

North Eastern States

6025. SHRI SAMAR CHOUDHURY : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) the details of present status of the Central agencies concerning the promotion of agriculture, trade and industries with their financial involvements to each of the North Eastern States;

(b) the progress and scheme-wise financial programme to each of the State by the Central agencies during 1998-99; and

(c) the details of Central agencies who had withdrawn their presence from the North Eastern States before 1998 March?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI) : (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the House.

Enhancement of Foodgrains under TPDS

6026. SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE : Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Parliamentary Committee on Food and Public Distribution has recommended to enhance the quantity of foodgrains supplies under Targeted Public Distribution System from 10 kgs. to 15 kgs. per family; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto indicating the additional subsidy required therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI SATYA PAL SINGH YADAV) : (a) and (b) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Recognising the Old Persons as Senior Citizen

6027. SHRI RAVINDRA KUMAR PANDEY : Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have adopted 65 years of age for recognizing the old persons as Senior Citizen;

(b) if so, the guidelines/grounds formulated by the Government in this regard;

(c) whether the Government proposed to give status of Senior Citizen to all those persons completing the age of 60 years instead of 65 years;

(d) if so, the time by which the decision is likely to be taken and notified by the Government; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI) : (a) and (b) No, Sir. There is no uniform age prescribed by the Government for recognition as an Older Person.

(c) to (e) In view of the above, the question does not arise.

Religious Places

6028. SHRI MULLAPALLY RAMACHANDRAN : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that the Delhi Government has taken decision to exclude the Churches from the list of religious places;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Government are aware that the Christians all over the country are agitating over Statement of the Excise Minister of Delhi to exclude Churches from the list of religious places; and

(d) if so, the response of the Government in this regard and the steps taken by the Government to protect Churches in Delhi?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI) : (a) to (d) The Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi have denied that they have taken any decision to declare Churches as not being places of worship. They have infact reiterated their firm commitment to safeguard the rights of worship of all the people residing in Delhi irrespective of their religion, caste or creed and uphold the sanctity of all the religious places and the customary rites and sacraments of all the communities.

[Translation]

Inclusion of Siklikar Sikh Community

6029. SHRI SHANTILAL PURSHOTTAMDAS PATEL : Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have received any representation/letter to include Siklikar Sikh Community in the list of Scheduled Castes;

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

(c) the action taken by the Government in this regard;

(d) whether any ordinance is likely to be issued by the Government to include the said community in the list of Scheduled Castes; and