

(b) whether the rubber growers from Kerala have made representation to stop the import of raw rubber;

(c) if so, the action taken by the Government thereon; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government to ensure remunerative price to the rubber producers?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) During 1998-99 (April-August), a quantity of 11020 MT of Natural Rubber has been imported.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. Import of rubber is already in the Restricted List and free import is not permitted. However, import of rubber is allowed against Advance Licence/Special Import Licence only, for re-export purposes. Import and Natural rubber from SAARC countries has been permitted w.e.f. August 1998.

(d) To improve the domestic price of Natural Rubber, the Government has ordered procurement of Rubber by the STC.

#### Scam in Indian Bank

1055. SHRI SURESH WARPUDKAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item appearing in the 'Hindustan Times' dated August 9, 1998 captioned "4 crore scam detected in the Indian Bank."

(b) if so, the details of the facts of the matter; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to curb such incidents in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCE AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARATHANAN) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Indian Bank has reported to RBI a fraud of Rs. 3.10 crore at its Jamshedpur branch. The fraud was detected by the bank on 17th July, 1998. The bank has reported that following a fire at the branch premises on 5th July 1998, an investigation was conducted which revealed that Demand Drafts (DDs) were issued without consideration and without proper entries in the books of the branch. It was also noticed that some DD leaves were missing and relevant pages of the DD issued register were either torn or not traceable. Enquiries with Service Branches of the bank and verification of unreconciled entries have so far revealed that DDs to the tune of Rs. 3.10 crore were encashed through the bank's New Delhi and Calcutta Service branches. An amount of Rs. 2.60 crore was found to have been collected in the accounts of two business concerns in New Delhi by

HDFC Bank Ltd. and Canara Bank. The balances in these accounts (Rs. 90.44 lakhs at HDFC Bank Ltd. and Rs. 1.43 lakhs with Canara Bank) have been frozen. The bank filed a complaint with the Police on 22.7.98. CBI was also requested to investigate on 4th August, 98. The police arrested the Assistant Manager of the branch and he has been placed under suspension by the bank. Police have seized 23,600 shares of one Company and a few shares of other two companies from one of the business concerns involved. Police have also reportedly frozen the bank accounts of a financial consultant and a broker at Jamshedpur. The Bank has also lodged claim with insurance company and alerted its branches regarding the missing blank DDs.

(c) With a view to prevent such incidents, RBI has instructed banks that blank demand drafts and mail transfer forms should be treated as security items and adequate safeguards should be taken against their pilferage and these should be held in the joint custody and balanced daily. Draft/mail transfers for amounts of Rs. 10,000/- and above should be signed by two officials jointly. Deviation from observation of this safeguard should be allowed only in exceptional circumstances such as one-man-branches or small branches where two officers may not be available at all the time.

In August 1998 banks have been further advised that all transactions in DDs/TTs/MTs should be segregated from inter-branch items. These should be reconciled at weekly intervals and large value transactions should be closely monitored.

#### Development of Handloom Varieties

1056. SHRI T. GOVINDAN: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal for development of handloom varieties pending with the Union Government; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RANA) : (a) and (b) Receipt of proposals is a continuous process. However, utmost priority is given to considering valid and viable proposals, as per the guidelines of schemes supported with State/Cooperative Society/Implementing Agency financial contributions.

[Translation]

#### Construction of Yatri Niwas in Bihar

1057. DR. MADAN PRASAD JAISWAL: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) the details of proposals received from the Bihar Government for construction of Yatri Niwas in the State;

(b) the action taken by the Union Government thereon and the amount released for the purpose during 1997-98; and

(c) the places in Bihar where Yatri Niwas are located at present?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI OMAK APANG) : (a) No proposal was received from the State Government during 1997-98 for the construction of Yatri Niwas. However, proposals were received for construction of tourist complexes.

(b) During 1997-98, the Ministry of Tourism sanctioned Rs. 233.07 lakhs for various Tourism projects.

(c) In Bihar, Yatri Niwas are located at the following places:-

1. Yatrika at Gaya.
2. Yatrika at Patna Sahib.
3. Yatrika at Deoghar.

[English]

#### Loan to Karnataka by NABARD

1058. SHRI RAMCHANDRA VEERAPPA : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the NABARD has announced 50 crore rupees loan to Karnataka recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the interest rate and terms of repayment and area of its utilisation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCE AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) to (c) National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) has reported that it has not announced any loan of Rs. 50 crore in respect of Karnataka State. NABARD, however, provides refinance assistance to State Co-operative Banks (SCBs) on behalf of affiliated Central Co-operative Banks (CCBs) for providing short-term and medium-term agricultural loans. NABARD have recently sanctioned short term (Seasonal Agricultural Operations) credit limits to the Karnataka State Co-operative Apex Bank Ltd. On behalf of the Karnataka District Central Co-operative Bank Ltd., Dharwad.

[Translation]

#### Identification of Coal Mines

1059. SHRI RAMSHAKAL : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether any Committee has been constituted by the Government for locating new coal mines;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of coal mines located during the last five years in each State;

(d) the reasons for the poor condition of coal mines found in Sonebhadra district of U.P.;

(e) whether the Government propose to make available funds for this mine under the Special Scheme; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI DILIP RAY) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise in view of reply to part (a) above.

(d) Northern Coalfields Ltd. is working four mines in the district Sonebhadra and all these mines are working properly and also earning profit.

(e) and (f) Do not arise in view of reply to part (d) above.

[English]

#### Appointment on Compassionate Grounds in New India Ass. Co. Ltd.

1060. SHRI RAMA CHANDRA MALLICK :

SHRI BHIM DAHAL :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the employees of New India Assurance Company Limited died during 1997 and 1998 ;

(b) the details of the deceased whose dependants have not been provided with employment on compassionate grounds together with the reasons in each case; and

(c) the time by which they are likely to get employment in the company?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCE AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) As per Statement-I enclosed.

(b) As per Statement-II enclosed.

(c) New India has reported that these cases are likely to be cleared shortly in accordance with the rules and procedures of the company.

#### Statement-I

Details of employees died during 1997 and 1998

	1997	1998
Class I	9	7
Class II	6	5
Class III and IV	45	35