

(e) whether the Government have appointed any committee in this regard ;

(f) if so, the recommendations made by the said Committee ; and

(g) the action taken by the Government in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI P. K. THUNGON) (a) to (d) There is a gap between revenue realised through irrigation and related charges and the cost of operation and maintenance of irrigation projects. It has been estimated that cumulative financial losses during the Seventh Plan period (1985-90) under the irrigation sector amounted to Rs. 3676.83 crores without considering interest charges. This has adversely affected the availability of resources for proper operation and maintenance of irrigation projects.

(e) and (f) Yes, Sir. The suggestions of the Committee include: treating water rates as users charge; the objective of water charges is ultimately to recover cost; linking revision of water rates to the improvement of the quality of service; revision and implementation of water rates in phases consolidation of the system of Farmer group management; upgrading the system to higher level efficiency in water use and productivity; setting up experts group at the State level for working out norms for operation and maintenance and procedure for periodic review; setting up of autonomous boards at the State level to review policy regarding cost of water, revising water rates and introducing a minimum financial return criteria.

(g) Irrigation being a State Subject, decision on water rates can be taken only in consultation with the State Governments and the Administrations of Union Territories. With a view to go into the report of the Committee and to have a broad spectrum of the views on various recommendations made by the Committee, the Planning Commission has constituted a

group of officials under the Chairmanship of the Secretary, Planning Commission.

[Translation]

#### Sale of Idols

97. SHRI PANKAJ CHOWDHRY :

SHRI JANARDAN MISRA :

SHRI ARVIND TRIVEDI :

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has arrested some persons engaged in selling idols of archaeological importance to the foreigners during the last two months ;

(b) if so, the details thereof ;

(c) the action taken against them ; and

(d) the number and value of idols seized from their possession ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI P. M. SAYEED) : (a) Yes Sir.

(b) Two persons, namely, Parmanand Aggarwal and his son Ramesh Kumar Aggarwal, residents of Kantibanji, District Bolangir, Orissa were arrested in Delhi by the Central Bureau of Investigation on 10-10-93 and 12 Ashtdhatu idols suspected to be antiques were recovered from them. These idols were alleged to be stolen from temples/monuments in Orissa. Both these persons came to Delhi to sell these idols.

(c) A criminal case RC/9/93-SIU(XI) against the accused persons under sections 411 IPC and Sec. 25(2) r/w 14(3) AAT Act, 1972 was registered by the CBI on 10-10-93.

(d) 12 Ashtdhatu idols were recovered from them. The antiques are generally priceless and their exact value cannot be assessed easily.