by banks, financial institutions, State Government, etc. for revival of such companies.

(b) and (c): The references registered with the BIFR are processed as per the provisions of Sick Industrial Companies (Specation Provisions) Act, 1985, and reasonable opportunity is even to all concerned at the various stages of inquiry. The registration and disposal of cases with BIFR year else as under;

YEAR	REGISTERED	FINAL DISPOSET
1987	318	26
1988	298	25
1989	200	15
1990	152	8
1991	155	9
1992	177	7
1993 (upto June)	72	8
	1366	100

(d) and (e) : Government have already initiated action on comprehensive amendments to the sick Industrial Companies Special provisions) Act, 1985 in order to detect sickness at its incipient stage, to enhance the effectiveness of the BIFR, and to remove certain ambiguities inherent in the Act.

#### Joint Ventures in Portugal

950. SHRI PANKAJ CHOWDHRY: Will

the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Portugal has invited the Indian investors for setting up joint ventures in that country;

(b) if so, whether the Government propose to encourage the Indian investors for setting up joint ventures in Portugal;

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MIN-

ISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION AND MINISTRY OF STATE IS THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED) (a) At the first meeting of Indo-Portugal joint Business Council held in Lisbon recently, Portuguese industrialists invited Indian investors to set up joint ventures in their country.

(b) It is a part of Government's policy to strengthen bilateral economic cooperation..

(c) and (d): Some potential areas identified for enhanced cooperation on both sides include tourism, ship building, ship repairs, fisheries, textiles, footwear, tele-communications, pharmaceuticals, construction and consultancy services.

[English]

#### **Nationalised and Regional Rural Banks in Gujarat**

951. SHRI GABHAJI MANGAJI THAKORE: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of licences issued by the Reserve bank of Indian (RBI) to open branches of the nationalised and Regional Rural Banks in Gujarat during Eighth Five Year Plan period so far; and

(b) the proposals for opening branches of the above banks pending clearance with RBI?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (DR. ABRAR AHMED) (a) and (b): Under the Branch Expansion Policy 1990-95, Public Sector banks (excluding RRBs) have been allotted 65 and 54 centres for opening of their branches in Rural and Urban/Metropolitan areas of Gujarat State. No specific quota has been allotted to individual Indian Schedule Com-

mercial bank (excluding RRBs) on All India basis for opening of branches at semi-urban centres and the banks are free to open branches at the centres of their choice. On the basis of allotments made, banks has been advised by Reserve bank of India (RBI) to approach their Regional Offices concerned for issue of licences after finalising the necessary arrangements such as, premises, infrastructural facilities etc. The Regional Offices of RBI will issue licences to banks on the basis of allotments made as and when approached by banks in the matter. In view of this, there are no proposals pending at the RBI level in respect of semi-urban centres.

#### **Smuggling of ARMS Through Gujarat**

952. SHRI HARIBHAI PATEL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of the large scale smuggling of deadly arms/weapons to India by Pakistan through Gujarat sea route;

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(c) to steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to stop such smuggling?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKARA MURTHY): (a) to (c): Government are aware of the threat of smuggling of deadly arms/weapons into India through Gujarat sea route. All concerned Central Government and State Government agencies are alert and acting in a fully integrated manner to enforce surveillance.

#### **Development of Tourist Centres in Sundarbans**

953. SHRI RADHIKA RANJAN PRAMANIK: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state: