

LOK SABHA DEBATES

(English Version)

Ninth Session
(Fourteenth Lok Sabha)



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LOK SABHA DEBATES

LOK SABHA

[English]

Monday, December 04, 2006/Agrahayana
13, 1928 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

(Interruptions)

REFERENCE BY SPEAKER

Train and bus mishaps and landmine blast

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Hon. Members, in a very misfortunate mishap on 2nd December, 2006, 35 people reportedly lost their lives and many were injured when a portion of 150 year old bridge collapsed on the 3071 Howrah-Jamalpur Express at Bhagalpur in Bihar.

In another mishap on the same day, a bus from Delhi to Shimla plunged into a gorge near Kandaghat about 10 Km. from Solan on the Kalka-Shimla Highway resulting in death of about 14 people and injuries to many.

In yet another accident or rather a mishap, on the same day, about 14 police personnel were killed and some injured in a landmine blast at Kanchkir, in Bokaro District of Jharkhand.

The House expresses its grief over the loss of lives and injuries caused in these mishaps.

The House may now stand in silence as a mark of respect to the departed.

11.01 hrs.

*The Members then stood in silence
for a short while*

(Interruptions)

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY (Puri) : Sir, let the hon. Minister make a statement in this regard. The House is entitled to know about this. ... (Interruptions)

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD) : Sir, I will make my Statement at 12 O'clock.

MR. SPEAKER : Let me conduct the House. We will start with the Question Hour. I will request all of you for your cooperation; we will try to cover as many as possible. At 12 noon, immediately after the Question Hour, the hon. Minister for Railways will make a statement. The hon. Railway Minister has sought my permission to make a statement; I will allow him. I will also allow other important matters, starting with Shri Syed Shahnawaz Hussain.

We will dispense with the luncheon recess today. We will continue with the discussion on 'price rise', and the hon. Minister will reply to that. By about 3 p.m., it should be over. At about 3 o'clock, the discussion on the 'state of the panchayats' will be taken up and discussed until it is completed, maybe, late in the night.

(Interruptions)

Now, Question No. 162 –

Shri G. Karunakara Reddy – Not present.

Shri Kishanbhai V. Patel – Not present.

Question No.163 – Shri Brajesh Pathak.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[Translation]

Condition of ESI Hospitals

*163. SHRI BRAJESH PATHAK : Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the conditions of the Employees State Insurance (ESI) Hospitals in the country are far from satisfactory;

- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the schemes formulated by the Government to improve the condition of the said hospitals; and
- (d) the amount likely to be allocated for implementation of the improvement schemes during the current financial year?

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU) : (a) to (d) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

(a) to (d) The condition of ESI Hospitals and their working in the country is generally satisfactory. The ESI Corporation has formulated various schemes to improve the condition of the ESI hospitals as detailed below:

- 123 ESI Hospitals are being run by the State Governments as per Section 58 of the ESI Act, 1948; 17 hospitals as Model Hospitals, 03 hospitals in Delhi and 01 hospital in Chandigarh are directly run by the ESI Corporation.
- Modernization and upgradation of hospitals is done by providing modern equipments for diagnostic and clinical services. Senior State Medical Commissioners / State Medical Commissioners have been delegated powers to facilitate early sanction of equipments for hospitals for to Rs.15 lacs per unit at the State level itself.
- ESI Corporation has increased the ceiling for providing medical care from Rs.750/- to Rs.900/- per Insured Person family unit per annum w.e.f. 01.04.2005 to facilitate State Governments with more funds to improve medical services in ESI Hospitals.
- Apart from this, ESI Corporation is incurring total expenditure on construction / repair and maintenance of hospital buildings at its own cost. Further there is sharing of expenditure on equipments costing above Rs.25000/- per unit

between the State Government and ESIC outside the ceiling of Rs.900/- per I.P. per annum.

- ESI Corporation has introduced the Scheme of Revolving Fund for providing advance / reimbursement for super speciality / speciality treatment, purchase of drugs and dressings and repair and maintenance of equipments.
- Tie up arrangements have been made with other reputed Government / non-Government hospitals for providing super speciality / speciality services which are not available in ESI Hospitals.
- ESI Corporation is in the process of getting hospitals graded by professional agencies and obtaining ISO 9001-2000 certification. One ESI Hospital in Delhi has already been granted ISO certification.
- ESI Corporation is encouraging computerization and incurs all expenditure on provision of computers to ESI Hospitals.
- ESI Corporation has allotted a budget of Rs.1042.71 crores during 2006-07 to provide medical services.

[Translation]

SHRI BRAJESH PATHAK : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the condition of Employees State Insurance (ESI) hospitals is far from satisfactory. The employees covered under ESI particularly in Uttar Pradesh prefer to get medical treatment in Government hospitals which are run by the State Government or the Central Government instead of going to ESI hospitals. In this regard, I have written several letters to the Ministers of Labour and Employment. I would like to know from the hon'ble Minister as to what action has so far been taken on those letters.

SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU : Sir, most of the ESI hospitals are functioning under the State Government. Our ESI corporation is giving only Rs.900 per I.P. to them. [English] In the first three quarters, we give them

and in the fourth quarter, we ask them for the bills so that it could be reimbursed fully. [Translation] There are 123 ESI hospitals and some of them are also located in Uttar Pradesh. For the up-gradation of ESI hospitals the State Governments should send proposals for purchasing equipments for hospitals. While I was in this Ministry.

[English]

I have personally written letters to the State Labour Ministers and to the hon. State Chief Ministers throughout the country to give the proposals and to monitor things so that the functioning of the ESI hospitals will be better. So, from our side, there is no constraint and there is no problem about funds also.

They have to send proposals for purchase of equipment above Rs.25,000. The amount of Rs.900 that we give covers, all the purchases within Rs.25,000 but above Rs.20,000 it is on sharing basis. [Translation] They are giving for seven times then they have to given once.

[English]

They have to give proposals for upgradation, new constructions and other things for the hospitals. There is no problem from the side of the Ministry. The Ministry is fully prepared to upgrade the hospitals.

[Translation]

SHRI BRAJESH PATHAK : Mr. Speaker, Sir, my question was as to what action has been taken so far by the department on my letters. The hon'ble Minister has to just taken over the charge of the department and I welcome him. He is our colleague. My second supplementary question is regarding those hundreds of workers who work in leather factories and tenaries located in my parliamentary constituency Unnao. They often fall ill. They fall prey to dangerous diseases that make their lives miserable. Employees State Insurance hospital facilities are not available there especially for workers. I had written letter to the then Minister in this regard and my letters might be available in his department. I would like to request the Government that it should set up an separate hospitals for

labourers in Unnao district for the welfare of labourers. What action has been taken by the Department on my letters for setting up of a hospital there?

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Have you got the information?

SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU : Right now I do not have the information. In general I can say.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the State Government will have to issue a notification keeping in mind the geographical condition of the site when new hospital is proposed to be set up. Once the notification is issued by the State Government the matter will be taken up by the Central Government at the earliest and action will be taken in this regard.

SHRI BRAJESH PATHAK : The Minister should do this.

SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU : We cannot do this. First of all the State Government will have to notify it and only then the matter will be taken up by the Central Government.

SHRI BRAJESH PATHAK : The Minister should forward my request.

[English]

SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU : I will definitely look into it.

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY : Sir, in his reply the Minister has acknowledged rather euphemistically that ESI hospitals are not performing as per the desired level. ESI hospitals are reported to have been suffering from lack of infrastructure, equipment, diagnose facilities, etc. including the resource crunch of respective State Governments. May I ask the hon. Minister how much revenue has been generated by ESI Corporation per year at present and how much of this chunk is being reimbursed for the beneficiaries.

SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU : In my reply I have stated that we give per IP Rs.900 for treatment, medicine and other infrastructure. What the hon. says is true because the State Governments are not able to send their proposals. As I told earlier, we are prepared to upgrade the infrastructure, equipment, everything but the State Governments are in financial constraint and they are not prepared to share. There lies the problem. From our side, we are taking all interest because last year in the ESI Corporation meeting we passed a resolution to take direct control of all the ESI hospitals throughout the country so that we can upgrade them. That is under process. We are formulating principle and everything so that we write to the concerned State Governments and if they agree we will take up all the hospitals under our control. On trial basis we have taken up one model hospital in each State and we are upgrading it up to the level.

[Translation]

SHRI JASWANT SINGH BISHNOI : Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you I would like ask the hon'ble Minister especially about ESI hospitals of Jodhpur. When that hospital was set up there, the number of employees in that hospital was very less. However, now the number of employee has steeply increased. But there is neither any specialist doctor nor there is any medical equipment. It is a ESI hospitals only in name. The Government of Rajasthan has sent recommendations on its behalf to the Central Government. Jodhpur is the second largest city of Rajasthan after Jaipur. So the said hospital should be upgraded at the earliest and specialist doctor posted there and equipments also provided. I would like to know from the hon'ble Minister whether the Government propose to upgrade the ESI hospital of Jodhpur. If so, the time by which the said hospital is likely to be upgraded.

[English]

SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU : Sir, I have already replied it because if

[Translation]

The proposal has been sent by the State Government

then we will certainly ponder over it and take action in this regard at the earliest. But the proposal should come from the State Government.

[English]

SHRI KHAGEN DAS : Sir, we discussed the condition of the ESI hospitals with the officials in the PAC meeting during our tour. It was reported that the patients are not going to the hospitals for treatment because there is a shortage of specialist doctors. Is it a fact that the specialist doctors are not there in the ESI hospitals throughout the country? If so, what actions are being taken by the Government of India to fill up those vacant posts?

SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU : As regards the ESI hospitals which are run by the Ministry of Labour, the appointment process is on. We have already recruited more than 70 doctors. As far as other super-specialty doctors are concerned, their interviews have already been conducted and they are going to be appointed very soon. Regarding State Government run hospitals, I cannot give you the details now because it is for them to appoint the doctors and para-medical staff. But I can say about the hospitals run by us. I think about 70 to 80 doctors have already been appointed. The recruitment process of other para-medical staff and doctors is on and they would also be appointed very soon.

[Translation]

SHRI SHAILENDRA KUMAR : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the concerns expressed by the hon'ble Members belonging to the treasury benches and the opposition both on the issue is justified and the reply of the hon'ble Minister all along points towards the responsibility of the State Government. In his reply he has stated that Rs.900 are being given as IP to ESI hospitals and Rs.2500 are being paid for basic infrastructure. The said amount is meager in the present scenario of inflation. As the prices are rising prices of medicines are also increasing. I would like to submit to the hon'ble Minister that in fact the condition of ESI hospital is really very pathetic. The services of specialist doctors as well as other facilities that ought to have been available in the hospital are not available. I would like to know from

the hon'ble Minister whether he will meet the demand of special package made by the State Governments.

SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU : Sir, the amount of IP of Rs.900 has been recently increased. Earlier it was Rs.750 which has been increased to Rs.900. I agree with what the hon'ble Member is saying. There are financial constraints with the State Government and it is on account of this that the said hospital could not be upgraded. They are not able to pay their 1/8th share that they were supposed to pay. I will certainly pay attention to the suggestions made by the hon'ble Members. There is ESI corporation...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SHAILENDRA KUMAR : The Minister should say especially about Uttar Pradesh.

MR. SPEAKER : He will do for all places.

SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU : We will ponder over it in our next meeting.

(English)

SHRI GURUDAS DASGUPTA : Sir, again we have the misfortune. The Minister who is in charge of the Ministry is not present here.

MR. SPEAKER : He has taken my permission. He has gone abroad for a very national cause. So, never make such comments.

SHRI GURUDAS DASGUPTA : I do not object to it. But I am saying that the workers are having the same misfortune that the question is answered by another Minister.

MR. SPEAKER : It is all right. You are there to uphold their cause.

SHRI GURUDAS DASGUPTA : The point is, the hon. Minister is referring to diarchy. He is saying that 153 hospitals are run by the State Governments and 17 hospitals are run by the Central Government. It means that there is diarchy. A number of hospitals are run by the

Central Government and most of the hospitals are run by the State Governments. And the hon. Minister is saying that the condition is generally satisfactory. He is just reading the statement.*...

MR. SPEAKER : No, don't say that. That will be deleted. Please put a question. This is not a debate.

SHRI GURUDAS DASGUPTA : This is absolutely incorrect. Most of the hospitals do not have doctors, do not have medicines and super-speciality is beyond reach. The workers do not go there, money is being wasted and there is no monitoring. I am saying this because I am coming to the root of the problem. The Central Government is passing on the buck to the State Governments and the State Governments are passing on the buck to the Central Government. In view of the unsatisfactory condition prevailing now in most of the ESI Hospitals and the workers not getting any benefit out of them despite increased allocation, will the Central Government consider having a unified command so that* ... and diarchy come to an end?

MR. SPEAKER : That word will be deleted.

SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU : In reply to the first question, I have told that, in the meeting of the ESI Hospitals, it has been decided that all these Hospitals will be directly controlled by the Central Government and there is a proposal for that. They are working out on that proposal. After the whole proposal is worked out, we will write to the State Governments and those State Governments which would agree to hand over their Hospitals will be entirely taken over by the Central Government. Infrastructure and other equipments required are there.

Regarding super-speciality, I can say this much that there are four zones in the country. A proposal for this has already been approved and they are working out on it. Very soon, we will have four superspecial hospitals throughout the country...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : Nothing is being recorded.

*(Interruptions)**

*Not recorded.

[Translation]

Oilseed Crops

+

*164. SHRI TUFANI SAROJ :

SHRI KAILASH NATH SINGH YADAV :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether any assessment has been made regarding sowing of oilseeds and pulses for the year 2006-07 in the country;

(b) if so, whether there has been a decline in the sowing area of the above crops for 2006-07 in comparison to the corresponding period of the last years;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to meet the domestic demand;

(e) whether the Union Government has considered any scheme to provide financial assistance to the farmers of such States; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) to (f) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

(a) to (c) Yes, Sir. As per the assessment in the 1st advance estimates for kharif crops of 2006-07, area coverage under sowing of kharif oilseeds is around 15.74 million hectares compared to 16.79 million hectares (1st advance estimates) in 2005-06. For rabi oilseeds 2006-07, as per the reports received in the weekly Crop Weather Watch Group meeting held in the Ministry on 24th November, 2006, the area coverage stands at 7.48 million hectares compared to 8.16 million hectares during the corresponding period last year. The total (Kharif and Rabi)

area covered under oilseeds in 2006-07 stood at 23.22 million hectares against 24.95 million hectares in 2005-06, showing a decline. This is due to shifting of some oilseeds area to pulse crops on account of less moisture availability in some States. Also, some oilseeds area has shifted to wheat crop due to prevailing high prices of wheat in the market. However, the sowing of rabi oilseeds is in momentum and coverage of more area is envisaged.

For kharif pulses, the area coverage in 2006-07 is about 10.50 million hectares compared to 10.33 million hectares in 2005-06. For rabi pulses of 2006-07, up to 24th November, 2006, the area coverage stands at 7.90 million hectares compared to 7.18 million hectares during the corresponding period last year. The total (Kharif and Rabi) area covered under pulses in 2006-07, reported so far is 18.40 million hectares against 17.51 million hectares in 2005-06. The total area covered under pulses in 2006-07 is already more than that in 2005-06 by about 9 lakh hectares.

(d) The demand supply gap in respect of edible oils was met through imports of 4.17 million tonnes in 2005-06 and 1.61 million tonnes in April to June of 2006. In respect of pulses, the gap was met through import of 1.61 million tonnes in 2005-06 and 0.43 million tonnes during April to June of 2006.

(e) and (f) With a view to providing financial assistance to the oilseeds and pulses growing States, the Government is implementing a Centrally Sponsored "Integrated Scheme of Oilseeds, Pulses, Oil Palm and Maize" (ISOPOM). Under this scheme, financial assistance is provided on 75:25 basis between the Government of India and the State Governments for purchase of various inputs.

SHRI TUFANI SAROJ : Mr. Speaker, Sir, oilseeds and pulses are the staple diet of the common man in India. Despite that the farmers are not getting the desired co-operation from the Government in the production of oilseeds and pulses in agriculture sector. The growth rate of G.D.P. has dreedy reached 9.1 per cent. The growth rate in agriculture sector is 2.6 per cent as against 3.7 per cent

in last year. I would like to know the reasons for 1.1 per cent decline in growth rate in the agriculture sector in comparison to that of last year.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Your question is on oilseeds and pulses. Please restrict yourself to that point. Generally, it comes within agriculture. Therefore, you may deal with oilseeds and pulses.

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, in regard to what has been stated here that the Government has done nothing in the field of oilseeds, I would like to clarify that we cannot ignore the point that it is the responsibility of the State Government. As far as the Union Government is concerned, it has launched a scheme in 14 States in the country for increasing the production of oilseeds and pulses. These States are Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. Under the scheme the Union Government provides 75 per cent of grant while the State Governments give the remaining 25 per cent. The Union Government has given Rs.176 crore under the scheme during 2004-05, Rs.212 crore during 2005-06 and Rs.190 crore 2006-07 to the States in the form of grant. It is entirely the responsibility of the State Governments to implement the scheme. As stated by me, the Union Government provides 75 per cent of grant and it was provided to the above-mentioned 14 States in accordance with their demand.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Tufani Saroj, you ask your second supplementary on oilseed crops and pulses.

[Translation]

SHRI TUFANI SAROJ : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like

to know whether the Union Government has formulated any scheme for providing financial assistance to the farmers of Uttar Pradesh for growing oilseeds and pulses?

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR : Mr. Speaker, Sir, as far as providing financial assistance to the farmers of Uttar Pradesh is concerned, I would like to tell the hon. Member that a sum of Rs.11 crore 15 lakh has been provided to Uttar Pradesh during 2006-07, Rs.5 crore 65 lakh and Rs.7 crore 85 lakh were given for 2005-06 and 2004-05 respectively.

Mr. Speaker Sir, the funds provided to Uttar Pradesh have mainly been for developing good quality and improved varieties of seeds. Now it is the responsibility of the State Government to provide assistance to the farmers. We shall provide quality seeds to the State Government, which could improve their crop. Therefore, Uttar Pradesh has been provided assistance in view of it.

SHRI KAILASH NATH SINGH YADAV : Mr. Speaker, Sir, there is shortage of cultivable land of oilseeds and pulses in the country. Does the Government propose to launch any scheme which could increase cultivable land for oilseeds and pulses crops?

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR : Mr. Speaker, Sir, as far as pulses are concerned, it will have to be admitted that the farmers do not have a tendency to take to oilseeds farming where irrigation facility is there, they rather sow other crops. In rainfed areas, they sow pulses crops, however, their production is limited. As far as oilseeds are concerned, the scenario is changing. The situation is changing in several States in terms of increase in the cultivable area of soya, groundnut, mustard. However, much depends on weather. This year one would find that there has been an increase in the production of pulses followed by Rabi and Kharif crops. This time, approximately 9 lakh hectares of additional land has been covered under pulses whereas there has been a decline in the cultivable area of oilseeds upto 10 lakh hectares. So, we cannot ignore the situation this year. I would like the State Governments to take maximum

advantage from the new scheme which came into effect from 1.4.2004. There is a need to increase its area and production.

CHAUDHARY LAL SINGH : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Government has provided for an integrated scheme for pulses under all the centrally sponsored schemes. Our State, Jammu and Kashmir has not been covered under it. It has been provided that 75 per cent will be given by the Centre whereas 25 per cent will be borne by the States. If the Centre does not give 75 per cent wherefrom will the State meet the remaining 25 per cent. For his information I would like to state that 'Rajma' from our State is of the best quality in the world. Everyone might be aware of that. What can the Government do for promoting it? This variety is hardly available anywhere. My submission is whether our State would be included as the 15th State?

MR. SPEAKER : It is not a question of request. *[English]* You will have to ask the Minister: "Will you help us?"

[Translation]

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR : More attention has been paid to those States where the production of pulses and oil seeds is higher. As far as Jammu and Kashmir is concerned pulses are cultivated in a very limited area, however, the Government is ready to consider it.

[English]

SHRI B. MAHTAB : The total Khariff and Rabi area covered under oilseeds is showing a decline. Oilseed growers are shifting to other crops due to various reasons. One of the main reasons, the major reasons being non-remunerative prices. Though the area coverage for pulses is growing year after year, yet the country is not self-sufficient. We are importing edible oil and also pulses. My question is this. Do you believe that the financial assistance that is being provided to the oilseeds and pulses growing States need improvement, specially the financial assistance which is being provided on 75:25 basis need to be converted into 90:10 basis?

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR : One should not forget that this is the entire responsibility of the States. Agriculture is a State subject. That is why, when the Government of India is taking 75 per cent responsibility, at least 25 per cent responsibility should be taken by the States. Otherwise, the importance goes. That is why, I would say that it is a conscious decision.

[Translation]

SHRI MITRASEN YADAV : Mr. Speaker, Sir the Minister of Agriculture is an expert of the Agriculture Department. Pulses and oilseeds are very important produce of agriculture sector and these are cash crops. A question has been asked here in regard to these crops. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether he is aware that this year a lot of trouble has been faced in the cultivation of these crops, since there is no water, no electricity and no fertilizers. Fertilizers have become so costly, that it is neither available nor within the reach of the farmers. What has been the extent of increase in the production of pulses and oilseeds as compared to the expenditure incurred by the Government as shown on papers and the figures given by him of the last few years? This apart, what has been the quantum of import and its availability by way of production?

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR : One thing I have already said in the House. As far as the issue of import and export is concerned we have to resort to import to fill the gap caused due to shortage of edible oil every year. We have been forced to go for import of edible oil in the years 2001-02 to 2006-07. *[English]* This year, Rs.3548 crore worth edible oil has been imported. Last year, Rs.8716 crore worth edible oil had been imported. In 2004-05, Rs.11,076 crore worth edible oil had been imported. *[Translation]* As I have already stated, we need to resort to import to make up the gap. So far as pulses are concerned, the situation is slightly different. We resort to both export and import of the pulses. During the last few years we used to import pulses. This is for the first time when the need to make export has come up to the fore

front as the indigenous yield of pulses was relatively low earlier. This is why a ban has been imposed on exports to some degree recently—otherwise we used to export pulses every year. However, when there is no availability of things in the country on more than one occasions, we give permission for import. There has been import of goods worth Rs.730 crore this year. It was of worth Rs.3240 crore last year and during the year 2004-05, we have witnessed import of goods worth Rs.1777.

SHRI MITRASEN YADAV : He did not mention the quantum of indigenous production and the increase in percentage of yield. I would very much like to know the quantum of increase in production in proportion to the amount spent for this.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Can you give the figures?

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR : I can give the figures. There is a variation in productivity over the years. For instance, last year the total oilseed production was 27.73 million tonnes; in 2004-05 it was 24.35 million tonnes; and in 2003-04 it was 25.19 million tonnes. So, if you see the figures, [Translation] During the year 2003-04, 2004-05 and 2005-06 the quantum of production has been to the tune of 25 million, 24 million and 27 million tonnes respectively. At times there is set back, sometimes the production is on the higher side. This is the case with oil seeds. As far as pulses are concerned given the figures available during the years 2003-04, 2004-05 and 2005-06, it has been almost stagnant quantum-wise i.e. 14 millions, 13.13 million, 13.11 million tonnes respectively. The production of pulses has been on the lower side for quite sometime in the past. As I stated earlier there is a tendency among the farmers to grow pulses crops in the rain-fed area. It has severely affected the yield. We will have to accept the fact that the varieties developed by us through the research process over the years have not been found upto the mark. The actual state of affairs is testimony to the fact that there has not been proper breakthrough as of now.

[English]

National Commission for Farmers

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*165. MS. INGRID MCLEOD :

SHRI P.C. THOMAS :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the National Commission on Farmers headed by Dr. M.S. Swaminathan has submitted its fifth and final report to the Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof indicating the recommendations made therein;

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(d) the time by which the National Policy for farmers is likely to be approved by the Government?

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) to (d) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) to (d) Yes, Sir. The Fifth and Final Report deals, inter alia, with improving livelihood opportunities and income of farmers; attracting and retaining youth in agriculture; improving the competitiveness of Indian agriculture; and strengthening the coping capacity of farmers in an uncertain trade environment. The Report also contains a Revised Draft National Policy for Farmers which, inter alia, aims to improve economic viability of farming; mainstream the human and gender dimension in all farm policies; introduce a social security system for farmers; foster community-centred food, water and energy security system in rural India; strengthen biosecurity of crops, farm animals, fish and trees; make India a global outsourcing hub for supply of inputs needed for sustainable agriculture

products of bio-technology and information and communication technology; and complete the unfinished agenda in land reform.

The recommendations made by the Commission are under active consideration of the Government. However, there are several programmes already under implementation on the lines recommended by the Commission.

[English]

MS. INGRID MCLEOD : Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Draft National Policy for Farmers would include a detailed study on marketing and management to reduce the adverse manipulation on farmers.

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR) : Sir, this Commission has been set up by the Government and the Commission has given a total of five Reports. In these The Commission has definitely said something about marketing and it has also said that we should try to remove various types of restrictions for the movement of agricultural produce so that the farmers would get proper price.

MS. INGRID MCLEOD : Sir, will the reforms in the agriculture sector include insurance schemes for all the family members who are dependent on the farmer?

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR : Sir, one of the recommendations of the Commission is revision of insurance and that particular subject is before us.

SHRI P.C. THOMAS : Sir, the Report of the Commission on Farmers has extensively dealt with a lot of aspects including land, soil, water, credit, insurance, distress sale, agri risk fund, technology, market etc. and has also suggested a new National Policy for Farmers. I am sure the Ministry would have taken steps to make further study and also taken steps to implement many of these things. I would like to put a pointed question with regard to only one aspect of this because it is a large area.

MR. SPEAKER : Yes, please do it. All questions should be pointed.

SHRI P.C. THOMAS : Agri Risk Fund is one aspect which has been specifically pointed out in the Report.

I hope, it will be coming into the policy also. The risk of agriculture, the farmers, is the main issue before the farmers. It is the risk of nature, it is the risk of floods, it is the risk of everything. I would like to know what exactly is the Government thinking of doing to save the farmers from the risk of nature as well as the risk with regard to the steep fall in prices of agricultural products.

MR. SPEAKER : The report is under consideration.

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR : In fact, the report was given in different stages. The last report has been recently submitted. One of the important suggestions which has been made in this report is that this Commission is going to suggest a new National Agricultural Policy, which has been suggested.

In fact, this Parliament has cleared a National Agricultural Policy in the year 2002. Now, there are further suggestions and some recommendations which have been given in this report. We have not taken a final view on this. After getting all the recommendations of these five reports, the recommendations were consolidated, sent to different Ministries because different Ministries are dealing with this, we took their reactions and these reactions would be ultimately dealt with by the Committee of Secretaries which was appointed by the Prime Minister's Secretariat. After getting the report from the Committee of Secretaries, it will be discussed at the highest level, that is, by the Committee on Agriculture headed by the Prime Minister. In that Committee, these recommendations will be discussed and then the final proposal will be brought before the Cabinet. After the clearance from the Cabinet, I will be able to tell you which item has been accepted and which is the item that the Government of India is going to implement. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : Nothing else is being recorded.

*(Interruptions)**

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : Sir, I have raised my hand.

MR. SPEAKER : So what?

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I have got 20 hands raised. I cannot call all 20 people together.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : Sir, I raised my hand to ask a question.

MR. SPEAKER : I am happy to see your hand raised.

SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR : Mr. Speaker Sir, I would like to put a specific question to the hon. Minister. What are the programmes envisaged by the Government on the recommendations of the Commission to provide one acre per household to landless Adivasi farmers, for home gardens and the animal rearing. I think, the question is clear, Mr. Minister.

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR : The question is clear, but the final view has not yet been taken on this.

MR. SPEAKER : Only thing, I believe, the hon. Members may ask is what is the timeframe of coming to a final decision. All are suggesting 'do this, do that' and he is answering, 'we will look into it'. Would you like to answer, Mr. Minister?

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR : As I said, this particular proposal is before the Committee of Secretaries. After getting the clearance from there, we would like to take the decision as early as possible. In fact, some of the recommendations, which Swaminathan Commission has made, have already been implemented in the last one-and-

a-half to two years. But the view on the total general policy, the report and the total view on the Commission's recommendations has not been taken so far.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : Thank you Sir.

MR. SPEAKER : You need not thank me. I expect some patience and rules to be observed.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : Sorry Sir, but it is the only method to draw your attention.

MR. SPEAKER : We are noting down the names of those who are raising hands. That does not mean, immediately I have to call you. I would like to know how you performed as the Speaker of the Assembly.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : Sir, the Swaminathan Commission reported the issue of fixing fair interest rate. Recently, the Kerala Assembly announced considering a new legislation for this purpose. For fixing of fair rate of interest, a commission will have to be appointed. The appointment of a Debt-Relief Commission is the issue before that State. Now, they are taking evidence. It includes the banking system, which is a Concurrent Subject.

If Kerala Legislation is there attempting to succeed in giving a relief to farmers by fixing fair rates, the Central Government also should take an initiative of bringing a Central Legislation regarding fixing of fair rates of interest because the scheduled banks are involved, the Reserve Bank of India is also involved. The State Legislation will not serve the purpose fully.

Since this subject is in the Concurrent List, I would like to request the hon. Minister to bring in a Central legislation at par or in line with the legislative attempt of the Kerala Legislature in giving relief to debt-ridden farmers. This is my question.

MR. SPEAKER : This is not a question; you made a request only.

It does not arise but please do reply something.

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR : Indebtedness is a very serious problem which Indian farming community is facing today. This particular subject was many times discussed in the august House. The Government of India has taken certain decision. Just to assess the total burden of indebtedness on the farming community in the entire country, one Committee has been appointed under the chairmanship of Shri Radhakrishnan, an eminent Professor.

MR. SPEAKER : Not him!

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : It is a very important question. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR : That Committee has been appointed, and the Committee has been requested to give Interim Report up to 31st December and final report up to 31st of May.

MR. SPEAKER : Which year?

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR : This year; in fact it was appointed four months back only. The issue is very important; this type of time limit is also given to the Committee.

Secondly, regarding the interest issue, the Government of India took a conscious decision to reduce the rate of interest from 9 per cent to 7 per cent. This particular provision was not applicable to many cooperative societies. About three weeks back, the Government of India also took a decision to provide monetary support to cooperative banks whereby they will be able to reduce their interest rate from 9 per cent or 11 per cent to 7 per cent up to Rs.3 lakh. So, we have started the process. After getting Radhakrishnan Committee's Report, final view will be taken.

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY : The hon. Minister has stated that one of the important recommendations of the National Commission on Farmers headed by Dr. Swaminathan is to complete the unfinished agenda in land reforms. Now, the Government is driving the vehicle of land reforms to back gear, in a reverse way. Misusing the

provision of Land Acquisition Act, the State Governments are acquiring lands from farmers and handing them over to industrialists.

MR. SPEAKER : It does not arise.

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY : Sir, Swaminathan Commission has given this specific recommendation to finish the unfinished work of the land reforms. That is why I am asking the particular question, through you, to the hon. Minister.

Provisions under Special Economic Zone Act are one of the bright examples of how the lands are transferred to industrialists. Taking all this into consideration, it seems that land distribution is no more the agenda of the Government. Hence, I would like to know from the hon. Minister what is the perception of the Government about the land reforms, and what is its target and time schedule to complete the unfinished agenda on land reforms. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR : Firstly, this particular subject at the national level is dealt with by the Rural Development Ministry and not the Agriculture Ministry. So, the question should go to the respective Ministry. But, this is a recommendation and we have applied our mind on the recommendation yet.

SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPAN : Sir, we are discussing this question in the context of widespread suicides all over the country by farmers mainly due to the crisis in our agrarian economy.

MR. SPEAKER : It deals with only National Commission Report, Shri Chandrapan.

SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPAN : In this regard, I am asking the Minister because the Swaminathan Commission Report, if implemented, will go a long way in resolving many of the agitating problems. Since the Minister has said that it is under consideration at various levels, I would like to know specifically what will be the time that you are taking for finally processing this Report.

Secondly, on the question of interest, which Swaminathan Commission recommended 4 per cent, I would like to know whether the Government, as a special case, will take an early decision on that recommendation.

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR : Sir, as I have earlier mentioned, the Government of India has already taken a decision to reduce it from 11 per cent to seven per cent, and substantial burden has been taken by the Government of India by implementing this decision.

Regarding the time-limit for taking a final view on the recommendations, it is very difficult for me to answer because many Ministries are involved. Our efforts will be to finish this entire programme, if possible, in six months' time.

SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH : Sir, most of the questions have been asked. The Commission had submitted its Report. But then, Committees under the Ministers, under several experts and under the Secretariat have been constituted. Already, 50 per cent time is over. By the time, the next Report comes the Government's term will be over. Certain recommendations should be straightaway implemented. One of the recommendations is the extension of crop insurance to all crops in the country. Another important one is four per cent interest. These two recommendations should be straightaway implemented without waiting for the Committees' recommendations any further. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government is considering these two recommendations.

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR : I have already said that this is a State subject and the recommendations have a far reaching effect. One of the formalities which we are yet to complete is this. We have to take the confidence of the State Governments. On 22nd December, I have called a meeting of the Agriculture Ministers from all the States to discuss and also to take their views on these recommendations. After getting the views from the States and the concerned Ministries, we would like to take a final view. This view will be taken not by one Ministry. Take the case of the recommendation of four per cent interest.

Ultimately, this particular decision has to be taken by the Finance Ministry. That is why it is very difficult for me at this juncture to say whether we will be able to accept each and every recommendation.

MR. SPEAKER : Now, Q.No.166. Shrimati Bhavana P. Gawali - Not present.

Shri Mahesh Kanodia.

[Translation]

Indebtedness of Farmers

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*166. SHRI MAHESH KANODIA :

SHRIMATI BHAVANA PUNDALIKRAO GAWALI :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether huge burden of agricultural debt has been identified as the major cause of suicide by farmers;

(b) if so, whether the National Commission on Farmers headed by Dr. M.S. Swaminathan has suggested loans to farmers at lower rate of interest and also waiver off interest and principal of loan on certain category of farmers;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto;

(d) whether the Radha Krishnan Expert Group and Hannumantha Rao Committee constituted in this regard have submitted their final report;

(e) if so, the details of the recommendations made therein alongwith the action taken thereon;

(f) whether the farmers who had outstanding debts have been excluded from the special package declared by the Government for farmers in drought prone areas;

(g) if so, the details thereof; and

(h) the action proposed to be taken by the Government to include the indebted farmers in this package?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) to (h) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) Agricultural indebtedness is one of the major reasons for committing suicide by farmers;

(b) and (c) The National Commission on Farmers headed by Dr. M.S. Swaminathan has, inter alia recommended expansion of the outreach of the formal credit system, lowering of rate of interest on crop loan to 4% restructuring of micro finance into livelihood finance and moratorium on debt recovery and waiver of interest on loan in distress hotspots and during calamities. The recommendations are under consideration of the Government.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

(f) No, Sir.

(g) and (h) Do not arise.

SHRI MAHESH KANODIA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to ask the hon'ble Minister through you the number of farmers especially those belonging to Gujarat whom loans have been disbursed under the provisions of borrowings meant for waiving off the loans raised by the farmers from the non-institutional money lenders. I would very much like to apprise myself of the details thereof;

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR) : Sir, it is very important subject and a special attention has been paid to ensure the disbursement of crop loans on a large scale in the country this year. The Government of India introduced a

scheme relating to the increased in agricultural credit three years ago and a target of disbursing as much as Rs. One lakh and five thousand crore was fixed. [English] A sum of Rs.86,000 crore was disbursed for agricultural crop loan. In the year 2004-05, the total target was Rs.1,05,000 crore. The actual achievement was Rs.1,25,309 crore. So, additional 32 per cent credit loan was provided in the year 2004-05. In the year 2005-06, the total target was finalized at Rs.1,41,000 crore and the achievement was Rs.1,67,700 crore. So, 119 per cent target was completed. In the year 2006-07, I have got the figures only up to *kharif*. *Rabi* figures are not with me.

The target was fixed at Rs.1,75,000 crore; and the achievement as on September, 2006 is Rs.94,345 crore. It shows that 53.91 per cent target has been achieved.

For the first time, such a big credit flow has been seen by the Indian farmers. But still I myself am not satisfied because in spite of such a huge flow of credit, even today, more than 60 per cent farmers are not in a position to take loan from any financial institutions, be it the cooperative or the nationalized or regional development bank. Unless and until we take conscious decision and make efforts to bring all the farmers on the net of this loaning, we will not be able to stop these private money lenders. We have to concentrate on all these things in a big way.

[Translation]

SHRI MAHESH KANODIA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the loans raised by the farmers of 31 districts in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala and Maharashtra have been waived off. I would like to know from the hon'ble Minister whether the farmers of Gujarat who committed suicide in certain districts have been provided any sops. If so, the details thereof.

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR : Mr. Speaker, Sir, out of the scheme of districts of four States 6 districts of Maharashtra, 6 districts of Karnataka, 3 districts of Kerala and 10 districts of Andhra Pradesh have been covered. These 31 districts were identified because maximum incidences of suicide

were witnessed there. Therefore, the situation over there was different. The percentage of irrigation was also very low there. This apart there were so many other problems. For obvious reasons the Government of India prepared a package for the assistance of those States-under which as much as 50 percent of the Financial burden of the farmers shall be borne by the Government of India and the remaining 50 percent shall be borne by the State Governments concerned. In this way the amount has been disbursed. I am pleased to note that the situation in Gujarat is very good. The suicidal rate among the farmers of Gujarat is very low as the State Government has undertaken a few new schemes which have proved advantageous to the farmers. There are so many other States as well where the incidence of suicide is lower as the State Governments are much concerned in this regard. However, the situation in these 31 districts was different which is why they have been projected separately.

SHRI SACHIN PILOT : Mr. Speaker, Sir, we are debating over the issue of disbursing loans to the farmers. I would like to tell the hon'ble Minister that the farmers particularly those belonging to such States where there is shortage of water, marginal farmers go for loans to irrigate their small areas of land or for digging bore wells. On more occasions than one, they spend the amount ranging from Rs. Two thousand to Rs. One lakh in making bore wells but water is hardly available. I would like to know from the hon'ble Minister whether the Government propose to provide insurance cover to the marginal farmers in order that the Government may help the poor farmers out in case of non-availability of water.

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR : As of now, there is no such proposal before the Government.

MD. SALIM : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister himself if saying that the Swaminathan Commission has reported that unless the credit delivery mechanism is improved, the major reason for the suicides being committed by farmers, the problem of debt cannot be solved. Either our present organized credit system is beyond the reach of the farmers or the farmers don't have access to the system. I would

like to tell the hon. Minister that the hon. Minister of Finance of the Government is talking of increasing the credit by manyfolds but since agriculture is not viable, farmers are unable to repay their loans and become indebted. The reason behind most of the suicides being committed is that more people are in the clutches of Mahajans and other money-lenders as compared to the people who approach our organized credit mechanism. How will you break the nexus?

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Mr. Salim, Please put your question now.

MD. SALIM : You are unable to help the needy by adopting the method you are talking about. [English] Besides your own organized system, [Translation] the informal sectors, like the one which has got Nobel prize for microfinancing, and the microfinance institutes, like various channelling agents of the State Governments which work among backward sections and SC people are also there. Would you like to use this mechanism so that flow of loans to the farmers can get through those and the farmers are freed from the clutches of money lenders?

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR : Sir, I have stated in the very beginning that it is a very serious problem and the Government is very much concerned about it. Two years ago disbursement figure of Rs.86,000 crore was projected and this year it has reached up to Rs.1,75,000 crore. It shows improvement but still more work needs to be done on this front. We are facing two problems here. One is that among the cooperative societies and banks which provide loans in the villages, the number of sick cooperative societies is higher. A committee under the chairmanship of Sh. Vaidynathanji was constituted to improve their financial health and now the committee has given its recommendations. The Government has accepted these recommendations. Accepting these recommendations, the Government is ready to provide an amount of Rs.14,000 crore to improve the health of these cooperative societies

Out of this, Rs.12,000 crore will be provided to State Governments through the Government of India and the remaining Rs.2,000 crore will be provided by the State Governments and other financial institutions. This money will be used to improve the health of cooperative institutions. If their health improves, the means of credit availability which got blocked in the past will be reopened. Secondly, this year NABARD has begun with credit disbursement on a massive scale through Self-Help Groups for the benefit of the weaker sections and the poor. At present, I don't have the figures but if needed, I can make it available to the House.

SHRIMATI KALPNA RAMESH NARHIRE : Sir, most of the farmers who have committed suicides in Maharashtra belong to Vidarbha but many farmers of Marathwada region in Maharashtra have also committed suicides. I would like to know, through you, from the hon. Minister whether the farmers of Marathwada region will also be given packages like the one given to Vidarbha farmers and whether the debts of the farmers will be waived off to check the suicides being committed by them?

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR : Sir, the problem of suicides is a very serious problem before the country. I have provided the details to the House earlier in this regard. Each year approximately 1.15 to 1.20 lakh people commit suicide in the country. Out of these, 16% people are either farmers or those who belong to farmers' families. It can not be accepted that all of them commit suicide for the reasons concerning agriculture only, but in the majority of cases, it is observed that the burden of debts on them, not getting appropriate prices of their produce, damage to crop causing loss to them due to which they are forced to borrow money from private money lenders and the pressure exerted by the money lenders on the farmers when they are not in a position to repay the loans, are some of the reasons which force farmers to suicide. So, some steps have been taken in the four States where this problem is severe. As far as the situation in other districts of the remaining States is concerned, Radhakrishnan Committee has been constituted to take a decision in the

matter and a time limit has been fixed for the committee to submit its report as early as possible. After the report is received, the Government will take a decision based on the recommendations, as to what steps are needed to free the farmers from the clutches of debt.

[English]

SHRI A. KRISHNASWAMY : Sir, the National Commission on Farmers has suggested loans to certain categories of farmers at lower rate of interest. This is one of the recommendations of the National Commission on Farmers headed by Dr. M.S. Swaminathan.

But in our State, our DMK Government led by hon. Chief Minister, Dr. Kalamangar Karunanidhi, waived Rs.7,000 crores of loans to all the farmers irrespective of the categories. As such, I want to know from the Union Minister whether there is any programme to direct all the States to waive the loans given to the farmers. Will any support be extended to all the States for waiving the loans of the farmers?

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR : I am grateful to the hon. Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu that he has taken a very courageous decision. Regarding the direction to all the States, my appeal is that all the States should take inspiration from Tamil Nadu and also should take certain responsibility about this. We will be very happy to associate with any collective decision.

SHRI A. KRISHNASWAMY : Will the Union Government support that?

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR : I say, definitely yes.
...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I find that you have come fully invigorated. I do not know how many matters you have got to raise.

Now, Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[English]

Labour Courts and Tribunals

*162. SHRI G. KARUNAKARA REDDY :

SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATEL :

Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state :

(a) the number of Labour Courts and Tribunals functioning in the country as on date, State-wise;

(b) the number of cases pending in each of these Courts;

(c) whether there is any proposal to increase the number of Labour Courts and Tribunals;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) the efforts being made to expedite these cases; and

(f) the steps being taken to get the awards of the Labour Courts and Tribunals implemented by the employers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU) : (a) and (b) As per the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947, an appropriate Government can set up Labour Courts and Industrial Tribunals for resolution of industrial disputes. In respect of industrial disputes arising in the Central Sphere, Central Government is the appropriate Government for setting up the Central Government Industrial Tribunal - cum - Labour Courts (CGIT's). There are 22 CGIT's in different parts of the country. State-wise break-up and CGIT-wise pendency of cases are indicated in the enclosed statement.

(c) to (e) Five new CGIT's have been set up during

the 10th Five year Plan in addition to the 17 existing CGIT's. At present, there is no proposal for setting up more CGIT's during the 10th Five Year Plan. These 5 new CGIT's have been set up to expedite the settlement of industrial disputes. A new Scheme for adjudication of disputes through Lok Adalats has also been introduced during the 10th Five Year Plan as an alternative grievance redressal machinery. CGIT's are holding awareness campaigns to make the litigating parties informed of the efficacy of resolution of industrial disputes through this method.

(f) Whenever non-implementation of awards is reported, show-cause notice is issued to employers. After expiry of the show-cause notice, if the employer either fails to reply or the reply is not considered sufficient for compliance of the Order of Tribunal, prosecution proposals are sanctioned by Chief Labour Commissioner (Central) and prosecution cases are filed in the Court for breach of Section 29 of the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947.

However, if the employer is a public servant, attracted by the provision of Section 197 of CrPC, the prosecution proposal is referred by the Ministry of Labour and Employment to the employing Ministry for obtaining sanction.

Statement

| | CGIT's | State | Cases pending upto (9/2008) |
|-----|------------|-------------|-----------------------------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| (1) | Mumbai-I | Maharashtra | 198 |
| (2) | Mumbai-II | | 460 |
| (3) | Nagpur | | 944 |
| (4) | Dhanbad-I | Jharkhand | 1723 |
| (5) | Dhanbad-II | | 930 |

| | 1 | 2 | 3 |
|------|---------------|--------------------|--------|
| (6) | Jabalpur | Madhya Pradesh | 1450 |
| (7) | Kanpur | Uttar Pradesh | 652 |
| (8) | Lucknow | | 387 |
| (9) | N.Delhi-I | NCT Delhi | 513 |
| (10) | N.Delhi-II | | 472 |
| (11) | Kolkata | West Bengal | 202 |
| (12) | Asansol | | 588 |
| (13) | Chandigarh-I | Punjab and Haryana | 886 |
| (14) | Chandigarh-II | | 1124 |
| (15) | Jaipur | Rajasthan | 149** |
| (16) | Bangalore | Karnataka | 332 |
| (17) | Ernakulam | Kerala | 247 |
| (18) | Chennai | Tamil Nadu | 599 |
| (19) | Hyderabad | Andhra Pradesh | 772 |
| (20) | Bhubaneswar | Orissa | 418 |
| (21) | Guwahati | Assam | 33 |
| (22) | Ahmedabad | Gujarat | 1867** |

** The figures in respect of the CGIT's of Jaipur and Ahmedabad are upto June, 2006 as there is no Presiding Officer since July, 2006.

Development of Forest Villages

*167. SHRI VIJOY KRISHNA : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) the aims and objectives of developing forest villages;

(b) whether the Union Government has received proposals for the development of forest villages;

(c) if so, the details thereof, State-wise, particularly from Bihar and Jharkhand;

(d) the funds allocated/utilised therefor, State-wise; and

(e) the number of villages developed as on date?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA) : (a) Recognizing that conservation and development of forests is related to the welfare of the forest dependent communities, the Government of India is supporting projects for the development of forest villages aimed at improving the quality of life of people therein by providing basic minimum facilities and services like food, safe drinking water, health care, primary education, approach roads, other infrastructure facilities etc.

(b) Yes Sir.

(c) and (d) The Government of India provides assistance for the development of forest villages under the Special Central Assistance (SCA) to Tribal Sub Plan (TSP) Scheme of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs. The proposals received from the States are recommended by the Ministry of Environment and Forests to the Ministry of Tribal Affairs for approval as per prescribed procedure and for release of funds. As per the information provided by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, the State-wise details of funds released are given in the statement enclosed. There is no forest village in the State of Bihar.

(e) As per the information provided by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, funds have been released for the development of 2179 villages.

Statement

(As on 28.11.2006)

| S. State No. | No. of forest villages for which projects approved during 2005-06 | Total cost of the project approved during 2005-06 (Rs. in lakhs) | No. of forest villages for which projects approved during 2006-07 | Total cost of the project approved during 2006-07 (Rs. in lakhs) |
|-------------------|---|--|---|--|
| 1. Assam | 373 | 4059.00 | Nil | 0.00 |
| 2. Chattisgarh | 343 | 4359.00 | 61 | 1092.67 |
| 3. Gujarat | 199 | 1979.00 | Nil | 0.00 |
| 4. Jharkhand | 21 | 130.00 | Nil | 0.00 |
| 5. Maharashtra | Nil | 0.00 | Nil | 0.00 |
| 6. Meghalaya | Nil | 0.00 | 23 | 390.71 |
| 7. Madhya Pradesh | 679 | 6191.00 | 143 | 2650.06 |
| 8. Mizoram | 27 | 203.00 | 58 | 870.00 |
| 9. Orissa | 20 | 157.00 | Nil | 0.00 |
| 10. Tripura | Nil | 0.00 | 62 | 930.00 |
| 11. Uttaranchal | Nil | 0.00 | Nil | 0.00 |
| 12. Uttar Pradesh | Nil | 0.00 | Nil | 0.00 |
| 13. West Bengal | 170 | 2104.00 | Nil | 0.00 |
| Total | 1832 | 19182.00 | 347 | 5933.44 |

Abstract

- Total number of forest villages for which projects approved (1832+347) = 2179
- Total Amount released (Rs.19182 lakhs + Rs.5933.44 lakhs) = Rs.251.15 crores.

*[Translation]***Development Work in Forest Areas**

*168. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE :
SHRI KRISHNA MURARI MOGHE :

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether road construction and other various schemes have come to a stand still in tribal and forest

areas of the country after the enforcement of The Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980;

[English]

Rain Water Harvesting

*169. SHRI SUGRIB SINGH : Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state :

(a) the details of ground water level in various States during 2004-05 and 2005-06;

(b) whether the Central Ground Water Authority organized training programmes in various States during 2004-05 and 2005-06 to create public awareness about roof top rain water harvesting; and

(c) if so, the details thereof, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV) : (a) As per the assessment of ground water resources carried out in the year 2004 jointly by the Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) and the States, out of 5723 ground water resource assessment units (block/ mandal/ taluka), 839 assessment units are 'over-exploited' wherein stage of ground water development is more than 100% and significant decline in long term trend of water level has been observed in either pre-monsoon or post-monsoon periods or both. 226 units are 'critical' wherein ground water development is more than 90% and upto 100% and significant decline is observed in long term trend of water level in both pre-monsoon and post-monsoon periods. As per the ground water level monitoring carried out by CGWB, declining trends in the ground water levels are observed between 2004-05 and 2005-06 in isolated pockets of Blocks/Mandals in 14 States. Details are given in the enclosed statement-I

Annexure-I. However, in the States of Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Jharkhand, Meghalaya and Orissa there is no perceptible decline in ground water level.

(b) and (c) The Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA) organizes training programmes to generate

(b) if so, whether the Government proposes to provide any special relaxation to start developmental works under the Government schemes;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor;

(e) whether the Union Government has received any proposal from the State Government in this regard during the last three years and the current year; and

(f) if so, the action taken or being taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) For development of tribal villages/forest-fringe villages, the Central Government has granted one-time general approval under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for certain essential developmental and security related activities. The projects pertaining to schools, dispensary/hospital, electric and telecommunication lines, drinking water, water harvesting, minor irrigation canal, non-conventional sources of energy, skill-upgradation, power sub-stations, communication posts and police outposts involving less than one hectare of forest land in each case are considered by the respective States/Union Territory Government as per the guidelines issued by the Central Government in this regard.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) and (f) 3986 Development projects received from State/Union Territory Governments during the last three years were considered and disposed in the time-bound manner by the Central Government.

resource persons as a measure of capacity building in Rain Water Harvesting and Artificial Recharge of Ground Water. CGWA also conducts Mass Awareness Programmes on Rain Water Harvesting and Artificial Recharge to Ground Water through out the country involving the States/ Central, NGOs, VOs, Industries, Educational Institutions and Welfare Organisations. During the years 2004-05 and 2005-06, 52 and 51 mass awareness programmes and 39 and 49 training programmes were organized, respectively. State-wise details of these programmes are given in the enclosed statement-II. Besides, CGWA also participated in 3 and 8 exhibitions during the years 2004-05 and 2005-06, respectively to create awareness through display of working models on various aspects of ground water management.

Statement-I

States showing the declining trend in ground water levels as per the assessment carried out by CGWB in the years 2004-05 and 2005-06

| S. No. | State | Remarks |
|--------|----------------|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1. | Andhra Pradesh | Declining trends observed in isolated pockets of 296 mandals. |
| 2. | Delhi | Declining trends observed in isolated pockets of 7 Blocks |
| 3. | Gujarat | Declining trends observed in isolated pockets of 43 Taluks |
| 4. | Haryana | Declining trends observed in isolated pockets of 66 Blocks |
| 5. | Karnataka | Declining trends observed in isolated pockets of 68 Blocks |

| 1 | 2 | 3 |
|-----|----------------|---|
| 6. | Kerala | Declining trends observed in isolated pockets of 20 Blocks |
| 7. | Madhya Pradesh | Declining trends observed in isolated pockets of 29 Blocks |
| 8. | Maharashtra | Declining trends observed in isolated pockets of 8 Blocks |
| 9. | Punjab | Declining trends observed in isolated pockets of 108 Blocks |
| 10. | Rajasthan | Declining trends observed in isolated pockets of 190 Blocks |
| 11. | Tamil Nadu | Declining trends observed in isolated pockets of 175 Blocks |
| 12. | Uttar Pradesh | Declining trends observed in isolated pockets of 50 Blocks |
| 13. | Uttaranchal | Declining trends observed in isolated pockets of 2 Blocks |
| 14. | West Bengal | Declining trends observed in isolated pockets of 1 Block |

Statement-II

States-wise number of mass awareness and training programmes conducted by CGWA/CGWB on Rain Water Harvesting for Ground Water Recharge during 2004-05 and 2005-06

| S. No. | State/UT | No. of mass awareness programmes organized | | No. of training programmes conducted | |
|--------|----------------|--|---------|--------------------------------------|---------|
| | | 2004-05 | 2005-06 | 2004-05 | 2005-06 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 1. | Andhra Pradesh | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|---------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2. Assam | | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| 3. Bihar | | 3 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| 4. Chandigarh | | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| 5. Chhattisgarh | | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 |
| 6. Dadra and Nagar Haveli | | 0 | 2 | 0 | 1 |
| 7. Diu | | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 8. Delhi | | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 |
| 9. Gujarat | | 3 | 2 | 3 | 3 |
| 10. Haryana | | 1 | 2 | 0 | 1 |
| 11. Himachal Pradesh | | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| 12. Jammu and Kashmir | | 3 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| 13. Jharkhand | | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| 14. Karnataka | | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| 15. Kerala | | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| 16. Madhya Pradesh | | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| 17. Maharashtra | | 3 | 1 | 3 | 2 |
| 18. Mizoram | | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| 19. Orissa | | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| 20. Punjab | | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| 21. Rajasthan | | 2 | 3 | 2 | 3 |
| 22. Tamil Nadu | | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 |
| 23. Tripura | | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 |

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|-------------------|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 24. Uttranchal | | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 25. Uttar Pradesh | | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| 26. West Bengal | | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 |
| Total | | 52 | 51 | 39 | 49 |

Environmental Clearance for Road Projects

*170. SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of proposals received from various State Governments particularly from Government of Bihar for getting the environmental clearance for various road projects during the last three years;

(b) the number out of them cleared so far; and

(c) the time by which the remaining proposals are likely to be cleared?

THE MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA) : (a) The Ministry of Environment and Forests has received 39 road project proposals from the various State Governments and the Union Territory of Andaman and Nicobar Islands during the last three years, seeking Environmental Clearance. The number of proposals from the concerned State Governments/Union Territory are; Maharashtra (1), Andhra Pradesh (2), Karnataka (1), Kerala (31), Madhya Pradesh (2), Haryana (1) and Andaman and Nicobar Island (1). No road project proposal has been received from the State Government of Bihar seeking environmental clearance.

(b) Out of the aforesaid 39 proposals, 37 road project proposals have been cleared so far.

(c) Two road proposals pending as on date with the Ministry were received very recently in November, 2006 only. According to the provisions of the Environmental

Impact Assessment Notification, 2006 the time required for grant of environmental clearance is 105 days to be counted after the receipt of a complete application with requisite documents, including Environmental Impact Assessment report.

Environmental Clearance for Mining

*171. SHRI JUAL ORAM : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

- (a) whether a number of mining projects are pending for environmental clearance;
- (b) if so, the details thereof during the last three years and current year, State-wise; and
- (c) the time by which clearance is likely to be granted?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) State-wise break-up of the pending 372 mining proposals as on 31.10.2006 for environmental clearance is given in the table hereunder:—

| S. No. | Name of State | No. of Projects Pending |
|--------|------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1. | Andhra Pradesh | 15 |
| 2. | Chhattisgarh | 14 |
| 3. | Goa | 33 |
| 4. | Gujarat | 31 |
| 5. | Himachal Pradesh | 1 |
| 6. | Jharkhand | 17 |
| 7. | Karnataka | 77 |

| 1 | 2 | 3 |
|-------|----------------|-----|
| 8. | Madhya Pradesh | 12 |
| 9. | Maharashtra | 25 |
| 10. | Meghalaya | 2 |
| 11. | Orissa | 23 |
| 12. | Rajasthan | 117 |
| 13. | Tamil Nadu | 2 |
| 14. | Uttaranchal | 1 |
| 15. | West Bengal | 2 |
| Total | | 372 |

(c) The completed proposals would need to be considered by the Expert Committee for obtaining their recommendation on the same in accordance with the prescribed procedure before taking a decision for grant of environmental clearance or otherwise. In order to speed up clearance of the pending proposals, Ministry of Environment and Forests has constituted an additional Expert Committee for environmental appraisal of mining projects on 23rd August, 2006. The Committee has since held 3 meetings.

[Translation]

Law for Daily Wagers

*172. SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR : Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state :

- (a) whether the Hon'ble Supreme Court has directed to enact a law as soon as possible to regulate the terms and conditions of the daily wagers;
- (b) if so, whether the Government has prepared or proposes to formulate a proposal in this regard;

(c) if so, whether the consultations have been held with the State Government trade unions and others Stake holders prior to preparing the said proposal;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAH SAHU) : (a) No Sir.

(b) to (e) Do not arise.

[English]

Price of Pulses

*173. SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA :

SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is a huge difference between procurement price and market price of pulses;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reasons for conceding low support price despite the high prices prevailing in market; and

(d) the efforts made by the Government for rationalizing the support and market price of pulses?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR) : (a) and (b) A comparative position of Minimum Support Prices (MSPs) and market prices of the major pulses is given below:

MSP and Month - end Wholesale Prices

(January - October, 2006)

(Rs. Per quintal)

| Pulses | MSP for 2006-07 | Market Centre | Minimum | Maximum | Average (Jan. Oct.) |
|--------|-----------------|----------------|---------|---------|------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| Arhar | 1410 | Chennai (TN) | 1900 | 2050 | 1978 |
| | | Kanpur (UP) | 1720 | 1900 | 1804 |
| | | Kolkatta (WB) | 2250 | 3000 | 2492 |
| Moong | 1520 | Bhatinda (Pb.) | 3270 | 4280 | 3889 |
| | | Chennai (TN) | 2426 | 4500 | 3259 |
| | | Kanpur (UP) | 2230 | 3180 | 2864 |
| | | Hapur (UP) | 2050 | 2300 | 2185 |

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|-----------------|------|---------------|------|------|------|
| Urad | 1520 | | | | |
| | | Chennai (TN) | 2500 | 5102 | 3732 |
| | | Mumbai (Mah.) | 3625 | 5000 | 4319 |
| | | Kanpur (UP) | 2210 | 3425 | 2968 |
| MSP for 2005-06 | | | | | |
| Masur | 1535 | | | | |
| (Lentil) | | Mumbai (Mah.) | 2075 | 2400 | 2282 |
| | | Kanpur (UP) | 1670 | 2025 | 1774 |
| | | Kolkatta (WB) | 2300 | 2600 | 2433 |
| Gram | 1435 | | | | |
| | | Dohad (Guj.) | 1675 | 3160 | 2337 |
| | | Jaipur (Raj.) | 1675 | 3125 | 2241 |
| | | Hapur (UP) | 2100 | 2900 | 2401 |

The market price of pulses is higher than the MSP because the domestic production of pulses is lower than the requirement. Further, the changes brought in the Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee (APMC) Act, with the objective of providing more options to the farmers by way of having the choice to sell their produce to prospective buyers, has also brought in greater degree of competition in the market pushing the prices upwards.

(c) and (d) The Government fixes the Minimum Support Prices (MSPs) for various agricultural commodities, including pulses, taking into account the recommendations of Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP), the view of State Governments and concerned Central Ministries as well as other relevant factors, which in the opinion of the Government, are important for fixation of MSPs.

CACP, while formulating its recommendations on price policy considers a number of important factors which include cost of production, changes in input prices, input/output price parity, trends in market prices, demand and supply situation, inter-crop price parity, effect on industrial cost structure, effect on general price level, effect on cost of living, international market price situation and parity between prices paid and prices received by the farmers.

The objective of MSP mechanism is to provide a guarantee to the farmers to realize a reasonable price for their produce. When the market prices tend to fall below the MSP, the designated agencies such as Food Corporation of India (FCI), National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd (NAFED), Cotton Corporation of India (CCI) and Jute Corporation of India

(JCI) purchase the produce at the MSP. However, if the market price is more than the MSP fixed by the Government, farmers are free to realize a higher price by selling their produce in the market.

Issue of Special Cards

*174. SHRI M. SHIVANNA : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government has directed the States to issue special green cards to the Below Poverty Line (BPL) families;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the criterion fixed for issuance of these special cards;

(c) whether BPL families owning a few consumer goods and small plots of land have also been excluded from this scheme;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor and the steps taken to include all the BPL families under the scheme;

(e) whether most of the States have completed the work of issuance of special cards; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR) : (a) No orders for any specific colour cards for distribution to families identified under TPDS have been issued by the Government of India. The Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) with focus on the poor was introduced with effect from June 1997 and covers 6.52 crore Below Poverty Line (BPL) families including 2.50 crore Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) families and 11.52 crore Above Poverty Line (APL) families based on poverty estimates of the Planning Commission for the year 1993-94 on the population projection of Registrar General of Census as on 31st March, 2000. Instructions have been given to issue distinctive ration cards to the identified families under APL, BPL and AAY categories.

State Governments have the freedom to prescribed appropriate distinctive colours/designs.

(b) PDS is operated under the joint responsibility of the Central and State Governments. The Central Government has taken the responsibility for procurement, storage, transportation and bulk allocation of foodgrains, etc. The responsibility for effectively distributing the same to the consumers through the network of Fair Price Shops (FPSs) lies with the State Governments. The operational responsibilities including allocation within the State, identification of families below poverty line, issue of ration cards, supervision and monitoring the functioning of FPSs rest with the State Governments. On the basis of the poverty estimation of the Planning Commission, the number of BPL families (including AAY) to be covered in each State/UT Administration has been conveyed to the State Governments and necessary guidelines for identification of AAY families have been sent to all the State Governments/UT Administrations as per Statement-I. The enclosed statement-II to the PDS (Control) Order, 2001 gives detailed guidelines for identification of BPL and AAY families.

(c) and (d) As per the last BPL census for the 10th Plan conducted by the Ministry of Rural Development, the methodology of score based ranking of each household indicating their quality of life was adopted. For this purpose, 13 socio-economic parameters which include size of land holding, type of house, food security, sanitation, etc. were adopted. These were ranked in order, on the basis of which BPL families were identified.

(e) and (f) Most of the State Governments except Himachal Pradesh have completed the work of identifying the issuing distinctive ration cards to the BPL families. Marginal shortfall in issue of BPL cards is there in Bihar, Goa, Uttar Pradesh, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Chandigarh, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Lakshadweep (statement-III). Out of the 2.50 crore families which were to be identified under AAY category, various States/UT Administrations have identified 2.25 crore AAY families and distinctive ration cards have been issued to them. The Central Government is allocating foodgrains to 2.25 crore

AAY families as per the approved norms. A Statement showing the number of AAY families identified by the States/UT Administration is enclosed as statement III. For identification of the remaining AAY families (0.25 crore), concerned States/UT Administrations have been directed to expedite the process.

Statement-I

Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY)

- (i) A National Sample Survey Exercise points towards the fact that about 5% of the total population in the country sleeps without two square meals a day. This section of the population can be called as "hungry". In order to make TPDS more focused and targeted towards this category of population, the "Antyodaya Anna Yojana" (AAY) was launched in December, 2000 for one crore poorest of the poor families.
- (ii) AAY contemplates identification of one crore poorest of the poor families from amongst the BPL families covered under TPDS within the States and providing them foodgrains at a highly subsidized rate of Rs.2/- per kg. for wheat and Rs.3/- per kg for rice. The States/UTs are required to bear the distribution cost, including margin to dealers and retailers as well as the transportation cost. Thus the entire food subsidy is being passed on to the consumers under the scheme.
- (iii) The scale of issue that was initially 25 kg. per family per month has been increased to 35 kg. per family per month with effect from 1st April, 2002.

First Expansion of AAY

The AAY Scheme has been expanded in 2003-2004 by adding another 50 lakh households from amongst the BPL families.

- (a) Households headed by widows or terminally ill persons or disabled persons or persons aged 60 years or more with no assured means of subsistence or societal support
- (b) Widows or terminally ill persons or disabled persons or persons aged 60 years or more or single women or single men with no family or societal support or assured means of subsistence.
- (c) All primitive tribal households.

Second Expansion of AAY

As announced in the Union Budget 2004-05, the scheme has been further expanded with effect from 1st August, 2004 by another 50 lakh BPL families by including, inter-alia, all households at the risk of hunger. The guidelines have been issued to all States/UTs on 3rd August, 2004. The following criteria was adopted for identification of additional Antyodaya families:—

- (a) Landless agriculture labourers, marginal farmers, rural artisans/craftsmen such as potters, tanners, weavers, blacksmiths, carpenters, slum dwellers, and persons earning their livelihood on daily basis in the informal sector like porters, coolies, rickshaw pullers, hand cart pullers, fruit and flower sellers, snake charmers, rag pickers, cobblers, destitutes and other similar categories in both rural and urban areas.
- (b) Households headed by widows or terminally ill persons/disabled persons/persons aged 60 years or more with no assured means of subsistence or societal support.
- (c) Widows or terminally ill persons or disabled persons or persons aged 60 years or more or single women or single men with no family or societal support or assured means of subsistence.

(d) All primitive tribal households.

Out of the 50 lakh households in the 2nd expansion, 48 lakh BPL households have been distributed State wise and the remaining 2 lakh households to be identified subsequently by the States where error of exclusion come to light.

Third Expansion of AAY

As announced in the Union Budget 2005-06, the AAY has further been expanded w.e.f. 1st April, 2005 to cover another 50 lakh BPL households thus increasing its coverage to 2.5 crore households. Earlier criteria adopted for identification of Antyodaya families was followed in this expansion. With this increase more than 38% of the total estimated BPL families have been covered under AAY.

Identification of Families and Allocation of Foodgrains

- (i) The identification of the Antyodaya families and issuing of distinctive Ration Cards to these families is the responsibility of the concerned State Governments. Detailed guidelines were issued to the States/UTs for identification of the Antyodaya families under the AAY and additional Antyodaya families under the expanded AAY. Allocation of foodgrains under the scheme is being made to the States/UTs on the basis of issue of distinctive AAY Ration Cards to the identified families.
- (ii) The status of identification of households under AAY (Normal, 1st expansion, 2nd expansion and 3rd expansion) is given in Annexure enclosed. The defaulting States/UTs are reminded regularly as a part of monitoring.

Annexure

as on 29.11.2006

Status of identification of Households under AAY (Normal and Additional)

(Fig. in lakh)

| S. No. | States/UTs | No. of BPL families as on 1.3.2000 | Estimated No. of AAY families | | | | | AAY families identified and RC issued | | | | |
|--------|-------------------|--|-------------------------------|----------|-----------|------------|--------|---------------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|--------|
| | | | Normal | 1st exp. | 2nd exp.* | 3rd exp.** | Total | Normal | 1st exp. | 2nd exp. | 3rd exp. | Total |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 1. | Andhra Pradesh | 40.63 | 6.228 | 3.117 | 2.991 | 3.242 | 15.578 | 6.228 | 3.117 | 2.991 | 3.242 | 15.578 |
| 2. | Arunachal Pradesh | 0.99 | 0.151 | 0.077 | 0.073 | 0.079 | 0.380 | 0.151 | 0.077 | 0.073 | 0.079 | 0.380 |
| 3. | Assam | 18.36 | 2.815 | 1.408 | 1.352 | 1.465 | 7.040 | 2.815 | 1.408 | 1.352 | 1.43 | 7.005 |
| 4. | Bihar | 65.23 | 10.000 | 5.033 | 4.802 | 5.205 | 25.010 | 10.000 | 5.033 | | | 15.003 |

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
|-----|-------------------|-------|--------|-------|-------|-------|--------|--------|--------|-------|-------|--------|
| 5. | Chhattisgarh | 18.75 | 2.874 | 1.439 | 1.380 | 1.496 | 7.189 | 2.874 | 1.439 | 1.380 | 1.496 | 7.189 |
| 6. | Delhi | 4.09 | 0.626 | 0.315 | 0.301 | 0.326 | 1.568 | 0.320 | 0.235 | | | 0.555 |
| 7. | Goa | 0.48 | 0.073 | 0.037 | 0.035 | 0.039 | 0.184 | 0.073 | 0.037 | 0.035 | | 0.145 |
| 8. | Gujarat | 21.20 | 3.250 | 1.626 | 1.561 | 1.691 | 8.128 | 3.250 | 1.626 | 1.561 | 1.661 | 8.098 |
| 9. | Haryana | 7.89 | 1.209 | 0.606 | 0.581 | 0.629 | 3.025 | 1.209 | 0.606 | 0.581 | 0.528 | 2.924 |
| 10. | Himachal Pradesh | 5.14 | 0.787 | 0.395 | 0.378 | 0.411 | 1.971 | 0.787 | 0.395 | 0.378 | 0.411 | 1.971 |
| 11. | Jammu and Kashmir | 7.36 | 1.129 | 0.564 | 0.542 | 0.587 | 2.822 | 1.129 | 0.564 | 0.542 | 0.322 | 2.557 |
| 12. | Jharkhand | 23.94 | 3.665 | 1.841 | 1.762 | 1.911 | 9.179 | 3.665 | 1.841 | 1.762 | | 7.268 |
| 13. | Karnataka | 31.29 | 4.797 | 2.400 | 2.303 | 2.497 | 11.997 | 4.797 | 2.400 | 2.303 | 2.497 | 11.997 |
| 14. | Kerala | 15.54 | 2.382 | 1.192 | 1.144 | 1.240 | 5.958 | 2.382 | 1.192 | 1.144 | 1.24 | 5.958 |
| 15. | Madhya Pradesh | 41.25 | 6.324 | 3.164 | 3.037 | 3.291 | 15.816 | 6.324 | 3.164 | 3.037 | 3.120 | 15.645 |
| 16. | Maharashtra | 65.34 | 10.017 | 5.011 | 4.810 | 5.215 | 25.053 | 10.017 | 5.011 | 4.810 | | 19.838 |
| 17. | Manipur | 1.66 | 0.255 | 0.127 | 0.122 | 0.132 | 0.636 | 0.255 | 0.0127 | 0.122 | | 0.504 |
| 18. | Meghalaya | 1.83 | 0.281 | 0.140 | 0.135 | 0.146 | 0.702 | 0.281 | 0.140 | 0.135 | 0.146 | 0.702 |
| 19. | Mizoram | 0.68 | 0.105 | 0.051 | 0.050 | 0.055 | 0.261 | 0.105 | 0.051 | 0.050 | 0.055 | 0.261 |
| 20. | Nagaland | 1.24 | 0.189 | 0.096 | 0.091 | 0.099 | 0.475 | 0.189 | 0.096 | 0.091 | 0.099 | 0.475 |
| 21. | Orissa | 32.98 | 5.055 | 2.530 | 2.428 | 2.632 | 12.645 | 5.055 | 2.530 | 2.428 | 2.632 | 12.645 |
| 22. | Punjab | 4.68 | 0.717 | 0.359 | 0.345 | 0.373 | 1.794 | 0.717 | 0.359 | 0.312 | | 1.368 |
| 23. | Rajasthan | 24.31 | 3.726 | 1.865 | 1.790 | 1.940 | 9.321 | 3.726 | 1.839 | 1.790 | 1.924 | 9.279 |
| 24. | Sikkim | 0.43 | 0.067 | 0.032 | 0.032 | 0.034 | 0.165 | 0.067 | 0.032 | 0.032 | 0.034 | 0.165 |
| 25. | Tamil Nadu | 48.63 | 7.455 | 3.730 | 3.580 | 3.881 | 18.646 | 7.455 | 3.730 | 3.580 | 3.881 | 18.646 |

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
|-------------------------------|---|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| 26. Tripura | | 2.95 | 0.452 | 0.227 | 0.217 | 0.235 | 1.131 | 0.452 | 0.227 | | | 0.679 |
| 27. Uttar Pradesh | | 106.79 | 16.371 | 8.191 | 7.861 | 8.522 | 40.945 | 16.371 | 8.191 | 7.861 | 8.522 | 40.945 |
| 28. Uttranchal | | 4.98 | 0.763 | 0.382 | 0.367 | 0.397 | 1.909 | 0.763 | 0.382 | 0.367 | | 1.512 |
| 29. West Bengal | | 51.79 | 7.939 | 3.973 | 3.813 | 4.132 | 19.857 | 7.939 | 3.973 | 2.887 | | 14.799 |
| 30. Andaman and Nicobar | | 0.28 | 0.043 | 0.021 | 0.021 | 0.022 | 0.107 | 0.043 | | | | 0.043 |
| 31. Chandigarh | | 0.23 | 0.035 | 0.018 | 0.017 | 0.018 | 0.088 | 0.021 | | | | 0.021 |
| 32. Dadra and Nagar Haveli | | 0.18 | 0.28 | 0.013 | 0.013 | 0.015 | 0.069 | 0.028 | 0.009 | | | 0.037 |
| 33. Daman and Diu | | 0.04 | 0.006 | 0.003 | 0.003 | 0.003 | 0.015 | 0.006 | 0.003 | 0.003 | 0.003 | 0.015 |
| 34. Lakshadweep | | 0.03 | 0.004 | 0.003 | 0.002 | 0.003 | 0.012 | 0.004 | | | | 0.004 |
| 35. Pondicherry | | 0.84 | 0.128 | 0.065 | 0.062 | 0.067 | 0.322 | 0.128 | 0.065 | 0.062 | 0.067 | 0.322 |
| Total | | 652.03 | 99.946 | 50.021 | 48.001 | 52.030 | 249.998 | 99.626 | 49.869 | 41.669 | 33.389 | 224.553 |

* Out of the 50 lakh households in the 2nd expansion, 48 lakh households (from BPL) had been earmarked for expansion State wise and the remaining 2 lakh households were to be identified subsequently by the State where error of inclusion came to light

** The left over expansion of 2 lakh families of 2nd expansion have been included in the 3rd expansion of AAY scheme to 52 lakh families from 50 lakh families.

Statement-II

PDS Control Order, 2001

Identification of families living below the poverty line:

- (i) State Governments shall formulate suitable guidelines for the purpose of identification of families living Below the Poverty Line (BPL), including the Antyodaya families, as per the estimates adopted by the Central Government. Care will be taken to ensure that the families

so identified are really the poorest. The exercise of identification of BPL and Antyodaya families, wherever it has not been done already, shall be completed within three months of the issue of this Order.

- (ii) State Governments shall get the lists of BPL and Antyodaya families reviewed every year for the purpose of deletion of ineligible families and inclusion of eligible families.
- (iii) While undertaking the exercise of identification

or review of BPL and Antyodaya families, each State Government shall prescribe a suitable proforma to be filled up by or on behalf of the head of a family.

- (iv) The data provided in the prescribed proforma shall be verified by the authority designated by the State Government for the purpose. The said authority shall also certify the correctness of the information contained in the proforma.
- (v) Gram Sabha shall finalise the list of beneficiaries belonging to BPL and Antyodaya categories drawn up by the designated authority in

respect of the area under their respective jurisdiction.

- (vi) Where there are no Gram Sabhas, the local representative bodies shall finalise the list of beneficiaries belonging to BPL and Antyodaya categories within their respective jurisdiction.
- (vii) The designated authority of the State Government or the local representative bodies including Gram Sabhas and Gram Panchayats which have been entrusted with the task of identification of beneficiaries, shall verify and certify the information in the prescribed proforma for BPL and Antyodaya families.

Statement-III

Statewise No. of Households BPL Households, Fair Price Shops and Ration Cards issued by the respective State/UT

| State/UT | Projected population in 2000 (in lakhs) | % of BPL population | Size of Households | No. of Households in 2000 (in lakhs) | No. of BPL Households in 2000 (in lakhs) | Ration Cards (In Lakhs) | | | Difference of Col. 8 and 5 | Reported as on |
|-------------------|---|---------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------------|--|-------------------------|-------|-----------------|----------------------------|----------------|
| | | | | | | BPL | AAY | Total (BPL+AAY) | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| Andhra Pradesh | 754.66 | 25.68 | 4 | 158.21 | 40.63 | 126.24 | 15.58 | 141.82 | 101.19 | 31.8.06 |
| Arunachal Pradesh | 11.92 | 40.86 | 4.93 | 2.42 | 0.99 | 0.61 | 0.38 | 0.99 | 0.00 | 31.3.04 |
| Assam | 261.96 | 40.86 | 5.83 | 44.93 | 18.36 | 12.02 | 7.00 | 19.02 | 0.66 | 31.8.06 |
| Bihar | 731.11 | 54.96 | 6.16 | 118.79 | 65.23 | 49.99 | 15.00 | 64.99 | -0.24 | 31.8.06 |
| Chhattisgarh | 249.25 | 42.52 | 5.65 | 44.11 | 18.75 | 15.45 | 7.19 | 22.64 | 3.89 | 31.8.06 |
| Delhi | 139.64 | 14.69 | 5.02 | 27.82 | 4.09 | 3.79 | 0.56 | 4.35 | 0.26 | 31.8.06 |
| Goa | 15.95 | 14.92 | 4.99 | 3.20 | 0.48 | 0.13 | 0.15 | 0.28 | -0.20 | 31.5.06 |

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
|-------------------|---------|-------|------|--------|--------|---------|-------|--------|--------|-----------|
| Gujarat | 482.52 | 24.21 | 5.51 | 87.57 | 21.20 | 26.92 | 8.10 | 35.02 | 13.82 | 31.5.06 |
| Haryana | 198.31 | 25.05 | 6.30 | 31.48 | 7.89 | 5.29 | 2.92 | 8.21 | 0.32 | 31.8.06 |
| Himachal Pradesh | 67.11 | 40.86 | 5.34 | 12.57 | 5.14 | 0.92 | 1.97 | 2.89 | -2.25 | 31.7.05 |
| Jammu and Kashmir | 99.45 | 40.86 | 5.52 | 18.02 | 7.36 | 4.80 | 2.56 | 7.36 | 0.00 | 1.4.2003 |
| Jharkhand | 268.31 | 54.96 | 6.16 | 43.56 | 23.94 | 16.68 | 7.27 | 23.95 | 0.01 | 19.9.2002 |
| Karnataka | 520.91 | 33.16 | 5.52 | 94.37 | 31.29 | 58.31 | 12.00 | 70.31 | 39.02 | 31.8.06 |
| Kerala | 322.62 | 25.43 | 5.28 | 61.10 | 15.54 | 14.91 | 5.96 | 20.87 | 5.33 | 31.8.06 |
| Madhya Pradesh | 548.22 | 42.52 | 5.65 | 97.03 | 41.25 | 36.40 | 15.64 | 52.04 | 10.79 | 22.4.2003 |
| Maharashtra | 911.15 | 36.86 | 5.14 | 177.27 | 65.234 | 53.15 | 19.84 | 72.99 | 7.65 | 28.2.04 |
| Manipur | 25.18 | 40.86 | 5.19 | 4.07 | 1.66 | 1.16 | 0.50 | 1.66 | 0.00 | 3.7.05 |
| Meghalaya | 24.34 | 40.86 | 5.42 | 4.49 | 1.83 | 1.13 | 0.70 | 1.83 | 0.00 | 31.8.06 |
| Mizoram | 9.52 | 40.86 | 5.70 | 1.67 | 0.68 | 0.42 | 0.26 | 0.68 | 0.00 | 31.8.06 |
| Nagaland | 16.84 | 40.86 | 5.57 | 3.02 | 1.24 | 0.77 | 0.47 | 1.24 | 0.00 | 28.2.05 |
| Orissa | 358.57 | 48.56 | 5.28 | 67.91 | 32.98 | 37.58 | 12.64 | 50.22 | 17.24 | 31.8.06 |
| Punjab | 235.36 | 11.77 | 5.92 | 39.76 | 4.68 | 4.79 | 1.39 | 6.18 | 1.50 | 31.8.06 |
| Rajasthan | 535.59 | 27.41 | 6.04 | 88.67 | 24.231 | 15.17 | 9.27 | 24.44 | 0.13 | 2.2.06 |
| Sikkim | 5.59 | 41.43 | 5.33 | 1.05 | 0.43 | 0.26 | 0.17 | 0.43 | 0.00 | 31.8.06 |
| Tamilnadu* | 617.74 | 35.03 | 4.45 | 138.82 | 48.63 | 149.565 | 18.65 | 168.30 | 119.67 | 31.1.2003 |
| Tripura | 37.82 | 40.86 | 5.24 | 7.22 | 2.95 | 2.27 | 0.68 | 2.95 | 0.00 | 31.8.06 |
| Uttar Pradesh | 1626.04 | 40.85 | 6.22 | 261.42 | 106.79 | 65.49 | 40.95 | 106.44 | -0.35 | 31.8.06 |
| Uttanchal | 75.84 | 40.85 | 6.22 | 12.19 | 4.98 | 3.47 | 1.51 | 4.98 | 0.00 | 31.8.06 |
| West Bengal | 790.06 | 35.66 | 5.44 | 145.23 | 51.79 | 37.62 | 14.80 | 52.42 | 0.63 | 31.12.05 |

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
|--------------------------------|----------------|-------|-------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|-----------|
| Andaman and Nicobar Islands | 3.86 | 34.47 | 4.75 | 0.81 | 0.28 | 0.12 | 0.04 | 0.16 | -0.12 | 30.6.05 |
| Chandigarh | 8.88 | 11.35 | 4.38 | 2.03 | 0.23 | 0.07 | 0.02 | 0.09 | -0.14 | 31.7.06 |
| Dadra and Nagar Haveli | 1.90 | 50.84 | 5.28 | 0.36 | 0.18 | 0.12 | 0.04 | 0.16 | -0.02 | 31.5.05 |
| Daman and Diu | 1.40 | 15.30 | 5.80 | 0.26 | 0.04 | 0.04 | 0.01 | 0.05 | 0.01 | 31.3.2003 |
| Lakshadweep | 0.71 | 25.04 | 6.23 | 0.11 | 0.03 | 0.01 | 0.004 | 0.01 | -0.02 | 24.9.05 |
| Pondicherry | 11.11 | 37.04 | 4.97 | 2.24 | 0.84 | 0.89 | 0.32 | 1.21 | 0.37 | 31.8.06 |
| Total | 9969.44 | | 5.51 | 1803.78 | 652.03 | 746.64 | 224.54 | 971.18 | 319.15 | |

1* Separate figures of APL/BPL cards in Tamil Nadu are not available as there is no categorisation on the basis of APL/BPL in the State.

2. AAY figures are as on 25.10.2006. BPL figures have been reduced correspondingly.

Differences in Interest Rate of EPF

*175. SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA :

SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR :

Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether differences have surfaced between the Government and the representatives of the employees on the issue of interest rate on Employees Provident Fund;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the efforts made to sort out the differences; and

(d) the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU) : (a) to (d) No, Sir. The issue regarding the rate of interest for the year 2006-07 was deliberated upon by

the Central Board of Trustees, Employees' Provident Fund in its meeting held on 7.11.2006. Since the deliberations remained inconclusive, it was decided to further discuss the issue at the next meeting of the CBT, EPF. The Central Government has not received the recommendations of Central Board of Trustees, Employees' Provident Fund on the issue, so far.

[Translation]

National Rainfed Area Authority

*176. DR. CHINTA MOHAN :

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has set up any National Rainfed Area Authority;

(b) if so, the details thereof along with the task assigned to the said Authority;

(c) whether the Government has made any assessment in regard to productivity of land under artificial and rainfed irrigation;

(d) if so, the details of rate of productivity of the various crops on both types of land, crop-wise; and

(e) the funds allocated for augmentation of irrigation facilities on agricultural land dependent on rain?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) NRAA has a two tier structure. The first tier is the Governing Board that will provide necessary leadership and appropriate coordination in implementation of programmes. The Governing Board will be chaired by the Union Agriculture Minister and co-chaired by the Union Rural Development Minister. The second tier would be the Executive Committee consisting of technical experts and representatives from stake holder Ministries. The Executive Committee would be headed by a full time CEO and will also have five full time technical experts.

An Order for setting up of NRAA, its constitution and mandate has been issued on 3rd November, 2006. A Copy of the Order is enclosed as statement-I

(c) and (d) Agriculture production depends on factors like agro-ecological conditions, input supply, farm mechanization, quality of seed, soil type and crop period. These factors vary considerably from region to region in the country. Estimated effect of irrigation on yields of selected crops from district data base in similar agro-climatic regions both under rainfed and irrigated conditions has been made by CRIDA, ICAR which reveals significant response of crops to irrigation. The selected crop wise details are given in the enclosed statement-II. However it is estimated that food grain production in the country accrues from approximately 142 million hectares of culti-

vated land. Of this, 40 percent is irrigated and accounts for 55 percent of production. The remaining 85 million hectares are rainfed and contribute 45 percent to total agriculture production.

(e) Total dependence of agriculture on rains can be minimized mainly through assured irrigation coverage and through improved water management practices. The revised outlay under irrigation sector for X Plan is Rs.109416.94 crores to create an irrigation potential of 10.5 million ha. Besides, following schemes are implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Rural Development to enhance soil and water conservation on watershed approach.

Ministry of Agriculture

1. National Watershed Development Project for Rainfed Areas (NWDPA)
2. Soil Conservation in the Catchments of River Valley Project and Flood Prone Rivers (RVP and FPR)
3. Watershed Development Programme for Shifting Cultivation Areas (WDPSA)
4. Reclamation of Alkali Soils (RAS)

Ministry of Rural Development

1. Drought Prone Area Programme (DPAP)
2. Desert Development Programme (DDP)
3. Integrated Wasteland Development Programme (IWDP)

For the X Plan an outlay of Rs.6400.00 Crores has been made for the above seven schemes for development of 214 lakh ha. In the first four years 159.30 lakh ha. at a cost of Rs.4851.33 Crores has already been achieved.

Statement-I

F.No. 9-2/2005-RFD-IV

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE
(Department of Agriculture and Cooperation)
Rainfed Farming Systems Division

Krishi Bhavan, New Delhi,
 Dated the 3rd November, 2006

ORDER

In Order to address the problems of rainfed areas and for sustainable development of such areas, the Government of India have decided to set up a National Rainfed Area Authority (NRAA). The Authority will be a two tier structure consisting of a Government Board and the Executive Committee with the following composition:—

I. Governing Board

- | | | |
|--|---|------------------|
| 1. Minister of Agriculture | — | Chairman |
| 2. Minister of Rural Development | — | Co-chairman |
| 3. Minister of Water Resources | — | Member |
| 4. Minister of Environment and Forests | — | Member |
| 5. Member, Agriculture, Planning Commission | — | Member |
| 6. Secretary, Department of Agriculture and Cooperation | — | Member |
| 7. Secretary, Department of Agriculture Research and Education | — | Member |
| 8. Secretary, Ministry of Rural Development | — | Member |
| 9. Secretary, Ministry of Water Resources | — | Member |
| 10. Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Forests | — | Member |
| 11. Secretary, Ministry of Panchayati Raj | — | Member |
| 12. Chairman, NABARD (National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development) | — | Member |
| 13. One Farmer Representative/ Organization (To be nominated by Ministry of Agriculture) | — | Member |
| 14. Chief Executive Officer (National Rainfed Area Authority) | — | Member Secretary |

II. Executive Committee

1. Chief Executive Officer, National Rainfed Area Authority
2. Five Eminent Experts in the field of:—
 - (i) Water Management
 - (ii) Agriculture/Horticulture
 - (iii) Animal Husbandry and Fisheries.
 - (iv) Forestry
 - (v) Watershed Development
3. One representative each from Ministry of Rural Development, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Environment and Forests, Ministry of Water Resources, Ministry of Panchayati Raj.
4. Advisor, Agriculture, Planning Commission.
5. Director, Central Arid Zone Research Institute (CAZRI), Jodhpur
6. Director, Central Research Institute for Dryland Agriculture (CRIDA) Hyderabad
7. Subject Matter Specialists

2. The Chief Executive Officer of the National Rainfed Area Authority and the experts in the Executive Committee shall be appointed by the Governing Board on the advise of a Search Committee appointed by the Prime Minister.
3. The National Rainfed Area Authority (NRAA) shall be an expert body to provide the much needed knowledge inputs regarding systematic up-gradation and management of country's dryland and rainfed agriculture.
4. The National Rainfed Area Authority (NRAA) shall be an Advisory, Policy Making and Monitoring Body charged with the role of examining guidelines in various existing schemes and in the formation of new schemes including all externally aided projects in the rainfed areas.
5. The National Rainfed Area Authority (NRAA) shall specially focus on issues relating to landless and marginal farmers who constitute the large majority of inhabitants of rainfed areas.
6. The National Rainfed Area Authority (NRAA) shall bring about convergence and synergy among the numerous ongoing programmes and shall advise, guide and monitor their progress.
7. The National Rainfed Area Authority (NRAA) shall cover all aspects of sustainable and holistic development of rainfed areas including appropriate farming and livelihood system approaches.
8. All Central Government Ministries and Departments shall be responsible for implementation of their line programmes in rainfed areas in consultation with the National Rainfed Area Authority (NRAA).
9. The mandate of the Authority shall be:
 - (i) To prepare a perspective plan, outlining the national strategy and road map for holistic and sustainable development of rainfed farming areas.
 - (ii) To evolve common guidelines for all schemes of different Ministries including Externally Aided Projects (EAPs) for development of Rainfed/Dry land Farming Systems.
 - (iii) To coordinate and bring convergence within and among agricultural and wasteland development programmes being implemented in rainfed areas of the country.
 - (iv) To identify rainfed areas in different States which need priority attention, and prepare watershed development programmes for integrated natural resource management, in consultation with States, focusing on multi dimensional crop, livestock, horticulture, agri-pasture integrated systems and programmes for landless farming communities.
 - (v) To identify gaps in input supply, credit availability, dissemination of appropriate technology and other requirements relevant for development of rainfed areas.
 - (vi) To guide the implementing agencies on priority setting and monitor the specific interventions required.
 - (vii) To develop plans/ programmes for capacity building of Centre/State Government functionaries in rainfed areas.
 - (viii) To suggest modalities to strengthen National and State Level Institutions concerned with Rainfed/Dryland areas, and establish institutional linkages with prioritized watersheds.

- (ix) To monitor disbursement of rural credit/ insurance cover/ safety net programmes developed for rainfed areas.
- (x) To set the research agenda including a critical appraisal of on-going programmes and promote diffusion of required knowledge for integrated farming in rainfed areas to district and lower level authorities.
- (xi) To evaluate the effectiveness of completed watersheds and concurrent evaluation of on-going programmes.
10. The National Rainfed Area Authority (NRAA) shall be located in and serviced by the Ministry of Agriculture.
11. The Ministries of Agriculture and of Rural Development will suitably redeploy staff for NRAA with no creation of posts other than the Chief Executive Officer and the full time experts of the Executive Committee. The staff would be drawn from the Ministries of Agriculture and of Rural Development through consultation between the Chief Executive Officer of NRAA and the Secretaries of these two Ministries.
12. The National Rainfed Area Authority may take additional personnel on contract or on deputation basis from elsewhere, when necessary.
13. The National Rainfed Area Authority (NRAA) shall have its own budget. The initial expenditures on establishment of NRAA shall be met under Watershed Development Council (WDC) Scheme of Department of Agriculture and Cooperation, Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India.

Distribution:

1. Secretaries of all Central Ministries/Departments of Government of India.
2. Member Secretary, Planning Commission, Government of India.
3. Shri K.L. Sharma, Deputy Secretary, Cabinet Secretariat, Rashtrapati Bhawan, New Delhi.
4. All Members of Governing Board/Executive Committee of the National Rainfed Area Authority (NRAA).
5. Additional Secretary and Financial Advisor, Department of Agriculture and Cooperation, Ministry of Agriculture, Krishi Bhavan, New Delhi.
6. Chief Secretaries of all States/UTs.
7. Agriculture Production Commissioners of all States/UTs
8. Secretary Agriculture/Soil Conservation/Watershed/Rural Development/Forest/Water Resources of all States/UTs.
9. Vice Chancellors of all State Agriculture Universities.
10. All Divisional Heads, Department of Agriculture and Cooperation, Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India.
11. Government of India Press, New Delhi with a request to publish this Order in the Gazette of India.

Sd/-

Prem Narain
Joint Secretary

Sd/-

Prem Narain
Joint Secretary

Statement-II

Estimated effect of irrigation on yields in similar agro-climatic regions of selected crops from district database based on a study conducted by CRIDA, ICAR

| Crop | Estimated Yield (Kg./ha) | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| | with no irrigation | with irrigation | Per cent Response |
| Rice, Kharif | 1236 | 1630 | 32 |
| Rice, Rabi | 445 | 2907 | 552 |
| Wheat | 954 | 1554 | 63 |
| Barley | 1368 | 1658 | 21 |
| Maize | 1351 | 1690 | 25 |
| Sorghum Kharif | 405 | 706 | 74 |
| Sorghum rabi | 919 | 1299 | 41 |
| Pearl millet | 925 | 1164 | 26 |
| Finger millet | 1611 | 1868 | 16 |
| Sesame | 177 | 263 | 49 |
| Castor | 346 | 532 | 54 |
| Linseed | 400 | 429 | 7 |
| Rapeseed/ Mustard | 653 | 796 | 22 |
| Sunflower | 704 | 1032 | 47 |
| Soya beans | 603 | 605 | 0 |
| Groundnut | 955 | 1085 | 14 |
| Cotton | 254 | 306 | 21 |

[English]**Reduction in Drug Price**

*177. SHRIMATI MANORAMA MADHAVRAJ : Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the recent reduction in prices of 886 drugs has turned out to be a cosmetic exercise without providing any relief for the common man;

(b) if so, whether many of the drugs with the reported price reduction upto 75 percent enjoy a market share of only 5 percent or less;

(c) whether the Government proposes to make suitable amendments in the Drug (Price Control) Order, 1995 to check unethical practices and make better availability of cheaper medicines to common man; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STEEL (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : (a) to (d) Pharmam companies have agreed to voluntarily restrict the trade margins for generic medicines to 15% for wholesalers and 35% for retailers. As a result of this voluntary cap on trade margins the prices of several medicines manufactured by 11 companies, have been reduced. A compilation of a list of 886 such medicines, whose prices have been voluntarily reduced by these companies has been brought out. The list of 886 medicines is available on this Department's Website www.chemicals.gov.in It has also been placed in the library of the Parliament. The list covers formulations in all dosage forms such as tablets, capsules and syrups, etc. and they find usage in the treatment of a large number of diseases. The medicines covered are antibiotics, cough syrups, painkillers as well as those used during the surgical operations, for the cure of the infectious diseases and for the treatment of hypertension etc. This was voluntary action/reduction by the companies which have not given figures of their market share for the respective

medicines. This reduction in trade margins has been effected by industry on medicines promoted by trade (commonly called generic-generic or branded-generic drugs) where these margins are high as compared to the Scheduled drug and non-Scheduled branded drugs. It is true that this segment forms a very small portion of the total pharma market in the country. However, it may be mentioned here that this is only the first step towards reducing high trade margins and consequently reducing prices of some of the drugs. Many more steps are contemplated to be taken after the finalization of the new Pharmaceutical Policy.

The Government have drafted National Pharmaceutical Policy-2006. After the Policy has been approved, a new Drugs (Prices Control) Order is proposed to be issued. This may include several new measures for better availability of cheaper medicines to the common man. In addition several other measures for making cheaper medicines available to common man are also being contemplated e.g. National Health Insurance Policy for the BPL families, Larger allocation for National Illness Assistance Fund/State Illness Assistance Funds, District Illness Assistance Fund, Revolving Funds for BPL families to be set up in all the Central Government hospitals, States also to set up revolving funds in all the Government hospitals for free treatment of BPL families, Rajasthan model of Medicare Relief Societies to be replicated in other States, Scheme of District level Drug Bank in States/UTs, Setting up of Cancer Medicines Assistance Fund etc.

Besides, it is also proposed to strengthen NPPA for effective monitoring and enforcement of drug prices with the help of State Drug Controllers.

Funds for Consumer Awareness

*178. SHRI ANWAR HUSSAIN : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) the details of the funds earmarked for launching consumer awareness campaigns during the current year, region-wise; and

(b) the details of campaigns launched and the expenditure incurred thereon in different regions of the country campaign-wise and region-wise?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR) : (a) An amount of Rs.6940 lakhs has been allocated for consumer awareness campaign during the year 2006-07 in the budget of Department of Consumer Affairs. Out of this, an amount of Rs.6190 lakhs is earmarked for running the campaign in all the regions of the country and an amount of Rs.750 lakhs is earmarked exclusively for North Eastern States.

(b) Department of Consumer Affairs has launched a campaign using both electronic and print media as well as outdoor publicity through State Governments and the Song and Drama Division of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

Details of campaign-wise expenditure incurred upto 30 November, 2006 are given below:—

| | | (in lakhs) |
|--|------------------------|----------------|
| North Eastern Region | | |
| — | Electronic/Print media | Rs. 344 |
| — | Outdoor publicity | Rs. 97 |
| | | Rs. 441 |
| Other Regions | | |
| — | Electronic media | Rs. 3526 |
| — | Print media | Rs. 10 |
| — | Outdoor publicity | Rs. 767 |
| | | Rs. 4303 |
| Total expenditure upto 30.11.2006:— | | |
| | | — Rs. 4303 |
| | | — Rs. 441 |
| | | Rs. 4744 lakhs |

[Translation]

Subsidy on Food

*179. SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH "LALAN" : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS; FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has decided to cut down food subsidy during 2006-07;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Government has identified the items on which the subsidy is proposed to be cut down; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Does not arise.

[English]

Deaths due to Pollution

*180. SHRI N.S.V. CHITTHAN :

SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE :

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether any study has been conducted to correlate excessive deaths occurring in major cities of the country on account of environmental pollution;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the percentage of the total annual increase in the environmental pollution during the last two years in the metropolitan cities;

(c) the strategy being formulated by the Government to gear up the measures for controlling environmental pollution; and

(d) the details of the steps taken/proposed to be taken in this regard alongwith the progress made by the Government so far?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA) : (a) and (b) Studies carried out by various institutions in some major cities on environmental pollution and health effects provide no conclusive scientific evidence to establish cause-effect relationship between environmental pollution and incidences of mortality.

Annual ambient levels of sulphur dioxide and oxides of nitrogen in the metropolitan cities are well within the prescribed standards for residential areas except for respirable suspended particulate matter (RSPM) which have exceeded the limit in Mumbai, Kolkata and Delhi but are below the standard in Chennai during the last two years as may be seen from the graph statement. About 60% of the RSPM in Delhi is natural dust.

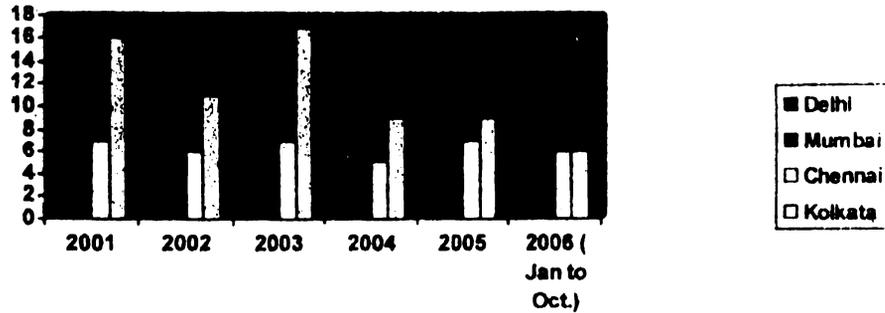
(c) and (d) Strategies adopted and measures taken to control pollution include comprehensive policy for abatement of pollution, supply of improved autofuel including CNG and LPG, tightening of vehicular and industrial emission norms, mandatory environmental clearance for specified industries, management of municipal and bio-medical wastes, promotion of cleaner technologies, strengthening of air and water quality monitoring stations, assessment of pollution load and source apportionment studies, preparation and implementation of action plans for major cities and critically polluted areas.

As a result of various measures taken, the air pollution load and water pollution load in terms of biochemical oxygen demand (BOD) have come down significantly.

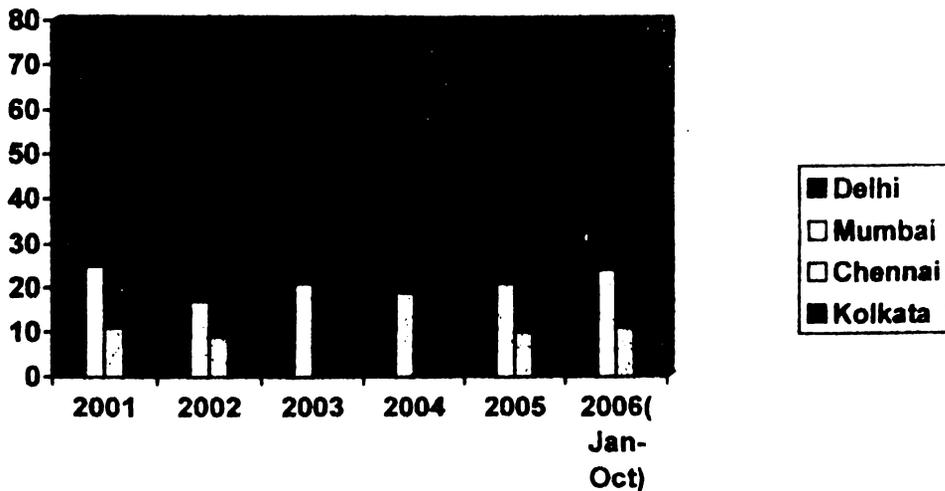
Statement

Trend in Ambient Air Quality
(Annual average concentration in micrograms per cubic metre)

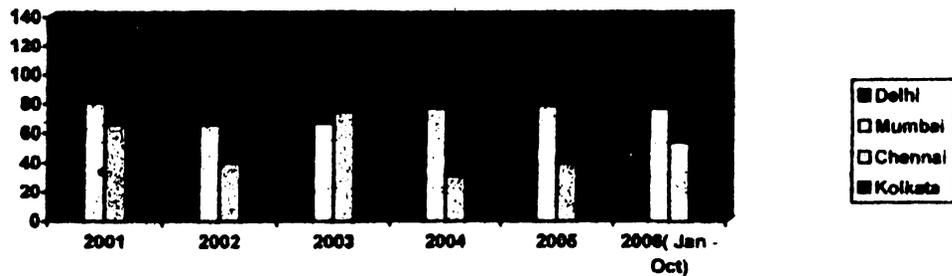
a) Trend in Sulphur dioxide (SO₂) levels



b) Trend in Nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) levels



c) Trend in Respirable Suspended Particulate Matter (RSPM)



NB: National Ambient Air Quality Standard for Residential Areas (Annual average) for SO₂, NO₂ and RSPM 60 micrograms per cubic metre.

Anti Sea Erosion Scheme

*181. SHRI PRASANTA PRADHAN : Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state :

(a) whether some State Government, have submitted projects for protection of the sea-shore to the Union Government;

(b) if so, the name of the projects, State-wise; and

(c) the amount sanctioned against the above mentioned projects upto the last financial year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV) : (a) to (c) Schemes for anti-sea erosion works are planned and implemented by the respective State Governments. Realizing the importance of such works, the Central Water Commission requested the State Governments to identify the critical reaches and submit suitable proposal with a view to prepare a scheme for seeking

external funding. State Governments of Andhra Pradesh, Goa, Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Orissa, Tamilnadu, West Bengal, Union Territories of Lakshadweep and Pondicherry have submitted the proposals. The details are given in the enclosed Statement-I. Based on the proposals received from the State Governments, a concept note was prepared and forwarded to Department of Economic Affairs (DEA) for identifying a suitable external funding agency. The DEA has forwarded the concept note to Asian Development Bank (ADB) for consideration. The ADB has approved administering technical assistance to the Government of India for technical studies on "Integrated Coastal Management and Related Investment Development". An ADB Inception Mission visited the States during September-November 2006. Consultants/Specialists have also been appointed by ADB to conduct the studies.

The Ministry of Water Resources is also implementing a scheme on pilot basis during X plan under which funds have been released for anti sea erosion works in specific critical reach of Kerala, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Orissa, Pondicherry and Tamilnadu. The details are given in the Statement-II enclosed.

Statement-I

Details of proposals received from State Governments/UTs for inclusion in the scheme for seeking external funding

| Name of the State | Details of works included | Amount of the proposal (Rs. in crores) | Locations/ Districts included in the proposal |
|-------------------|--|--|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Andhra Pradesh | (1) Construction of seawall near beach erosion at Uppada and near by villages near Kakinada | 35.65 | Uppada and near by villages near Kakinada and some places in West Godavari and Krishna Districts. |
| | (2) Protection arrangements from sea erosion to Chinnagollapalem (v) in West Godavari District | | |
| | (3) Formation of tidal bank to Protect the villages of Kruthivenu Mandalam in Krishna District | | |

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|-------------|--|---------|--|
| | (4) Repairs and Restoration of KET and Kona Tidal Banks of 43 km. long in Krishna District | | |
| Goa | (1) Construction of sea wall (7.50 km) | 55.00 | Pernem, Bardez, Salcete, Canacona, Tiswadi Talukas. |
| | (2) Reformation of sea wall (1.50 km) | | |
| | (3) River Bank Protection Works (4.00 km) | | |
| | (4) Reformation of damaged River bank Protection Work (3.00 km) | | |
| Gujarat | Anti-Sea-Erosion Works (61.295 km) | 400.22 | Some places in Valsad, Navasari, Surat, Bharuch, Jamnagar, Bhavnagar, Amareli, Junagadh districts. |
| Karnataka | (1) Construction of sea wall (49.875 km) | 135.95 | Some places in Mangalore, Udupi and Kundapur Talukas in Dakshina Kannada District and Bhatkal, Honnavar, Kurta, Ankola and Karwar Talukas in Uttara Kannada District |
| | (2) Reformation of Damaged sea wall (17.605) | | |
| Kerala | (1) Construction of sea wall (52.065 km) | 216.96 | Some places in Thiruvananthapuram Kollam, Alappuzha, Ernakulam, Thrissur, Manjeri, Kozhikode, Thalesseery, Kasaragode Divisions. |
| | (2) Construction of groins (21 nos) | | |
| | (3) Reformation of sea wall (59.448 km) | | |
| Maharashtra | Construction of Bunds for Anti-Sea-Erosion works (72.36 km) | 193.801 | Some places in Mumbai, Mumbai Suburban, Thane, Raigad, Ratnagiri and Sindhudurg Districts. |
| Orissa | (1) Construction of Sea Wall at open Baeaches (66.20 km) | 304.517 | Some places in Ganjam, Puri, Kendrapara, Balasore, Jagatsinghpur and Bhadrak Districts. |
| | (2) Construction of ea Wall at mouth of rivers (23.35 km) | | |

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|------------|--|---------|--|
| Tamil Nadu | Construction of 13.824 kms of sea walls/groins | 167.692 | Some places in Chennai North, Kancheepuram, Cuddalore, Nagapattinam, Thoothukudi, Tirunelveli and Kanyakumari districts. |

Statement-II

Funds released to State Governments for anti erosion works in specific critical reaches under the scheme, "Critical anti erosion works in coastal and other Ganga basin States"

| S. No. | State | Name of Scheme | Fund released so far (Rs. in Crore) |
|--------|-------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| 1. | Karnataka | Providing protection wall against Sea Erosion at Paduvari in Udupi district | 0.50 |
| 2. | Kerala | Constructing sea wall for a length of 1680m between Azhikode and Eriyadu between KERI CP 4004 and 4012 (Thrissur district). | 0.50 |
| 3. | Maharashtra | Construction of anti-sea erosion Bund at Theronda in Raigad district | 2.30 |
| 4. | Orissa | Construction of Sea wall of Jamboo Saline Gherry on Gobari left from RD 8.670 km to 10.855 km at Jamboo | 1.50 |
| 5. | Pondicherry | Strengthening the existing rock revetment from CH 0 m (New Pier) to CH. 300 m towards South and CH 300 m to CH 900 m North of New Pier in Union Territory of Pondicherry | 1.00 |
| 6. | Tamil Nadu | Construction of groyne (400m) at Periathalai in Thoothukudi district | 2.32 |

| Name of the State | Details of works included | Amount of the proposal (Rs. in crores) | Locations/ Districts included in the proposal |
|-------------------|--|--|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| West Bengal | Construction of 10.75 kms of beach protection works and 36.50 kms of bank protection works in the tidal reaches of the rivers. | 256.23 | Some places in 24 Parganas (South), 24 Parganas (North) and Digha. |

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|-------------|---|---------|---|
| Lakshadweep | 72.57 km of anti sea erosion works | 142.307 | A part of coastline in the Islands of Agatti, Amini, Andrott, Bitra, Chetlat, Kadmat, Kalpeni, Kavaratti, Kiltan and Minicoy. |
| Pondicherry | Providing replenishment/reformation and standardization of rock revetment in Pondicherry region (5.40 km) and Mahe region (1.00 km) | 25.50 | Some places in Pondicherry, Mahe regio. |

**Share of Contribution between
ESIC and State**

1665.SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE : Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether in respect of ESI Schemes operated in Maharashtra, Jharkhand and Bihar, the ESI Corporations contribution often falls far short of their due share, year after year;

(b) if so, the prescribed share of contribution between the ESI Corporation and the State; and

(c) the accumulated excess expenditure incurred by the Government of Maharashtra, Jharkhand and Bihar in respect of ESI Schemes as on August 31, 2006, over and above the State's due share?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) As per Section 58 of the ESI Act, the responsibility for providing medical benefit is that of State Governments. As per agreement between the ESIC and the State Governments the recurring annual expenditure on medical care is shared between the ESI Corporation and the State Government in the ratio of 7:1 subject to actual expenditure incurred by State Government and ceiling prescribed from time to time whichever is less. The

ESI Corporation is making the payment to the State Government as per the ceiling prescribed. The ceiling for reimbursement on expenditure on medical care to the States is Rs.900/- per IP family unit with effect from 01.04.2005. The State Government of Maharashtra, Jharkhand and Bihar are also being reimbursed as per the ceiling amount of Rs.900/- per IP per family unit subject to actual expenditure whichever is less. However, all capital expenditure on construction of building of dispensaries and hospitals is totally borne by the ESI Corporation. Similarly, the expenditure on purchase of initial equipments for hospitals and dispensaries is borne by ESI Corporation. Besides this the expenditure on additional equipments and replacement of old equipments is also borne by the ESI Corporation over and above the ceiling.

(c) Nil

MIS for Arecanut

1666.SHRI G.M. SIDDESWARA : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government has received any proposal from the Government of Karnataka regarding declaration of Market Intervention Scheme (MIS) for arecanut;

(b) if so, the details of the proposal; and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Subsidy for Growing Betel

1667.SHRI ANANTA NAYAK : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has any proposal to enhance the subsidy for growing betal; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) and (b) No, Sir. Under Centrally Sponsored Scheme for Technology Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture in North Eastern States, Sikkim, Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttaranchal, assistance @ Rs.13,000/- per hectare is provided to the cultivators for growing of spices including betelvine.

Demand of Steel

1668.SHRI K.C. PALLANI SHAMY :
SHRI E.G. SUGAVANAM :

Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state :

(a) whether demand for steel is increasing in the country during the last few years;

(b) if so, the details thereof for the last three years;

(c) whether the Government has any proposal to expand and modernise Salem Steel Plant to meet the growing demand for steel;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (DR. AKHILESH DAS) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The domestic demand for finished (Carbon) steel is reflected in the figures of apparent consumption. The apparent consumption of finished (Carbon) steel during the last three years is given below

| Year | 2003-04 | 2004-05 | 2005-06 |
|---------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Quantity (in million tonnes) | 31.169 | 34.389 | 39.185 |
| Growth% | 7.88% | 10.33% | 13.94% |

(Source : Joint Plant Committee)

(c) to (e) Expansion of Salem Steel Plant has been approved 'in-principle' by the SAIL Board at an indicative cost of 1,553 crores. The expansion Plan envisages installation of a Steel Melting Shop to produce 1,80,000 tonnes per annum (tpa) of stainless steel slabs and the capacity of Cold Rolling Mill to be increased to produce 146,000 tpa of cold rolled stainless steel.

Meeting between Minister and Trustees of EPFO

1669. SHRI MOHAN RAWALE : Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether any meeting had been convened recently between the Hon'ble Minister and the trustees of the Employees Provident Fund Organisation;

(b) if so, the outcome thereof; and

(c) the steps taken for safeguarding the interests of the employees?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES) : (a) and (b) A meeting of the Central Board

of Trustees, Employees' Provident Fund was held under the Chairmanship of Minister of State for Labour and Employment on November 7, 2006. During the meeting discussions were held on the rate of interest to be paid to the EPF members during the year 2006-07. It was decided to defer the declaration of rate of interest till the sub-committee to look into the accounts of EPFO submits the final report. Further after discussions on pensionary matters, Hon'ble Chairman decided to have meeting with the senior leader of all Central Trade Unions to have comprehensive review of the Employees' Pension Scheme, 1995 and to evolve consensus on the required changes in the Scheme.

In addition, various issues relating to finance, compliance and other matters were brought before the Board, deliberated upon and appropriate decisions taken.

(c) Since a decision on the issues placed before the Board is taken after due deliberations by the members of the Board including employees' representatives, interests of employees are duly safeguarded.

FM Channels In Andhra Pradesh

1670. SHRI BADIGA RAMAKRISHNA : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) the number of FM radio channels set up and proposed to be set up in Andhra Pradesh and other States;

(b) the areas identified in Andhra Pradesh for FM radio channels;

(c) the revenue the Government is likely to earn through the existing and proposed stations separately;

(d) whether enough FM transmitters have been set up to cater to the needs of new FM radio channels;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the time by which more FM transmitters are likely to be set up?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSHI) : (a) Under All India Radio (AIR) 12 FM transmitters have been set up and 7 are proposed to be set up in Andhra Pradesh. Apart from these 4 private FM stations are operating and 15 channels are proposed in Andhra Pradesh. In the whole of the country 161 AIR FM transmitters are working and 104 new transmitters have been planned. 41 Private FM channels are currently in operation in the country while 225 more private channels are proposed to be set up.

(b) Kakinada, Karimnagar, Srikakulam, Nellore, Mahboobnagar, Suryapet and Machera have been identified for AIR FM Radio Stations and Hyderabad, Vijayawada, Visakhapatnam, Rajamundry, Tirupati and Warangal have been identified for private FM Radio Stations in Andhra Pradesh.

(c) The revenue earning from existing AIR FM transmitters during 2005-06 was Rs. 33.25 crores. At this stage it is not possible to indicate revenue likely to be generated from proposed AIR transmitters because the rates for these transmitters are yet to be decided. The revenue earning from existing private FM transmitters during 2005-06 was Rs. 10.67 crores. Annual income expected from 41 currently operationalised channels has been calculated as Rs. 15.24 crores. Besides, a total of Rs. 1145.48 crores was also received under the Phase II of private FM radio scheme on account of One Time Entry Fee and migration fee. The annual revenue expected on operationalisation of all the 266 private FM channels would be Rs.38.16 crores.

(d) to (f) 133 AIR transmitters were proposed during 10th Plan to increase the coverage by FM signal from 31.3% by population to 49.75% after completion of 10th Plan scheme. Of these 19 transmitters have come up so far covering 35% of the population. Further expansion is envisaged in the 11th Five Year Plan. The implementation of all the AIR schemes will depend on approval and availability of funds.

Creation of Warehousing Capacity

1671. SHRI L. RAJAGOPAL : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Andhra Pradesh State Warehousing Corporation has recently created an additional 17.2 lakh metric tonne storage space for the Food Corporation of India (FCI);

(b) if so, the details of agreement entered into between the FCI and Andhra Pradesh State Warehousing Corporation for creation of said space;

(c) the details of rental charges paid by FCI to various State Warehousing Corporations at par with the Central Warehousing Corporation (CWC);

(d) whether the FCI has not increased the rental charges to be paid to the Andhra Pradesh State Warehousing Corporation since 2002 inspite of increasing the same for other State Warehousing Corporations;

(e) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(f) the steps taken for payment of revised rentals to Andhra Pradesh State Warehousing Corporation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH) :

(a) Yes, Sir. The Andhra Pradesh State Warehousing Corporation (APSWC) had got created 17.6 lakh MTs storage space for the Food Corporation of India (FCI) under the seven years guarantee scheme.

(b) The FCI had agreed to give seven years guarantee for using godowns to be constructed or to be got constructed by APSWC and to make such payments of storage charges to APSWC at par with Central Warehousing Corporation (CWC) subject to the specifications of godowns and services of storage being equal, as per instructions issued by the FCI from time to time.

(c) The FCI had fixed storage charges at the rate of Rs.1.51 per bag of 50 kg. per month (Rs.30.20 per MT) with effect from 1.4.2001 to 31.3.2002 and Rs.1.79 per bag of 50 kg. per month (Rs.35.80 per MT) with effect from 1.4.2002 at par with the CWC.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) It was observed by the FCI that the APSWC was paying much less godown rent i.e. Rs.2.00 per sq.ft. per month (Rs.12.00 per MT) to the private investors and the expenditure incurred by the APSWC on the maintenance of the stocks and godowns was also limited. Therefore, it was decided to restrict the payment to the extent as agreed between the investors and the APSWC +15% supervision charges.

This decision has been implemented uniformly with effect from 25.4.06 in all the States where the State Warehousing Corporations (SWCs) had got the godowns constructed through private investors under the seven years guarantee scheme.

(f) The FCI has requested APSWC to provide the details of the actual expenditure incurred as per their Annual Accounts for the year 2005-06. Currently, ad hoc payment is being made to APSWC as per actual rents paid to the investors plus 15% supervision charges.

Non Removal of Restrictions on Urea Import

1672. SHRI JOACHIM BAXLA : Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state :

(a) whether domestic fertilizer industry has requested to the Union Government not to remove quantitative restrictions on urea import;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF

STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE) : (a) No Sir. Department of Fertilizer has not received any request from fertilizer industry regarding non removal of quantitative restrictions on urea import.

(b) and (c) In view of (a) above does not arise.

Exemption of Excise Duty

1673. SHRI HITEN BARMAN : Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state :

(a) whether small scale drug manufacturers are facing difficulties due to high excise duties, manufacturing costs, etc.;

(b) if so, whether any representation has been received from the Drug Manufacturing Association of West Bengal and Maharashtra in this regard;

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

(d) whether excise duty has been exempted in some of the States while the other States are still reeling under high excise duty; and

(e) if so, the reasons for such discrimination?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE) : (a) to (c) The Government has received representations regarding the problems being faced by small scale drug manufacturing units in some of the States, consequent upon the levy of Central Excise Duty on drugs on the retail prices in lieu of the earlier practice of levying central excise duty on ex-factory price. The problem has accentuated due to existing Central Excise Duty exemption to the States of Himachal Pradesh, Uttaranchal and Jammu and Kashmir.

These representations were examined by the Government. In order to mitigate the rigours of Excise

Duty regime and to provide a level playing field for small units, this Department has proposed the following measures to be considered by the Department of Revenue:

(i) Reduction of the excise duty on all pharmaceutical products from 16 to 8 percent;

(ii) Enhance the exemption limit of small scale units from the present Rs. 1 crore to Rs. 5 crore.

(d) and (e) As per the decision earlier taken by the Government the Central Excise duty has been exempted on manufactured goods including drugs, in notified areas of Uttaranchal, Himachal, Jammu and Kashmir, Sikkim, Kutch, and North Eastern States.

[Translation]

Bonus to Farmers

1674. SHRI HANSRAJ G. AHIR : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has procured wheat from the wheat producing farmers by paying bonus in addition to Minimum Support Price (MSP);

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Union Government proposes to give bonus to the farmers in the procurement of paddy and other agricultural commodities also; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. An incentive bonus of Rs. 50 per quintal for procurement of wheat over and above the Minimum Support Price (MSP) of Rs. 650 per quintal was given to farmers in the Rabi Marketing Season (RMS) 2006-07.

(c) and (d) An incentive bonus of Rs.40 per quintal for procurement of paddy during Kharif Marketing Season (KMS) 2006-07 over and above the announced MSP of Rs. 580 per quintal for Common variety and Rs. 610 per quintal for Grade A variety has been announced for paddy to be procured upto 31.3.2007.

Package for Farmers

1675. SHRI SUBODH MOHITE : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the funds meant for the farmers under the special package for suicide prone areas in Vidarbha announced by the Prime Minister has been disbursed;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the extent of funds that has since been utilized;

(c) the manner in which the funds have been disbursed among farmers;

(d) whether the Headquarters for farmers package is being shifted to Pune from Amravati city; and

(e) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) to (c) Details are given in the enclosed statement.

(d) There is no such proposal under consideration of the Government.

(e) Does not arise.

Statement

— Loan disbursement of Rs. 1734 crore to 9.24 lakh farmers.

— Outstanding interest of Rs. 696 crore to 9.24 lakh farmers has been waived off.

— A principal sum of Rs. 1378 crore loan to 9.24 lakh overdue accounts has been rescheduled as on July 1st, 2006 with one year moratorium and three years instalments.

— 1.24 lakh quintal seed for Rabiwar, Wheat, Gram, Safflower and Maze has already been made available at distribution centres. 1.06 lakh quintal seed has already been distributed to 2.93 lakh farmers.

— National Horticulture Mission has been extended to all the six suicide affected districts. A project for Rs. 27 crore has been already sanctioned by Government of India for these districts. Rs. 14.50 crore have been released as first instalment. An area of more than 5,400 ha. has already been brought under various horticultural crops during the current year.

— For the spread of micro irrigation in the six affected districts, to bring an additional 16,000 ha. under drip and sprinkler, a project for Rs.15 crore was recently sanctioned by Government of India and nearly, 2,000 ha. area has already been brought under micro irrigation.

— To strengthen agricultural extension in the six districts, Agricultural Technology Management Agencies (ATMA) have been constituted in all these Districts. About Rs. 4.50 crore have been sanctioned for implementing extension programmes for the current year.

— To provide subsidiary income to the farmers, dairy and goat and sheep rearing activities have been taken up in all the six districts. More than 3000 farm families have already been assisted with one milch cattle each.

— Ex-gratia assistance has been provided to 3667 farmers.

[English]

Losses to HOCL

1676. SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN : Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state :

- (a) whether the Hindustan Organic Chemicals Limited (HOCL) is incurring losses;
- (b) if so, the details thereof during the last three years;
- (c) the reasons therefor;
- (d) whether the Government has any proposal to revive the HOCL;
- (e) if so, the details thereof; and
- (f) the time by which it is likely to be revived?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE) : (a) and (b) The losses incurred by HOCL during 2003-04 was Rs. 164.62 crores; during 2004-05, it made a profit to Rs. 6.40 crores and during 2005-06, it incurred a loss of Rs. 56.61 crores.

(c) The company has been incurring losses due to market conditions, dumping of certain products like phenol by other countries, closure of certain plants and high interest cost.

(d) to (f) The Government has sanctioned a revival proposal for HOCL which includes the following:

- I. Government of India to provide equity of Rs. 2.50 crores in the form of 8% redeemable non-cumulative preference shares to be redeemed @ 20% each year from 4th year onwards and this amount to be utilized by HOCL for
 - (i) repayment of high cost overdue Bonds;

- (ii) introduction of fresh VRS costing Rs. 36 crores for estimated 590 employees;
- (iii) repayment of VRS loan of Rs. 31 crores availed from Bank of Baroda in 2001 for 685 employees and (iv) Rs. 8 crores towards part repayment of Bonds.

- II. Waiver of penal interest and interest on interest upto 31.3.2005

- III. Continuation of Government of India Guarantees of Rs. 100 crores for full term of 10 years (issue date 19.12.2001) to be utilized to liquidate high cost debt.

BIFR has appointed State Bank of India as the Operating Agency for implementing the revival package.

Cultivation of Rice

1677. SHRI KULDEEP BISHNOI : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

- (a) whether the Government has any plan to promote cultivation of different varieties of 'joha' rice of Assam;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) to (c) Integrated Cereal Development Programme for Rice Based Cropping Systems Areas (ICDP-Rice) is under implementation as a sub-scheme of Macro Management Programme in different States of the country including Assam to promote the cultivation of Rice including 'Joha' rice of Assam. Under the scheme, assistance is provided for distribution of quality seeds of improved varieties and hybrids, farm implements, field demonstrations on improved package of practices including Integrated Pest

Management and capacity building of farmers. The frontline Demonstrations on frontier crop production and protection technologies are also conducted at farmers' field for popularization of the technologies amongst farmers.

Status of Advertising Court to ASCI

1678. SHRI KULDEEP BISHNOI : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government proposes to give status of an 'advertising court' to the Advertising Standards Council of India;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government to give legislative and judicial powers to ASCI to enable it to penalise a non-complaint offender?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The Government does not have any control over Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI) which is a self-regulatory body of the advertising industry. ASCI has a Consumer Complaints Council (CCC) comprising of people from various walks of life who examine complaints received on misleading, dishonest or indecent advertisements both in print media and electronic media and takes action on the same. As such, the Government has no proposal to give status of an 'advertising court' to ASCI.

(d) No such step has been taken by the Government. However, vide Notification dated 2-8-2006 statement, a provision has been made under the Cable Television Networks Rules, 1994 according to which no advertisement which violates the Code for self-regulation

in advertising, as adopted by the Advertising Standard Council of India, Mumbai for exhibition in India, shall be carried in the cable service.

Statement

THE GAZETTE OF INDIA : EXTRAORDINARY

Part (II) – Section 3 – sub-Section (i)

Ministry of Information and Broadcasting

Notification

New Delhi, dated : the 2nd August 2006

G.S.R. 459(E) : In exercise of the powers conferred by sub-section (1) of section 22 of the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 (7 of 1995), the Central Government hereby makes the following rules further to amend the Cable Television Networks Rules, 1994, namely:-

1. (i) These rules may be called Cable Television Networks (Amendment) Rules, 2006.
- (ii) They shall come into force on the date of their publication in the official Gazette.

2. In the Cable Television Networks Rules, 1994,

- (i) in rule 6, in sub-rule (1) after clause (0) the following proviso shall be inserted, namely:-

"Provide that no film or film song or film promo or film trailer or music video or music albums or their promos, whether produced in India or abroad, shall be carried through cable service unless it has been certified by the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) as suitable for unrestricted public exhibition in India".

- (ii) in rule 7, for sub-rule (9) the following shall be substituted, namely:-

"(9) No advertisement which violates the

Code for self-regulation in advertising, as adopted by the Advertising Standard Council of India (ASCI), Mumbai for public exhibition in India, from time to time, shall be carried in the cable service".

[F.No.2302/1/2001-BC-III (Part)]

N. Baljendra Kumar Jt. Secy.

Note: The principal rules were published in Gazette of India, Part II, Section 3, Sub-Section (i) vide number GSR 729 (E) dated the 29th September and subsequently amended by GSR 459 (E) dated the 8th October, 1996 and GSR 710 (E) dated the 8th September, 2000, and GSR 282 (E) dated the 11th May, 2006.

[Translation]

**Impact of Foreign Channels at
Border Areas**

1679. SHRI JASWANT SINGH BISHNOI : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

- (a) the names of the countries whose channels have an effect on the border areas of India; and
- (b) the steps taken to check it and success achieved therein?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI) : (a) Prasar Bharati have informed that Pakistan and Bangladesh Channels have an effect on border areas of India.

(b) Prasar Bharati have informed that the survey conducted in the early months of 2006 to assess the impact of foreign channels has revealed that about 40% of audience in the State, especially in Kashmir region watch Q-TV which is a religious channel of Pakistan, mainly for its religious recitation. However the steps taken by Doordarshan are as follows:

- (i) Priority to expansion of TV coverage in border areas of Pakistan and North-East;
- (ii) The terrestrial coverage in the border areas was strengthened with the satellite coverage and by DTH coverage.
- (iii) Counter propaganda programmes are being telecast in consultation with concerned Ministries.

[English]

Agri-Growth Centres

1680. SHRI M. SREENIVASULU REDDY : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

- (a) whether the Government has launched a mega project for Panchayat Level Agri-Growth Centres;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the time by which such Agri-Growth Centres are likely to become operational?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) There is no such specific mega project launched by the Government. However, a number of ongoing programmes which aim at promoting agricultural growth in the country are in operation.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Revival of BCPL

1681. SHRI SUNIL KHAN : Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state :

- (a) whether any decision has been taken to revive Bengal Chemicals and Pharmaceuticals Limited (BCPL);
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the funds allocated for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILISERS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE) : (a) to (c) There is plan to revive Bengal Chemicals and Pharmaceuticals Ltd. (BCPL). The Board for Reconstruction of Public Sector Enterprises (BRPSE) at its meeting held on 25.8.2006 has since recommended the Modified Scheme for revival of BCPL. Further action has been initiated to obtain the approval of the competent authority for the revival scheme of the Company.

Fish Landing Centres in W.B.

1682. SHRI SUBRATA BOSE : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether any techno-feasibility studies are done on potential landing sites for fishing on the Coast of West Bengal;

(b) if so, the details and outcome thereof and when was the study done in the past;

(c) the names of center studied in West Bengal alongwith economic potential of each such site; and

(d) the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) Techno-economic feasibility studies at a total of 19 landing sites on the coast of West Bengal have been carried out from time to time, which are found suitable from techno-economic angle for development as fishing harbour/ fish landing center. All the 18 feasible sites on West Bengal coast have been taken up for development. Out of these, one major fishing harbour at Roychowk, 2 minor fishing harbours at Fraser Ganj, Digha (Stage I and II), Sultanpur (Diamond Harbour) and 12 fish landing centers at other sites have been completed. Details are given in the enclosed statement.

Statement

| S. No. | Name of the Fishing Centre | Feasibility studies carried out by | Year of approval of GOI | Present status |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Fishing Harbours | | | | |
| 1. | Roychowk | Kolkata Port Trust | Jan-71 and Dec-73 | Completed |
| 2. | Fraser Ganj | CICEF | Jan-89 | Completed |
| 3. | Digha (Stage-I and II) | CICEF and Wbfd | Feb-82 and Nov-95 | Completed |
| 4. | Sultanpur (Diamond Harbour) | Wbfd | March-2000 | Completed |
| 5. | Harwood Point | Wbfd | March-01 | Work in progress |
| 6. | Petuaghat | Wbfd | March-05 | Work in progress |

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|------|----------|------------------|
| Fish Landing Centres | | | | |
| 7. | Namkhana | WBFD | March-76 | Completed |
| 8. | Jalda | WBFD | March-84 | Completed |
| 9. | New Jalda | WBFD | March-84 | Completed |
| 10. | Kharpai | WBFD | March-84 | Completed |
| 11. | Kalinagar | WBFD | Dec-84 | Completed |
| 12. | Ganeshpur | WBFD | Dec-84 | Completed |
| 13. | Bamanagar | WBFD | Dec-84 | Completed |
| 14. | Akhoyanagar | WBFD | Dec-84 | Completed |
| 15. | Junaput | WBFD | March-84 | Completed |
| 16. | Soula | WBFD | Dec-92 | Completed |
| 17. | Madangunj | WBFD | Dec-92 | Completed |
| 18. | Brajoballavpur | WBFD | Dec-92 | Completed |
| 19. | Maya Goalini Ghat | WBFD | Dec-05 | Work in progress |

CICEF : Central Institute of Coastal Engineering for Fisheries (CICEF), Bangalore

WBFD : West Bengal Fisheries Department, Government of West Bengal

24 Hours Movie Channel

1683. SHRI TUKARAM GANGADHAR GADAKH : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether any proposal for opening a 24 Hours Movie Channel of Doordarshan is under consideration of the Government;

(b) if so, the details there of alongwith the time by which the said channel is likely to be made operational;

(c) the increase in the revenue of Doordarshan by the advertisement from this movie channel;

(d) whether the Government is considering to telecast weekly English/Hollywood Movies on Doordarshan Channel; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND
MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
(SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI) : (a) Prasar Bharati

have informed that there is no such proposal under consideration of Doordarshan at present.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

(d) Prasar Bharati have informed that there is no such proposal under consideration.

(e) Does not arise.

Wild Life Crime Control Bureau

1684. SHRI DALPAT SINGH PARSTE : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether revised proposal for Constitution of wildlife crime control bureau has been submitted to the Ministry of Law for suggestions;

(b) if so, the details thereof as on date;

(c) the suggestions given by the Ministry of Law thereon; and

(d) the steps taken to expedite the process and the time by which the bureau is likely to be constituted?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA) : (a) to (d) Based on the advise of the Union Ministry of Law and Justice, enabling legal provisions have been provided in the Wildlife (Protection) Amendment Act, 2006, which has come into force with effect from 4th September, 2006. Action has been taken for processing a revised proposal based on the new legal provisions for constituting the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau at the earliest.

Management of Tiger Reserve in Orissa

1685. SHRI MILIND DEORA : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) the status of Conservation and Protection of Tigers in Orissa as on date;

(b) whether Orissa Government has not demarcated park boundary, eviction of core area villages etc. while reviewing the functioning of the Simlipal Tiger Reserve in Mayurbhanj district;

(c) if so, the details thereof alongwith the reasons therefor;

(d) whether there is a discrepancy in the figures of Tigers as pointed out by Tiger Reserve and the latest Census of 2004;

(e) if so, the reasons for this discrepancy in the figures and the actual figure of Tigers in the State; and

(f) the time since when the proposal for notifying the Simlipal National Park has been pending?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA) : (a) Simlipal Tiger Reserve, the only tiger reserve in Orissa, has been assessed by a panel of independent experts based on 45 parameters using the format of the World Commission on Protected Areas of the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN), which has been peer reviewed by the IUCN. Both the assessment and peer review have been placed before the Parliament. Based on the above, Simlipal Tiger Reserve has been categorized as 'Very good'.

(b) and (c) The State Government has notified its intention for declaring the core area of Simlipal Tiger Reserve as a National Park, but its final notification is pending on account of settlement of rights of people living in such area.

(d) and (e) The All India estimation of tiger is carried out once in every four years and estimation figures pertaining to the last such estimation done in 2001-02 in respect of Simlipal Tiger Reserve, as received from the State, is 99. At present, the All India estimation of tigers and other wild animals, including habitat status evaluation,

is ongoing as per the revised, enhanced methodology endorsed by the Tiger Task Force.

(f) The State Government has notified its intention for declaring Simlipal National Park in two phases vide notifications 18703/FFAH dated 6.8.1980 and 19525/FFAH dated 11.6.1986. The final notification as a National Park is pending on account of settlement of rights of people living in such area.

Social Forestry

1686. SHRIMATI PRIYA DUTT : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) the total area of land afforested under the social forestry scheme in the last three years; and

(b) the funds allocated in the last three years under the scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA) : (a) and (b) The Ministry of Environment and Forests is implementing National Afforestation Programme (NAP) Scheme in the country during the Tenth Five Year Plan. The scheme is being implemented through Forest Development Agency (FDA) at forest division level and Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs) at village level. 431 FDA projects have been approved in all 28 States to treat an area of 4.46 lakh hectares during last three years (2003-04 to 2005-06). An amount of Rs. 689.56 Crores has been released during last three years (2003-04 to 2005-06).

Regeneration of Mangroves

1687. SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) the steps taken for regeneration of mangroves that have been destroyed illegally after the Coastal Regulation Zone Notification came into force; and

(b) the funds allocated/utilised for this purpose so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA) : (a) and (b) The Central Government provides assistance to State Governments and UT Administration under the 100% funded, centrally sponsored scheme 'Conservation and Management of Mangroves'. Assistance is provided for plantation and maintenance both in new areas and for areas degraded by biotic and abiotic stresses. Among components for which assistance is given are supplementary and alternative livelihood support, infrastructure strengthening, training and capacity-building and awareness-creation. On a country-wide basis, there are 38 identified mangrove sites.

[Translation]

Terminator Seeds

1688. SHRI RAGHUVeer SINGH KOSHAL : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether due to the use of "terminator seed" technology several problems are reported to have been cropped up;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government has conducted any study in this regard;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the remedial steps taken/proposed in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) to (e) The use of Genetic Use Restriction Technology and Terminator Technology is not allowed in India. Under provisions of Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Act, 2001,

any variety of any genera or species which involves Genetic Use Restriction Technology and Terminator Technology shall not be registered. Any transgenic crop developed for commercial release is tested and verified for confirmation of the absence of terminator gene before it is permitted for any field testing by the Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC), functioning under the Ministry of Environment and Forests. GEAC has not received any report regarding use of "Terminator Seed" technology. Since this technology has not been permitted for use within the country, the question of conducting any study does not arise.

[English]

Coastal Zone Management Plan

1689. SHRI DAHYABHAI VALLABHBHAI PATEL : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has received a demand from Daman and Diu for a change in the Coastal Zone Management Plan;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken/proposed by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The proposal from Daman and Diu Administration sought for reclassification of Coastal Regulation Zone area falling between Moti Daman area from South of Daman Ganga river upto Dholar Char Rasta, i.e., upto southern municipal limit, as notified in 2005, from Coastal Regulation Zone-III to Coastal Regulation Zone-II.

(c) The said proposal was placed before the National Coastal Zone Management Authority in the meeting held in August, 2006. Subsequently, the Ministry has received a representation from Chairman, Bahujan

Samaj Party, Daman and Diu regarding the said reclassification proposal which has been referred to Daman and Diu Coastal Zone Management Authority for their comments. These are yet to be received.

[Translation]

Promotion of Agriculture in Hilly Areas

1690. SHRI K.C. SINGH "BABA" : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has formulated any scheme to promote agriculture in hilly areas of the country particularly in Uttaranchal;

(b) if so, the details thereof State-wise;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the funds allocated for the purpose, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) to (d) Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India has been implementing two major Centrally Sponsored Schemes namely (i) Macro Management of Agriculture and (ii) Technology Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture in North Eastern States, Sikkim, Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttaranchal for promotion of agriculture in hilly areas of the country including Uttaranchal. Details of the schemes are as under:

(i) The Centrally Sponsored Scheme on Macro Management of Agriculture has been formulated with the objective to ensure that the Central Assistance is spent on focused and specific intervention for development of agriculture of different States. The scheme provides sufficient flexibility to the States to develop and pursue the programmes on the basis of their

regional priorities within the ambit of 17 sub-schemes subsumed in it. The names of the 17 sub-schemes subsumed under Macro Management scheme and the details of State-wise allocation and release of funds for the year 2006-07 are given in the enclosed statement-I and II respectively.

- (ii) The Centrally Sponsored Scheme Technology Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture in North Eastern States, Sikkim, Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttaranchal has been formulated with the main objective of Integrated Development of Horticulture in all these eleven States in a Mission Mode approach. The Scheme is being implemented in a Mission Mode approach with its four Mini Missions. Mini Mission-I relates to Research and technology development is coordinated and implemented by Indian council of Agriculture Research. Mini Mission-II relates to Improving production and productivity is coordinated by Department of Agriculture and Cooperation and implemented by the Agriculture/Horticulture Department of the States. Mini Mission-III relates to Post-harvest management, marketing and export is Coordinated by Department of Agriculture and Cooperation and implemented by National Horticulture Board, Directorate of Marketing and Inspection, National Cooperative Development Corporation, National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Limited and Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export development Authority. Mini Mission-IV relates to Processing is coordinated and implemented by Ministry of Food Processing Industries.

Details of State-wise allocation and release of funds for the year 2006-07 are given in the enclosed statement-III.

The other schemes which are being implemented in

hilly areas of the country are (a) Watershed Development Project in Shifting Cultivation Areas, (b) Scheme on Transport subsidy on movement of Seeds to North Eastern States including Sikkim, Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttaranchal and Hill Areas of West Bengal, (c) Scheme on "On farm Water Management for Increasing Crop Production in Eastern India" and (d) Scheme on Technology Mission on Cotton.

Statement-I

A. List of 17 Sub schemes subsumed under Centrally Sponsored Scheme on Macro Management of Agriculture

1. Assistance to Coop. Weaker Section
2. Assistance to Women Cooperative
3. Non-overdue Cover Scheme
4. Agri. Credit Stabilization Fund
5. Special Scheme for SC/ST
6. Integrated Cereal Development Programmes in Rice Based Cropping System Areas
7. Integrated Cereal Development Programmes in Wheat Based Cropping System Areas
8. Integrated Cereal Development Programmes in Coarse Cereals Based Cropping System Areas
9. Special Jute Development Programme
10. Sustainable Development of Sugarcane Based Cropping System
11. Balanced and Integrated Use of Fertilizer
12. Promotion of Agricultural Mechanization among Small Farmers
13. National Watershed Development Project for Rainfed Areas

14. Scheme for Foundation and Certified Seed Production of Vegetable Crops
15. Soil Conservation in Catchments of River Valley Projects and Flood Prone Rivers
16. Reclamation and Development of Alkali Soils
17. State Land Use Boards.

Statemen-II

B. State wise allocation and release of funds under CSS on Macro Management of Agriculture during 2006-07

| S. No. | States/UTs | Allocation (Rs. in lakhs) | Released (Rs. in lakhs) |
|--------|-------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 1. | Andhra Pradesh | 4210.00 | 1203.50 |
| 2. | Arunachal Pradesh | 2200.00 | 1100.00 |
| 3. | Assam | 2000.00 | 1000.00 |
| 4. | Bihar | 2170.00 | 1085.00 |
| 5. | Chhattisgarh | 2300.00 | 692.00 |
| 6. | Goa | 260.00 | 237.50 |
| 7. | Gujarat | 2810.00 | 454.00 |
| 8. | Haryana | 2040.00 | 1350.00 |
| 9. | Himachal Pradesh | 2040.00 | 1350.00 |
| 10. | Jammu and Kashmir | 4000.00 | 2551.50 |
| 11. | Jharkhand | 1660.00 | 830.00 |
| 12. | Karnataka | 5990.00 | 2995.00 |
| 13 | Kerala | 3060.00 | 1000.00 |

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|--------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 14. | Madhya Pradesh | 4980.00 | 2490.00 |
| 15. | Maharashtra | 8730.00 | 4365.00 |
| 16. | Manipur | 2200.00 | 1100.00 |
| 17. | Mizoram | 2500.00 | 1250.00 |
| 18. | Meghalaya | 1800.00 | 900.00 |
| 19. | Nagaland | 2500.00 | 1250.00 |
| 20. | Orissa | 2550.00 | 1275.00 |
| 21. | Punjab | | |
| 22. | Rajasthan | 7390.00 | 4368.00 |
| 23. | Sikkim | 1900.00 | 950.00 |
| 24. | Tamil Nadu | 4590.00 | 3037.50 |
| 25. | Tripura | 2000.00 | 1000.00 |
| 26. | Uttar Pradesh | 7400.00 | 3700.00 |
| 27. | Uttanchal | 2170.00 | 1436.00 |
| 28. | West Bengal | 3190.00 | 1595.00 |
| 29. | Delhi | | |
| 30. | Pondicherry | | |
| 31. | Andaman and Nicobar Islands | 25.00 | 12.50 |
| 32. | Chandigarh | | |
| 33. | Dadra and Nagar Haveli | 10.00 | 5.00 |
| 34. | Daman and Diu | | |
| 35. | Lakshadweep | 25.00 | 12.50 |
| Total | | 88700.00 | 44595.00 |

Statement-III

C. State-wise allocation and release of funds under CSS on Technology Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture in North Eastern States, Sikkim, Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttaranchal during 2006-07

| States | Allocation (Rs. in lakhs) | Release (Rs. in lakhs) |
|--|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| A. Mini Mission-II | | |
| Assam | 1400.00 | 700.00 |
| Arunachal Pradesh | 1400.00 | 700.00 |
| Manipur | 1700.00 | 850.00 |
| Meghalaya | 2000.00 | 1000.00 |
| Mizoram | 2000.00 | 1500.00 |
| Nagaland | 2000.00 | 800.00 |
| Tripura | 1800.00 | 1500.00 |
| Sikkim | 1400.00 | 700.00 |
| Jammu and Kashmir | 3500.00 | 883.00 |
| Himachal Pradesh | 4000.00 | 3000.00 |
| Uttaranchal | 4000.00 | 3000.00 |
| B. Project based proposals under Mini Mission-I, III and VI | 2640.00 | 1117.00 |
| Total | 27640.00 | 15750.00 |

[English]

Agricultural Debt Relief Commission

1691.SHRI P. RAJENDRAN : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has received any proposal from the Government of Kerala to set up an Agricultural Debt Relief Commission;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) No. Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

AEZ for Medicinal and Aromatic Plants

1692.SHRI ANANT GUDHE : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has accorded approval to Agricultural Export Zone (AEZ) Project for medicinal and aromatic plants;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether above project is still pending with Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Agency (APEDA); and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the remedial steps to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) and (b) Yes, two agri, export zones have been approved by the Government for Medicinal and Aromatic Plants on the basis of proposal submitted by two State Governments of Uttaranchal and Kerala. The State-wise details are as under:

Uttaranchal : An Agri Export Zone was sanctioned by the Steering Committee on 03.02.2003. MoU between APEDA and Herbal Research and Development Institute (HRDI) was signed on 26.03.2003.

Kerala : The proposal for setting up of an AEZ for Medicinal and Aromatic plants in Kerala State was considered and approved in the Steering Committee meeting held on 24.09.2004. The MoU between APEDA and the State Government of Kerala was signed on 01.01.2005.

(c) and (d) In addition to above, APEDA has also received few more proposals from the States of Uttaranchal and Kerala. The proposals have been submitted to Ministry of Commerce and Industry for approval under the ASIDE Scheme. The details are given in the enclosed statement.

Statement

Uttaranchal

(Rs. in lakhs)

| S. No. | Name of the Project | Activity | Total | Funding Support requested | Remarks |
|--------|---|---------------------------------------|--------|---------------------------|---|
| 1. | Proposal for establishing Super Critical Fluid Extraction Unit (SCFE) as Common Processing Facility for Export Promotion at Centre for Aromatic Plants (CAP), Selaqui, Dehradun | Common Processing Facility | 305.11 | 240.11 | |
| 2. | Proposal for establishing of "Herbal Analytical and Tissue Culture Laboratory" at Gopeshwar at Chamoli | Setting up of Tissue Culture Lab | 438.31 | 100.00 | |
| 3. | Quality lab for testing Common Facility – To be used by Growers/Industrialists Exporters, which will help them to test the herbal and medicinal plants in order to standardize the herbal products, as per international specifications | Setting up of Quality lab for testing | 438.31 | 290.00 | Proposal is being put up for consideration in the Authority Meeting of APEDA scheduled to be held on 17/11/2006 |

Kerala

| | | | | | |
|----|--|--|----------|---------|--|
| 1. | Project proposal under the ASIDE Scheme for manufacture of medicines under AEZ for medicinal and aromatic plants in Palakkad, Kerala of M/s. Agastya Biopharm India Ltd. | Land Development and land and Machinery including R and D equipments | 20100.00 | 2725.00 | |
|----|--|--|----------|---------|--|

[English]

Tax Concession to Pharma Companies

1693. SHRI RAKESH SINGH : Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Pharmaceutical companies have included India in the list of important countries for its investment, research and development in an international survey;

(b) if so, whether the Government proposes to provide concessions in the tax structure to the pharma companies as per demand of these companies; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILISERS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE) : (a) India is emerging as one of the most favoured destinations for collaborative R and D, bioinformatics, contract research and manufacturing and clinical research as a result of growing compliance with internationally harmonized standards such as Good Laboratory Practices (GLP), current Good manufacturing Practices (CGMP), Good Clinical Practices (GCP) and patent laws.

(b) and (c) As per the current provisions of Section 35 (2AB) (1) of the Income Tax Act, if a company engaged in the business of bio-technology, drugs, pharmaceuticals etc. incurs any expenditure on scientific research (excluding cost of any land or building) on in-house R and D facility, a deduction of a sum equal to 150% of expenditure so incurred is allowed, to encourage investment in R and D in pharma sector. Besides this, Income Tax Act also contains the provision of Section 80-IB(8A) under which for any company carrying on Scientific R and D, deduction of 100% of Profit and Gains of such business for a period of 10 consecutive assessment years, beginning from the initial assessment year is allowed.

Settlement of Claims of Bhopal Gas Victims

1694. SHRI RAYAPATI SAMBASIVA RAO : Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state :

(a) the status of settlement of claims of Bhopal Gas Disaster victims;

(b) the reasons for delay in its settlement; and

(c) the efforts taken/proposal to be taken by the Government to resolve it?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILISERS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE) : (a) An amount of Rs.1546.62 crore has been awarded to 5,74,273 claimants of the Bhopal Gas Leak Disaster, as on 31st October, 2006. In addition to this, in compliance with the orders of the Supreme Court dated 19th July, 2004 and 26th October, 2004 an amount of Rs. 1494.29 crore has been disbursed among 5,57,927 claimants as pro-rata compensation on 1:1 basis, till 31st October, 2006. The disbursal process is still continuing on the directions of the Supreme Court.

(b) and (c) There is no delay in settlement of the claim cases.

[Translation]

Technical Education to Children of Labourers

1695. SHRI HARIKEWAL PRASAD :
SHRI SUNIL KUMAR MAHATO :

Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has taken any initiative to provide technical education exclusively to the children of labourers engaged in organised and unorganised sectors; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES) : (a) and (b) DGE&T under the Ministry of Labour and Employment is implementing Craftsmen Training Scheme where children of 14 years and above including children of labourers may join training courses run in the Industrial Training Institutes/Centres spread throughout the country. Presently, training is being imparted in 107 trades in 5114 Industrial Training Institutes/Centres.

[English]

Import of Vanaspati from Sri Lanka

1696. SHRI NAVJOT SINGH SIDHU : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government has received representations from Vanaspati Manufacturers regarding check on import of Vanaspati from Sri Lanka for providing remunerative price to domestic producers;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH) : (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The representations received from Vanaspati Consultative Committee and Vanaspati Manufacturers' Association of India in this regard has been considered by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. The total quantum of import of vanaspati including bakery shortening and margarine under India Sri Lank Free Trade Agreement (ISLFTA) has been restricted to 2.5 lakh MT per annum as per the arrangements indicated in the Public Notice No. 89 dated 21.11.2006 issued by Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT).

[English]

Corporate Houses in Retail Business

1697. SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has allowed the big corporate houses to enter into retail outlet business in the country;

(b) if so, whether this would adversely affect the retail outlets in the unorganized sector; and

(c) if so, the steps being taken by the Government to protect the interest of the people employed in retail business in unorganized sector?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR) : (a) and (b) There is no restriction on the entry of the big corporate houses and other domestic investors into the retail sector. The organised retail sector would reduce the cost of intermediation on account of economies of scale benefiting consumers and producers/farmers. It also helps in establishment of cost effective supply chains. Besides, the organised retailing sector would create more employment opportunities and improve the quality of employment in the long run. The share of organised retailing in the total retail trade is very small and it would not have any major adverse impact on retail outlets in the unorganised sector.

(c) No action seems to be necessary at present in view of replies to (a) and (b) above.

Invasion of Locusts in Jammu and Kashmir

1698. SHRI CHHEWANG THUPSTAN : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether all the three regions of Jammu and Kashmir was devastated by invasion of locusts;

- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the assistance sought and funds released to the State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) to (c) Migratory locust infestation in the Zankar area of Kargil was spread over an area of about 3000 hectares and in the Changthang valley of Leh district over an area of 5000 hectares. As soon as information about locust infestation was received from the State, Government of India dispatched special teams from its Locust Warning Organisation to the affected areas in Kargil and Leh districts. These teams conducted survey, devised control strategy and supervised control operations in the affected areas in collaboration with officials of the State Government due to which locust infestation could be brought under control.

Sujlam-Suflam Project

1699. SHRI MADHUSUDAN MISTRY : Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state :

- (a) the money spent on Sujlam-Suflam project in Gujarat so far;
- (b) the money provided by the Union Government for this project;
- (c) whether the State Government has diverted the Union Government's money meant for other purpose for this project;
- (d) if so, the details and reasons thereof;
- (e) whether any technical study was carried out by the State Government and Union Government before starting the project of Sujlam-Suflam project;
- (f) if so, the findings and reasons therefor; and
- (g) the status of project Sujlam-Suflam at present and the time by which it is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV) : (a) Sujlam Suflam Project launched by the Government of Gujarat in 2003-04 envisages irrigation watershed management and drinking water supply schemes. The estimated cost of the project is Rs. 4,291.00 crore out of which Rs.1946.33 crore is allocated to drinking water supply schemes. As per information received from State Government, expenditure incurred by State Water Resources Department and State Water Supply department on the project are Rs. 2067.14 crore and Rs. 984.88 crore respectively.

(b) and (c) The money for the project is provided by the Government of Gujarat.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) and (f) The State Government has informed that for each component of the project, a detailed report was prepared before according administrative and technical sanction by the State Government.

(g) The status of major component of the Sujlam Suphalam Project as reported by Government of Gujarat is as under:

(A) Water Resources Department:

- (i) Work of Sujlam Suphalam Spreading Canal (of 337 km. length) is in progress and is likely to be completed by June, 2007.
- (ii) Two lift irrigation schemes (pipe lines), (namely Piyaj - Dharoi and Khorasam-Saraswati) are completed. Works of six pipelines are in progress, which will be completed by June, 2007.
- (iii) In Surendranagar district, 71 check dams are completed and remaining works will be completed by October, 2007.
- (iv) Works of Panam High Level Canal and

Kandana High Level Canal are in progress and are likely to be completed by December, 2007.

- (v) Works of check dams under Sardar Patel Participatory Water Supply Scheme and other major check dams are in progress.
- (vi) In Kachch District, works of 10 Bandharas are in progress. For 30 Bandharas, tender process is in progress. This work will be completed by June, 2008.
- (vii) Remaining works will be taken up as per availability of funds and works will be completed at the earliest.

(B) Water Supply Department :

Total 32 Water Supply Projects are covered in Sujalam Suphalam Yojana-Drinking Water Supply Projects for Supplying drinking water to 4904 villages and 34 towns at the cost of Rs. 1946.33 crore, out of which-

- (i) 2 projects have been completed and 20 projects are in progress covering 3137 villages and 27 towns. Water supply to 636 villages has been started.
- (ii) 10 projects covering 176 villages and 7 towns are yet to be taken in hand.
- (iii) The projects are proposed to be completed by March, 2008 subject to availability of fund.

**Construction of Fish Landing Centre
at Kodibengre**

1700.SHRI D.V. SADANANDA GOWDA : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

- (a) whether the revised proposal for Rs. 179.00 lakhs for construction of fish landing center at Kodibengre in Karnataka is pending with the Union Government; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Polavaram Multi Purpose Project

1701.SHRI JUAL ORAM : Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the construction activity of the Polavaram Multi-Purpose Project has already started without proper clearance from the Union Government and without the knowledge of the affected states;

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

(c) whether the said project is also likely to submerge the world famous Rama Temple at Bhadrachalam alongwith the entire town; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken to protect the temple and the town?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV) : (a) As reported by the Government of Andhra Pradesh, the State Government commenced the works pertaining to canals and spill way located on the right flank and no work has commenced in the river portion. Subsequently, all the works were stopped from 8th May, 2006. The State Government is yet to obtain investment clearance from the planning Commission.

(b) The Ministry of Water Resources convened an Inter-State meeting of party States on 4th October, 2006 to discuss the issues related to Polavaram Project and to resolve them amicably. The party States have agreed for joint survey to assess extent of submergence from Polavaram Project.

(c) No, Sir. The State Government of Andhra Pradesh has informed that Rama Temple at Bhadrachalam alongwith the entire town will not be submerged with the project.

(d) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Production of Ethanol

1702. SHRI TUKARAM GANPATRAO RENGE PATIL :
SHRI BADIGA RAMAKRISHNA :
SHRI JIVABHAI A. PATEL :

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether production of ethanol has increased in the country during the last three years and the current year;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken to further augment ethanol production;

(c) whether the Government has provided/proposes to provide special facilities/loans at lower interest rates to sugar factories for setting-up of plants for production of ethanol from molasses/alcohol;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken/proposed to promote utilisation of ethanol produced by these mills?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH) : (a) and (b) The production of ethanol is expected to go up to about 550 million liters during the current year. In the absence of a clear policy on blending of ethanol with petrol, there was no significant production of ethanol during the last three years.

The Government has decided to blend 5% ethanol

with petrol from November, 2006 which will create a demand for about 550 million litres during the current year which in turn will augment ethanol production. Further, concessional loans are provided from Sugar Development Fund (SDF) to the sugar factories to establish facilities for production of ethanol.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. The Sugar Development Fund Rules, 1983 provide for sanction of financial assistance to sugar mills for setting up of plants for production of ethanol from molasses/alcohol at concessional rate of interest i.e. 2% below the Bank Rate, which effectively comes to 4% per annum at present. The sugar mill is eligible for SDF loan upto 40% of the eligible project cost which is to be repaid in eight half yearly equal instalments after one year from disbursement.

(e) The Government has decided to blend 5% ethanol with petrol with effect from November, 2006. The percentage of blending has been planned to be increased to 10% in Phase-II, which is expected to generate a demand of about 1200 million litres after one year or so.

[English]

Finalization of Phase-II of NPCBB

1703. SHRI HARIBHAU RATHOD : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has finalized Phase-II of the National Project for Cattle and Buffalo Breeding (NPCBB);

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the time by which the project is likely to be finalized?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR) : (a) to (c) Department has finalized the proposal for Phase-II of

National Project for Cattle and Buffalo Breeding (NPCBB). The Expenditure Finance Committee meeting held on 19.5.2006 has recommended the continuation of Phase-II of NPCBB from current financial year. The note for Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs for approval of the project has been submitted.

[Translation]

**Non-availability of Milk and
Milk Products of DMS**

1704. SHRI ALOK KUMAR MEHTA :
SHRI HEMLAL MURMU :
DR. K. DHANARAJU :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the consumers are facing problems due to short supply and non-availability of milk and milk products particularly Ghee in Delhi Milk Scheme (DMS) outlets for the past few months;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the action taken by the Union Government to ensure adequate supply of milk and milk products in the DMS outlets?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Due to floods in the States of Rajasthan and Gujarat, DMS could not procure sufficient quantity of milk for supply in its outlets.

(c) DMS has since started making adequate supply of milk and milk products in the DMS outlets.

**Presence of Pesticides and Metals in
Fruits and Vegetable**

1705. SHRI AVTAR SINGH BHADANA :
SHRI J.M. AARON RASHID :

DR. RAJESH MISHRA :
SHRI SAJJAN KUMAR
SHRI NAVEEN JINDAL :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether any arrangement has been made by the Union Government in consultation with the State Governments to examine and study presence of pesticides, other harmful elements and metals, like nickel and cadmium in fruits and vegetables;

(b) if so, the details and the findings thereof; and

(c) the action taken/proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) to (c) The Registration Committee constituted under Section 5 of the Insecticides Act, 1968 registers pesticides only after satisfying itself regarding their efficacy and safety. Toxicity and residue data generated under supervised trials is analysed and used to fix Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare under the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, 1954 and Rules framed thereunder. The inspection of fruits and vegetables for the presence of pesticide residues and other harmful substances falls under the purview of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. However, as per the directions of the Inter Ministerial Committee constituted to review the use of hazardous chemicals and insecticides, 33 samples of vegetables have been drawn from Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee, Azadpur, Delhi since June, 2006 and tested for residues of organo-chlorine, organo-phosphorus and synthetic pyrethroids pesticides. Residues of chlorpyrifos were detected in two of these samples at the level of 0.18 ppm. 24 of these samples have also been analysed for the presence of heavy metals like lead, cadmium and arsenic. The heavy metals

found in the samples of vegetables were below the maximum limit prescribed under the Food Adulteration Rules, 1955.

The Ministry of Agriculture has also taken up a scheme for Monitoring of Pesticide Residues under which 21 laboratories under various Ministries/Departments have been provided with equipments to undertake analysis of pesticide residues in vegetables, water, meat and meat products, and marine products.

[English]

Cleaning of Rivers

1706. SHRI PANNIAN RAVINDRAN : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Kerala Government has submitted proposals for Central Assistance for an action plan for the cleaning of the Karamanayar, Killiyar and Parvathi Puthanar rivers;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which the said proposals are likely to be cleared?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA) : (a) No proposal for an action plan for cleaning of Karamanayar, Killiyar and Parvathi Puthanar rivers have been received from the Government of Kerala.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

Notification on Environment Impact Assessment/Norms

1707. SHRI SWADESH CHAKRABORTTY :
SHRI A.K. MOORTHY :

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has issued a new

notification on Environment Impact Assessment (EIA)/ Norms; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA) : (a) Yes, Sir. The Environment Impact Assessment Notification has been issued on 14th September 2006 vide Gazette No. S.O. 1533(E)

(b) The salient features of the Notification are as follows:

(i) NOC (No Objection Certificate) is not required for the purpose of Environment Clearance.

(ii) The developmental project have been categorized according to their environmental impact potential instead of the earlier investment criteria.

(iii) Environmental Clearance process has been decentralized.

(iv) The developmental projects have been categorized into two Categories viz. Category 'A' and Category 'B'. All Category 'A' projects require environmental clearance from the Central Government level while all Category 'B' projects require clearance from the State/UT Level Environment Impact Assessment Authority (SEAC).

(v) Qualification and experience has been clearly prescribed for the Experts and Members for Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC), State Level Expert Appraisal Committee (SEAC) and the State Level Environment Impact Assessment Authority (SEAC).

(vi) The environmental process will comprise four stages; namely Screening, Scoping, Public Consultation and Environment Appraisal of the project proposals.

- (vii) Public Consultation has been structured and made more transparent.
- (viii) Time Limits have been prescribed for each stage of environmental clearance process.
- (ix) Over all, the Environmental Clearance process, has been made more transparent, as most of the documents will be displayed on the Web sites of respective Authorities.

DAMS on Upper Yamuna

1708. SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI :
SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL :

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Central Government has taken a serious note of the persistent water and power problems that the capital has been facing over the past few years and a high level meeting consisting of Uttar Pradesh, Uttaranchal, Rajasthan, Haryana and the National Capital Region Territory for construction of three dams in the upper reaches of the Yamuna river were considered;

(b) whether the Steering Committee comprising Secretaries to the Ministries of Power, Water Resources and Environment and Forests was constituted for this purpose;

(c) if so, whether a road map of the construction of these dams have been prepared; and

(d) if so, the time by which the work on this project is likely to be started?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV) : (a) The Government is already aware of the water and power problems being faced in the Capital. The construction of three storage projects i.e. Renuka, Kishau and Lakhwar Vyasi in upper reaches of river Yamuna was discussed, as an agenda item in the 3rd meeting of Upper

Yamuna Review Committee chaired by Hon'ble Union Minister of Water Resources on 12.4.06 and it was decided to constitute a Steering Committee to formulate the strategy to expedite the works on the three storage projects.

(b) Yes, Sir. A Steering Committee comprising the Secretary (Water Resources), Secretary (Power), Secretary (Environment and Forests) from the Central Government and Irrigation/Water Resources Secretaries from the States of Uttar Pradesh, Uttaranchal, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Haryana and NCT of Delhi was constituted as decided in the 3rd meeting of Upper Yamuna Review Committee.

(c) and (d) The Steering Committee has desired that Renuka dam project should be implemented expeditiously by the State of Himachal Pradesh. The Government of Uttaranchal informed the Committee of their decision in principle to entrust the Kishau dam project to Tehri Hydro Development Corporation (THDC), which is looking into the different technical and cost aspects of the project to proceed further. On a revised Detailed Project Report (DPR) of Lakhwar Vyasi Project submitted by National Hydro Electric Power Corporation (NHPC), comments of certain specialised Directorates of Central Water Commission have been forwarded to NHPC for compliance. The construction of the aforesaid projects can be started depending upon factors as applicable, such as compliance of observations of Central Appraising Agencies, Technical Clearance and Investment Clearance by Planning Commission.

Employment Opportunities

1709. SHRIMATI NIVEDITA MANE :
SHRI EKNATH MAHADEO GAIKWAD :

Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether despite 5 percent rise in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) during the last few years, employment opportunities have gone down; and

(b) if so, the reasons for this phenomenon with the

details of GDP and the employment opportunities recorded in the last five years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES) : (a) and (b) No, Sir, Reliable estimates of employment and unemployment are obtained through quinquennial National Sample Surveys carried out by the National Sample Survey Organisation. Last such survey for which results have been published relates to the year 2004-05. As per these surveys, the employment, as per usual status approach which was of the order of 397 million in 1999-2000 has gone up to 459 million in 2004-05. On an average, therefore, around 12.4 million persons were provided employment per year during the period 2000-05 against a target of 10 million per year.

Shortage of Milk

1710. SHRI N.S.V. CHITTHAN : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Chennai and certain other cities were suffering from milk shortage recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefore; and

(c) the steps being taken by the Government to meet the shortage?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR) : (a) No Sir, Chennai and certain other cities were not facing shortage of milk, recently.

(b) and (c) Does not arise in view of reply at (a).

[Translation]

Levy of Charge on Private Broadcasters

1711. SHRI SUNIL KUMAR MAHATO :
SHRI HARISINH CHAVDA :

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether Doordarshan levies any charge on private broadcasters;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the revenue earned during the last two years through the said levy; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government to increase revenue under the head?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Every private channel is currently paying an annual carriage fee of Rs. 1 crore to be on DTH platform.

(c) Rs. 1.45 crore till date.

(d) Prasar Bharati has initiated a move in this direction with other Public Service Broadcasters in the world. Besides some requests from other private channels are under process.

Guidelines for Film Certification

1712. SHRI HARISINH CHAVDA :
SHRI M. ANJAN KUMAR YADAV :

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether new guidelines formulated by the Central Board to check indecent and objectionable scenes in films have been recently circulated among the members of the Board for their observation/notes;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the time by which these guidelines are likely to get final approval and implemented; and

(d) the reaction of the Government on the increasing obscenity in films?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) The Central Board of Film Certification certifies films for public exhibition under the provisions of Section 5B(1) of the Cinematograph Act, 1952 and the guidelines issued thereunder. The guidelines inter alia stipulates the following:

- Human sensibilities are not offended by vulgarity, obscenity, or depravity;
- Such dual meaning words as obviously cater to baser instincts are not allowed;
- Scenes degrading or denigrating women in any manner are not presented;
- Scenes showing sexual perversions shall be avoided and if such matters are germane to the theme, they shall be reduced to the minimum and no details are to be shown.

Fixation of Standards for Bio Fertilizers

1713. SHRIMATI NEETA PATERIYA : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government has fixed the standards for Bio-fertilizers in March, 2006 and communicated them to the State Governments;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the States who have implemented the same and those who have not implemented so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF

AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government vide notification S.O. 391 (E) dated 24.03.2006 has incorporated bio-fertilizers namely Azotobacter, Rhizobium, Azospirillum and Phosphate Solubilizing Bacteria in Fertilizer (Control) Order, 1985 to regulate the standards and to provide regulatory mechanism for ensuring supply of quality bio-fertilizers to the farmers.

(c) As per Fertilizer (Control) Order, 1985 States are expected to regulate the production and sale of these bio-fertilizers. To enable the manufacturers and sellers, keeping in view the time required for taking necessary Government approvals and short shelf life of bio-fertilizers, time up to 31.12.2006 has been given for enforcement of Fertilizer (Control) Order relating to bio-fertilizers.

Pilot Project

1714. SHRI VIJAY KUMAR KHANDELWAL :
SHRI KRISHNA MURARI MOGHE :

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government proposes to conserve the Chambal's ravines;

(b) if so, whether any scheme is being formulated for this; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA) : (a) to (c) Presently, there is no specific scheme of the Union Government for the conservation of Chambal's ravines. However, the Government of India is implementing National Afforestation Programme (NAP) and Development of National Parks and Sanctuaries schemes in all the States, including the areas of Chambal's ravines for conservation, protection and development of forests. In

addition, the Government of India has constituted a National Level Task Force for the rehabilitation of ravenous areas.

(Rs. in lakh)

Cattle Diseases

1715. SHRI RAGHURAJ SINGH SHAKYA :
DR. Dhirendra Agarwal :
SHRI SUNIL KUMAR MAHATO :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has received any financial assistance from World Bank to deal with various diseases that affects livestock;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Union Government has received any proposal from the State Governments particularly Madhya Pradesh and Jharkhand for controlling the Cattle diseases;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Question does not arise.

(c) to (e) No specific proposal for financial assistance for controlling the Cattle diseases has been received from Government of Madhya Pradesh and Jharkhan. However, under ongoing Tenth Plan Centrally Sponsored Schemes namely, (i) Assistance to States for Control of Animal Diseases (ASCAD) and (ii) National Project on Rinderpest Eradication (NPRE) proposal for release of funds for controlling animal diseases has been received from these States. Amount revalidated/released to the Government of Madhya Pradesh and Jharkhand during the current financial year (2006-07) under above two schemes is as under:

| Name of Scheme | Madhya Pradesh | | Jharkhand | |
|----------------|----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| | Amount revali- dated | Amount released | Amount revali- dated | Amount released |
| ASCAD | 138.59 | 50.00 | 160.519 | 0.00 |
| NPRE | 0.00 | 25.00 | 30.18 | 0.00 |

[English]

Export of Cotton Bales

1716. SHRI RAOSAHEB DANVE PATIL : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government is considering any proposal to enter into cooperation with China in the agriculture field;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government of China has refused to purchase the cotton bales from India;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the rate of cotton is likely to decline as result thereof; and

(f) if so, the details of the steps taken by the Government to ensure remunerative price to farmers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE, MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) to (f) The information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the house.

[Translation]

Sources of Water

1717.DR. DHIRENDRA AGARWAL :

SHRIMATI SANGEETA KUMARI SINGH DEO :

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have conducted any survey for the exploitation of new water sources in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise; and

(c) the steps taken for proper utilization of the said resources?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV) : (a) to (c) The average annual water resources availability of the country has been assessed as 1869 billion cubic meter. It is estimated that owing to topographic, hydrological and other constraints, the utilizable water is 1123 billion cubic meter out of which 690 billion cubic meter is surface water and 433 billion cubic meter is replenishable ground water. The average annual water availability may be considered to remain unchanged. Survey and investigation for identification of appropriate sites for sustainable development of water resources for meeting the requirements in various sectors is a continuous process.

Water being a State subject, several measures for development and management of water resources are undertaken by the respective State Governments which include creation of storages, restoration of water bodies, rain water harvesting, artificial recharge to ground water and adoption of better management practices etc. Storage capacity of 213 billion cubic meter has been created so far. As per present assessment, the total estimated storage capacity of the various projects under construction is about 76 billion cubic meter. Further, the State Governments have

identified various other schemes for investigation and planning and the estimated storage for such schemes is about 108 billion cubic meter. The Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) also undertakes exploratory drilling to assess the potentialities of various geological formations. The State wise list of the exploratory bore holes drilled by CGWB is given in the statement enclosed.

Statement

State-wise status of Exploratory Bore Holes Drilled by C.G.W.B. (As on 30.9.2006)

(Annex to Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 1717 for answer on 04.12.2006)

| S. No. | State | Total |
|--------|-------------------|-------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1. | Andhra Pradesh | 2258 |
| 2. | Arunachal Pradesh | 36 |
| 3. | Assam | 513 |
| 4. | Bihar | 936 |
| 5. | Chhattisgarh | 671 |
| 6. | Goa | 121 |
| 7. | Gujarat | 1918 |
| 8. | Haryana | 966 |
| 9. | Himachal Pradesh | 160 |
| 10. | Jammu and Kashmir | 481 |
| 11. | Jharkhand | 486 |
| 12. | Karnataka | 1948 |
| 13. | Kerala | 663 |
| 14. | Madhya Pradesh | 1482 |

| 1 | 2 | 3 |
|--------------------|------------------------|--------------|
| 15. | Maharashtra | 1613 |
| 16. | Manipur | 38 |
| 17. | Meghalaya | 106 |
| 18. | Mizoram | 6 |
| 19. | Nagaland | 17 |
| 20. | Orissa | 1602 |
| 21. | Punjab | 438 |
| 22. | Rajasthan | 2431 |
| 23. | Sikkim | 40 |
| 24. | Tamil Nadu | 1364 |
| 25. | Tripura | 108 |
| 26. | Uttanchal | 185 |
| 27. | Uttar Pradesh | 1881 |
| 28. | West Bengal | 776 |
| Total | | 23244 |
| 1. | Andaman and Nicobar | 60 |
| 2. | Chandigarh | 55 |
| 3. | Dadra and Nagar Haveli | 13 |
| 4. | Delhi | 693 |
| 5. | Daman and Diu | 3 |
| 6. | Pondicherry | 77 |
| Total | | 901 |
| Grand Total | | 24145 |

National Commission for Farmers

1718. SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the National Commission for Farmers headed by Dr. M.S. Swaminathan has suggested the setting up of National Food Security and Sovereignty Board; and

(b) if so, the details thereof indicating the constitution and functions of the Board?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The National Commission on Farmers has recommended the setting up of National Food Security and Sovereignty Board with the Prime Minister as its Chairman and Union Minister of Agriculture, Finance, Rural Development, Water Resources, Panchayati Raj, Commerce and Environment, Leaders of all political parties, Chief Ministers of few States as Members and an eminent professional in the area of Food Security as Member Secretary.

Its major functions would include operation of Minimum Support Price (MSP) and Public Distribution System (PDS) and the maintenance of food Security reserves, review of growth rate in agriculture and horticulture and provide oversight to issues such as diversion of prime farmland for non-farm purposes.

[Translation]

Production of Canned Milk

1719. SHRI KULDEEP BISHNOI : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is mandatory for companies producing canned milk to seek certification from Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS);

(b) if so, the number of such companies which have obtained the said certification;

(c) whether a number of companies engaged in production of canned milk in the country has not obtained the said certification;

(d) if so, details and reasons therefor; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government to ensure compliance of standards fixed by BIS for canned food items by the companies engaged in production of such items?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR) : (a) According to sub-rule 16 of rule 49 of the Prevention of Food Adulteration Rules, 1955, condensed milk sweetened, condensed skimmed milk sweetened, milk powder, skimmed milk powder, partly skimmed milk powder and partly skimmed sweetened condensed milk shall not be sold except under Bureau of Indian Standards Marks.

(b) BIS has granted 203 licences to various manufacturers for packing milk powder (IS : 1165:2002), Condensed Milk (IS:1166:1986), Skimmed Milk Powder – Standard Grade (IS:13334 [Part-1]:1998) and Skimmed Milk Powder – Extra Grade (IS:13334 [Part-2]:1992).

(c) and (d) Department of Consumer Affairs/Bureau of Indian Standards have no information about the companies engaged in production of canned milk in the country without BIS certification.

(e) Violation of any provisions of the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, 1954 and rules made there-under attracts legal action against the offenders.

[English]

Increase in Agri Exports

1720.SHRI K.C. PALLANI SHAMY :

SHRI E.G. SUGAVANAM :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the agri-exports have increased in the country over the years;

(b) if so, the details thereof during the last three years and the items which are exported during the above period;

(c) whether the Government has made any perspective plan for agri-exports during the current decade;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken to further boost the production and export of agricultural products in the country particularly in fruits and vegetables?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) and (b) Yes Sir. Agricultural exports recorded a growth of 7.5%, 11.6% and 19.7% during the years 2003-04, 2004-05 and 2005-06 respectively. The details are given in the enclosed statement.

(c) to (e) The Government of India promotes agro-exports directly and through Commodity Boards, Export Promotion Councils and Commodity Associations. In order to boost export of agro products, the Government, through the Commodity Boards, provides various incentives for infrastructure development, quality control, market development and promotion, packaging, publicity, information dissemination etc. besides providing assistance to exporters for conducting publicity campaigns, market surveys, sending delegations abroad, participating in international trade fairs, inviting potential buyers etc. Further, the Government has taken initiatives to make the farmers aware about the latest techniques of farming through mass media support to agriculture which uses Doordarshan infrastructure for providing agriculture related information

and knowledge to the farming community. In order to disseminate information on improved production technologies amongst the farmers, block demonstrations and Integrated Pest Management (IPM) demonstrations are organized through State Department of Agriculture and Frontline Demonstrations through Indian Council of Agricultural Research.

The Government has introduced a number of initiatives and interventions for enhancement of production

and productivity of agricultural products, which *inter alia*, include Integrated Scheme of Oilseeds, Pulses, Oilpalm and Maize (ISOPOM), National Horticulture Mission, Technology Mission for integrated Development of Horticulture, Micro-irrigation and Integrated Cereal Development Programmes. Schemes such as the Transport Assistance Scheme and Visheesh Krishi Upaj Yojna are implemented to ensure that the farmers get remunerative prices for their exports as well as increased access to the international market.

Statement

Export of Agricultural Products from 2003-04 to 2005-06

Qty. '000 tonnes, Value : Rs. In crores

| Item | 2003-2004 | | 2004-2005 | | 2005-2006 | |
|----------------------------|-----------|---------|-----------|---------|-----------|---------|
| | Qty. | Value | Qty. | Value | Qty. | Value |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Pulses | 153.88 | 328.60 | 246.38 | 553.81 | 444.61 | 1102.62 |
| Rice Basmati | 771.49 | 1993.05 | 1126.13 | 2741.94 | 1161.44 | 3030.32 |
| Rice (other than Basmati) | 2640.57 | 2174.94 | 3645.87 | 3899.73 | 3905.41 | 4144.03 |
| Wheat | 4093.08 | 2391.15 | 1998.00 | 1448.03 | 745.56 | 557.12 |
| Other Cereals | 604.23 | 397.55 | 1155.3 | 776.68 | 658.69 | 512.88 |
| Tea | 177.77 | 1637.35 | 194.55 | 1764.18 | 157.91 | 1632.09 |
| Coffee | 188.45 | 1085.92 | 158.94 | 1007.96 | 177.89 | 1577.07 |
| Tobacco unmgd. | 120.64 | 801.41 | 135.32 | 937.71 | 144.06 | 1027.70 |
| Tobacco mgd. | | 295.06 | | 309.04 | | 302.41 |
| Dairy and Poultry Products | | 415.15 | — | 670.55 | | 1112.06 |
| Floriculture Products | | 250.47 | | 205.25 | | 304.69 |
| Spices | 267.47 | 1544.18 | 350.75 | 1794.11 | 402.84 | 2218.09 |

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|-----------------------------------|---|---------|-----------------|---------|-----------------|---------|-----------------|
| Cashewnut Shell Liquid | | 4.33 | 5.02 | 5.13 | 11.58 | 4.41 | 6.98 |
| Cashew | | 99.68 | 1699.82 | 109.67 | 2336.15 | 124.10 | 2562.77 |
| Sesame and Niger Seed | | 207.00 | 754.30 | 181.68 | 723.33 | 223.88 | 794.09 |
| Ground nut | | 176.11 | 544.30 | 167.50 | 501.99 | 185.11 | 500.53 |
| Guargum Meal | | 120.56 | 507.90 | 128.29 | 655.96 | 186.53 | 1042.19 |
| Oil Meals | | 3249.89 | 3348.41 | 3516.09 | 3100.75 | 6969.51 | 4826.07 |
| Castor oil | | 162.36 | 656.06 | 260.01 | 1028.26 | 253.40 | 934.41 |
| Shellac | | 10.50 | 179.74 | 8.60 | 162.77 | 9.67 | 161.18 |
| Sugar | | 1200.60 | 1216.59 | 105.11 | 143.90 | 316.85 | 557.10 |
| Molasses | | 98.62 | 19.38 | 7.71 | 5.22 | 72.46 | 27.29 |
| Fruits/Veg seeds | | 5.18 | 53.61 | 6.70 | 62.93 | 10.04 | 89.87 |
| Fresh Fruits | | | 784.03 | | 811.42 | | 1101.22 |
| Fresh Veg | | | 953.93 | | 813.63 | | 910.94 |
| Processed Veg | | | 291.15 | | 339.91 | | 472.94 |
| Processed Fruit Juice | | | 343.66 | | 346.08 | | 600.18 |
| Misc. Processed Items | | | 1058.69 | | 860.68 | | 978.98 |
| Meat and Preparations | | | 1714.41 | | 1734.37 | | 2647.50 |
| Marine products | | 409.49 | 6105.63 | 379.86 | 5695.21 | 461.06 | 6355.84 |
| Cotton Raw Incl. waste | | 179.61 | 942.37 | 73.60 | 364.49 | 595.88 | 2791.87 |
| Jute Hessain | | | 410.11 | | 422.14 | | 488.80 |
| Paper/Wood products | | | 2362.58 | | 3613.55 | | 4431.09 |
| Total Agricultural Exports | | | 37266.52 | | 39863.31 | | 48802.92 |
| % Growth in total Export | | | 7.50 | | 11.60 | | 19.70 |

Source : DGC&S Report

Projects under CADP

1721. PROF. M. RAMADASS : Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the allocation of Rs. 1208 crore for Command Area Development and Water Management Scheme has not been utilized fully during the first four years of the Tenth Plan; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Out of Plan outlay of Rs. 1208 crore for the Tenth Plan under Command Area Development and Water Management Programme, the budget allocation of Rs. 785.50 crore was made during the first four financial years of the Tenth Plan. Out of this an amount of Rs. 638.525 crore has been utilized.

The year wise details of budget allocation and utilization are as under:-

| S. No. | Year | Central Share Budget Allocation (In Crores) | Central Share Utilisation (In Crores) |
|----------------------|---------|---|---------------------------------------|
| 1. | 2002-03 | 202.00 | 152.157 |
| 2. | 2003-04 | 202.00 | 144.020 |
| 3. | 2004.05 | 181.50 | 142.449 |
| 4. | 2005-06 | 200.00 | 199.899 |
| Total for four years | | 785.50 | 638.525 |

The Central Assistance is provided to the States under the Programme on matching share basis. The utilization during first 3 years of the Tenth Plan has been less than

allocation mainly because State Governments have not been able to provide their matching share due to their financial constraints.

Strike and Lockouts

1722. SHRI NAVEEN JINDAL : Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the total number of strikes and lockouts in the country has come down during the current year as compared to the previous year;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the estimated loss of man-days and production due to strikes and lockouts during the current year so far;

(d) whether the mechanism to avoid strikes and lockouts is under review; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The total number of strikes and lockouts declined to 346 during January to September 2006 (for which the latest data is available) from 397 witnessed during the corresponding period of the previous year.

(c) the mandays and production loss due to strikes and lockouts during the first nine months of the current year has been 13.75 million and Rs. 181.82 crores respectively.

(d) and (e) The Industrial Disputes Act, 1947, provides a legal framework for maintaining harmonious industrial relations. Central Industrial Relations Machinery (CIRM) of Ministry of Labour and Employment continuously makes efforts to maintain harmonious industrial relations in the central sphere establishments through measures, which include intervention in situations of threatened strikes and lockouts with a view to avert the strikes and

lockouts with minimum loss of production, mandays and wages. There is no proposal to review the existing mechanism.

Citrus Fruits

1723.SHRI K.S. RAO : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has taken steps to encourage small farmers to adopt programme to grow citrus fruits on the lines of initiative taken by the Council for Citrus and Agro Juicing in Punjab;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the availability and supply of tissue cultured rootstock plants for growing citrus orchards under the programme; and

(c) the funds provided for the purpose, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) Under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme on "National Horticulture Mission (NHM)", being implemented by the Government since 2005-06, all category of farmers are being encouraged to take up cultivation of horticulture crops including fruits like citrus.

(b) The Scheme is in operation in 18 States and two Union Territories, wherein citrus has been identified as a focus crop in 10 States including Punjab. Establishment of nurseries and rehabilitation of tissue culture units both in the public and private sector has been envisaged under the NHM for making available quality planting material to the farmers. While Model nurseries produce 4 lakh plants per year, the small nurseries have to produce 60,000 to 80,000 plants per year. During 2005-06, funds have been provided for setting up 216 nurseries and rehabilitation of 27 tissue culture labs in the citrus producing States.

(c) State-wise details of funds provided during

2005-06 for establishment of nurseries and rehabilitation of tissue culture labs is given in the statement enclosed.

Statement

(Rs. in lakh)

| State | Setting up of Nurseries | | Rehabilitation of existing Tissue culture units | |
|----------------|-------------------------|----------------|---|---------------|
| | Physical (No.) | Financial | Physical (No.) | Financial |
| Andhra Pradesh | 5 | 90.00 | 1 | 8.00 |
| Bihar | 17 | 158.00 | 1 | 8.00 |
| Gujarat | 42 | 157.50 | 8 | 36.00 |
| Haryana | 6 | 48.00 | 2 | 16.00 |
| Jharkhand | 75 | 348.00 | | |
| Madhya Pradesh | 20 | 226.50 | 5 | 40.00 |
| Maharashtra | 26 | 234.00 | 6 | 48.00 |
| Punjab | 6 | 49.00 | 1 | 8.00 |
| Rajasthan | 15 | 105.00 | | |
| West Bengal | 4 | 72.00 | 3 | 24.00 |
| Total | 216 | 1486.00 | 27 | 188.00 |

Merger of Steel/Mining Units with SAIL

1724.SHRI DUSHYANT SINGH : Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has a proposal for the merger of some steel and mining companies with Steel Authority of India Limited;

(b) if so, the details thereof; unit-wise;

(c) whether the Government has started the merger process;

(d) if so, the details thereof as on date;

(e) whether an expert group was constituted by the Government to evaluate the technical and financial feasibility of various proposals for merger of steel and mining companies;

(f) if so, the details of the recommendations of the group: and

(g) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (DR. AKHILESH DAS) : (a) to (g) Ministry of Steel had constituted an Expert Group under the Chairmanship of Shri B.L. Das, former Secretary (Steel) to examine various proposals of merger between PSUs under the Ministry and make recommendations about the feasibility of these proposals. The Expert Group has recommended and the Government has accepted the same for the following mergers with SAIL:-

(1) Merger of Nilanchal Ispat Nigam Limited (NINL) with Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL)

In the meeting of Committee of Secretaries (COS) held on 14-7-05, it was decided to merge NINL with SAIL. Board of Directors of SAIL in its 312th meeting held on 24-3-2006 has accorded in-principle approval for acquiring equity share capital of NINL through cash payment and subsequently merge it with SAIL. Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI) has been appointed as the Valuer for valuation of NINL's business and the same is in progress.

(2) Merger of Maharashtra Elektrosmelt Limited (MEL) with SAIL

Board of Directors of SAIL and Board of Directors of MEL in their 314th meeting

held on 25-5-06 and 193rd meeting held on 26-5-06, respectively have accorded in-principle approval for the merger of MEL with SAIL. Necessary actions to effect the merger have since been initiated by both the Companies.

(3) Merger of Bharat Refractories Limited (BRL) with SAIL

Board of Directors of BRL have already passed a resolution accepting the proposal to merger BRL with SAIL on 11-5-06. Board of Directors of SAIL have also approved in-principle the merger proposal in its meeting held on 22-9-06. The proposal is under consideration by the Board for Reconstruction of Public Sector Enterprises (BRPSE).

The Expert Group has also recommended for merger of Sponge Iron India Limited (SIIL) with National Mineral Development Corporation (NMDC). The Government has directed SIIL and NMDC to take necessary action for merger.

Sale of Fertilizers

1725.SHRI A. SAI PRATHAP : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has received reports about the sale of fertilizers at a price above Minimum Retail Price to farmers in some States;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) to (c) Except a few sporadic cases, no large scale reports about

selling of fertilizers above the statutory/indicative prices have come to the notice of the Government. Under Clause 21 of the Fertilizer (Control) Order, 1985 (FCO) it is mandatory to print the Maximum Retail Price (MRP) on the bags of fertilizer and no person is permitted to sell the material above the statutory/indicative price. The State Governments are adequately empowered under the provisions of the Fertilizer (Control) Order, 1985 to check such activities. Any violation of the provisions of the FCO, 1985 attracts penal/administrative action under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955/FCO, 1985. State Governments have been advised to prevent such malpractices and ensure that the farmers are provided with right quality of fertilizers at statutory/indicative price.

Wind Mills in Forest Areas

1726. SHRI SHRINIWAS DADASAHEB PATIL : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether hill tops in Forest areas are proposed to be used for setting up of wind mills;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether alternate land is required to be given to the forest department in lieu of the land given for setting up of such wind mills; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA) : (a) and (b) The proposal for setting up of wind mills are forwarded to the Central Government by the State/ Union Territory Governments for seeking approval under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, after ascertaining the technical feasibility of the project sites.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. Equivalent non-forest land is required to be provided by the User Agency for Compensatory Afforestation as per the provisions of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 on case-to-case basis.

Profit of SAIL

1727. SHRI BALASHOWRY VALLABHANENI : Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state :

(a) whether Steel Authority of India Limited has posted net profit of Rs. 1443 crore for the second quarter of the current financial year; and

(b) if so, the overall target fixed and posted by it in the current year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (DR. AKHILESH DAS) : (a) Yes Sir. Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) has earned a Net Profit (Profit After Tax) of Rs. 1443 crores for the second quarter of the current financial year.

(b) The target fixed for the year 2006-07 and financial performance of SAIL for Half Year (H-1) of 2006-07 is as under:

| Particular | Annual Target (2006-07) as per the Performance Budget of Ministry of Steel | Actual financial performance of SAIL for Half year (H-1) of 2006-07) |
|----------------------------|---|--|
| Profit Before Tax (PBT) | 4727 | 4264 |
| Profit After Tax (PAT) | 3106 | 2829 |

Overcrowding of Animals in Zoos

1728. SHRI PRABODH PANDA : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is overcrowding of animals in certain zoos; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Central Zoo Authority to prevent overcrowding of animals in zoos?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA) : (a) Yes, Sir. There is over crowding of prolifically breeding species in certain zoos.

(b) The Recognition of Zoo Rules, 1992 (Rule 10 Sub Rule 38 and 40) prescribes that is mandatory for every zoo to keep in its collection only such numbers of animals and such species for which housing facility exists and in order to safeguard against uncontrolled growth in the population of prolifically breeding animals, zoos shall implement appropriate population control measures.

The Central Zoo Authority has also issued guidelines for keeping the number of Panther, Tiger, Blue bull, Chital, Sambar and Black buck in large, medium and small zoos, which is provided below:-

| Category of Zoo | No. of Tiger/ Panther | No. of Blue bull, Chital, Sambar and Black buck |
|-----------------|--------------------------|---|
| Large Zoo | 10 | 20 |
| Medium | 6 | 12 |
| Small | 4 | 10 |

Team Lease Services Limited

1729.SHRI SANTASRI CHATTERJEE : Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has gone through the report of Team Lease Services Limited; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The India Labour Report of Team-Lease Services Limited has been submitted to the Planning Commission. The Report has ranked Indian States based on a Labour Eco System Index constructed using three variables of labour demand, labour supply and labour laws. It has examined the current status of our labour market and makes the case that there will be a large number of people in 2020 in the labour force, who will require a range of employment opportunities. It further analyses that if current trends continue, it will lead to wide spread unemployment *i.e.* 30% by 2020. It has also linked economic growth with the States ranking on the Index and shows that the States, which has better rating in the past have achieved higher growth.

The Planning Commission has not accepted this Report or any of its recommendations till now.

Growth in Retail Sector

1730.SHRI K. SUBBARAYAN : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) the number of retail outlets in the country both in organized and unorganised sectors separately;

(b) the average turnover of the organised and the unorganised retail sectors;

(c) the share of organised and unorganised retail sectors in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the country;

(d) if rate of growth of share of retail sector in GDP;

(e) whether the retail sector has shown a steady growth over the years; and

(f) if so, the steps taken to ensure a steady growth for this sector in future?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC

DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR) : (a) to (c) As per the study commissioned to Indian Council of Research on International Relations (ICRIER) by Department of Consumer Affairs, the number of organised and unorganised retail outlets in the country has been estimated over 15 millions. The study has estimated the total size of the retail market in India at Rs. 7,40,000 crore in the year 2002. As per the study, the retail trade sector accounts for around 10 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

(d) As per the GDP estimated of the Central Statistical Organisation (CSO), the growth rate in GDP of trade sector as a whole has been estimated as 7.5 per cent during the year 2004-05. Separate official estimates of rate of growth of the share of retail sector in GDP are not available.

(e) As per the ICRIER study, the retail sector has grown at 7% per annum on an average during 1999-2002.

(f) To ensure steady growth of the retail sector, various measures have been taken such as adoption of Value Added Tax (VAT) and model Agriculture Produce Marketing Committee (APMC) Act by several States. Besides, the Bill for amending Essential Commodities Act, 1955, has been passed by both Houses of Parliament.

[Translation]

Approval to Forest Development Project

1731.SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of Forest Development Projects (FDP) sanctioned by the Union Government as on date;

(b) the number out of that submitted/sanctioned for Madhya Pradesh;

(c) the number of projects from Madhya Pradesh still pending as on date; and

(d) the time by which they are likely to be sanctioned?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA) : (a) The Ministry of Environment and Forests is implementing the National Afforestation Programm (NAP) Scheme, which is mainly aimed at development of forests. The scheme is being implemented through a two-tier decentralized institutional setup of Forest Development Agency (FDA) at the Forest Division level and Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs) at the village level. 715 FDA projects at a total cost of Rs.1521.10 Crores have been approved by the Ministry of Environment and Forests upto 31.10.2006.

(b) to (d) Out of 51 FDA project proposals received from State of Madhya Pradesh, 49 FDA projects have been approved at a total cost of Rs.112.48 Crores to treat an area of 76,520 hectares through 1,518 JFMCs. The pending proposals will be approval subject to their suitability according to NAP Guidelines, and the availability of funds.

[English]

Award for Work In Consumer Protection

1732.DR. K. DHANARAJU : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government had constituted a National Award for Women/Women Organisations for outstanding work done in the field of consumer protection;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of the awards distributed during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) In the year 1993, the Central Government had instituted a scheme of annual award called "Swami Vivekananda National Award for Women on Consumer Protection" to recognize the outstanding efforts made by the women in the field of consumer movement and to encourage them to come forward and take up such activities in large numbers. Under this scheme, three awards are given in the shape of prize money of Rs.20,000/-, Rs.15,000/- and Rs.10,000/- respectively along with a certificate of merit.

(c) No such award has been distributed during the last three years.

Water Development

1733. SHRIMATI ARCHANA NAYAK : Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the scenario for water development and management in India appears to be bleak in future; and

(b) if so, the measures taken by the Government to protect water bodies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV) : (a) The average annual water availability in the country is assessed as 1869 billion cubic metre (BCM). Based on the population of 1027 million as per the 2001 census, the per capita availability works out to be 1820 cubic metre per year. However, there is considerable temporal and spatial variations in the water availability in the country and due to population growth, the per capita water availability is also declining year after year. There are also instances of over-exploitation of ground water leading to lowering of water table in certain areas.

(b) Water being a State subject, several measures for development and management of water resources are undertaken by the respective State Governments which include creation of storages, restoration of water bodies, rain water harvesting, artificial recharge to ground water

and adoption of better management practices etc. Government of India provides assistance to the State Governments for completion of on-going irrigation projects under the Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme AIBP). Further, a pilot scheme titled "National Project for Repair, Renovation and Restoration of Water Bodies directly linked to Agriculture" has been approved by Government of India in January 2005. Government of India also provides support under centrally sponsored scheme for Command Area Development and Water Management (CAD&WM) with a view to bridging the gap between irrigation potential created and potential utilized. Government has also constituted an Advisory Council on Artificial Recharge to Ground Water under the Chairmanship of Union Minister of Water Resources with the main objective to popularize the concept of artificial recharge to ground water among all stakeholders.

Drug (Prices Control) Order, 1995

1734. SHRI E.G. SUGAVANAM : Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the existing Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 1995 (DPCO), 95 becomes obsolete;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government proposes to replace the existing DPCO, 95;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the time by which the new DPCO is likely to come into effect?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILISERS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE) : No. Sir.

(b) Does not arise, in view of reply to (a), as above.

(c) to (e) The Government have drafted National Pharmaceutical Policy 2006 which is under

finalisation. Based on this Policy, a new DPCO may be promulgated.

Transportation of Foodgrains

1735. SHRI P.S. GADHAVI :

SHRI ALOK KUMAR MEHTA :

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether a huge amount of food subsidy is lost due to unnecessary transportation of foodgrains from one State to another for distribution under Public Distribution System;

(b) if so, whether the Government has since decided to review this policy with a view to allow States to distribute foodgrains within the State from where it has been procured;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the time by which it is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH) : (a) A major portion of the procurement of wheat and rice is procured from a few States, such as Punjab, Haryana, U.P., A.P. and Chhatisgarh Foodgrains procured from these States have to necessarily be transported to other consuming States.

(b) to (d) The scheme of Decentralized Procurement of foodgrains was introduced in 1997-98 to enhance the efficiency of procurement and PDS and to encourage procurement in non-traditional States, thereby extending the benefits of MSP to local farmers as well as to save on transit losses and transportation costs. This also enables procurement of foodgrains more suited to local taste for distribution under the PDS.

Under this scheme, the State Government itself undertakes direct purchase of paddy and wheat and

procurement of levy rice on behalf of Government of India, and also stores and distributes these foodgrains there.

The Central Government undertakes to meet the entire expenditure incurred by the State Governments on the procurement operations as per the approved costing. The State Governments of West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Chhatisgarh, Uttaranchal, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Orissa, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Kerala and Karnataka are undertaking Decentralised Procurement.

T.V. Programme Under CAS

1736. SHRI REWATI RAMAN SINGH : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether the TV programme would be available through normal antenna even under the Conditional Access System (CAS) regime;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the steps taken to protect the viewer's right to have a free flow of information from such channels including State run channels?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Implementation of the Conditional Access System (CAS) will not affect availability through normal antenna of T.V. programmes terrestrially transmitted by Door-darshan.

(c) Does not arise.

Special Package for Kerala

1737. DR. K.S. MANOJ : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether several schemes sanctioned under the Vidarbha special package to agricultural and animal husbandry farms are only meant for dairy development; and

(b) if so, whether the Government propose to extend this scheme to other species of livestock particularly in Kerala?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR) : (a) and (b) The special package for suicide prone districts in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Kerala includes components for development of dairy and fisheries. There is no proposal to extend the scheme to other species of livestock.

TV Station in Andhra Pradesh

1738. SHRI G. NIZAMUDDIN :
SHRI M. ANJAN KUMAR YADAV :

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) the number of TV Stations in Andhra Pradesh alongwith coverage area of each;

(b) the number of people being connected by each of these stations;

(c) whether the Government proposes to set up additional TV Stations and upgrade the existing ones; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI) : (a) and (b) There are, at present, 3 TV Studio Centres and 105 TV transmitters of varying power functioning in Andhra Pradesh. Break up of the transmitters is as under:

- (i) DD1-85 (HPTs-9, LPTs-75, VLPTs-11)*
- (ii) DD News - 10 (HPTs-4, LPTs-6)

Coverage range of the above transmitters is as under:

| Transmitter Type | Power | Primary coverage range |
|------------------|----------------|------------------------|
| HPT | 10 kW | 70-80 Kms. |
| HPT | 1 kW/5 kW UHF | 40 Kms. |
| LPT | 100W/300W/500W | 15-20 Kms. |
| VLPT | 10W/50W | 5-6 Kms. |

Fringe coverage is available beyond the primary coverage zone of the transmitters. It is estimated that about 89.7% population of Andhra Pradesh is covered by the above transmitters. Area-wise coverage in the state is about 82.7%. The above coverage figures are inclusive of fringe coverage.

(c) and (d) The existing LPT at Mehboobnagar is envisaged to be replaced by an HPT and new TV Studio Centre is envisaged to be set up at Tirupati in the State of Andhra Pradesh.

*HPT - High Power Transmitter; LPT - Low Power Transmitter; VLPT - Very Low Power Transmitter.

Reduction in Wheat Allocation to Gujarat

1739. SHRI VIKRAMBHAI ARJANBHAI MADAM : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether there has been an abnormal reduction in the allocation of wheat to Gujarat since June, 2006;

(b) if so, whether the Government has decided to reinstate the earlier quota of wheat for the State;

(c) whether Gujarat has not been provided the coarse grains allocated to it in lieu of the cut in allocation of wheat for May and June, 2006;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor and the steps taken to release the said coarse grains to the State immediately; and

(e) the time by which it is likely to be released?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH) : (a) There has been no reduction in the allocation of wheat to Gujarat since June, 2006, till date. The details of allocation of wheat since June, 2006 till November, 2006 are as follows:

(in Tonnes)

| Commodity | June 2006 | | | October/ November 2006 | | |
|-----------|---------------|-------|------|---------------------------|-------|------|
| | AAY | BPL | APL | AAY | BPL | APL |
| Wheat | 11101 | 19954 | 6402 | 15373 | 21377 | 6402 |
| | Total = 37457 | | | Total = 43152* | | |

*Increase is because of allocation in lieu of coarsegrains.

(b) Question does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) to (e) No, Sir. On the request of the State Government, the State of Gujarat has been allocated coarse grains for the month of May and June, 2006 as per following details:

(in Tonnes)

| Commodity | May 2006 | | | June 2006 | | |
|-----------|----------|-----|-----|-----------|-----|-----|
| | AAY | BPL | APL | AAY | BPL | APL |
| Maize | 2807 | 935 | — | 2807 | 935 | — |
| Jowar | 1465 | 488 | — | 1465 | 488 | — |
| Bajra | 1800 | 600 | — | — | — | — |

The foodgrains allocated to the State were required

to be lifted within the validity period, subject to timely deposit of the payment by the State. While coarse grains allocated for the month of June, 2006 has been released by the Food Corporation of India (FCI), a request for extension of the validity period of coarse grains allocated for the month of May, 2006 has been received.

Widening Ambit of Consumer Protection

1740. SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government proposes to bring forward a law to widen the ambit of Consumer Protection in the age of e-governance and e-commerce;

(b) if so, the details thereof indicating the services to be covered therein and the time by which the new law is likely to be enacted;

(c) whether the draft law has been circulated to other concerned Ministries and States;

(d) if so, the reaction of the Ministries and the States thereon; and

(e) the benefits likely to accrue to the consumers therefrom?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR) : (a) to (e) Yes Sir. There is a proposal to further amend the provisions of the Consumer Protection Act, 1986, which would *inter-alia* widen the scope of the Act to expressly provide for certain provisions to cover e-commerce transactions also. In consultation with the concerned Ministries/Departments and the State Governments, who were generally supportive of the proposals, the proposals were finalized in the Department of Consumer Affairs and have been thereafter referred to Ministry of Law and Justice for their concurrence. In view of various processes involved till the enactment of the amendment proposals, no time frame can

be suggested at this stage. The proposed amendments are aimed at further protecting the interest of the consumers.

Inter-State Tiger Reserve in Kerala

1741. SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

- (a) whether the Government has received any proposal from Kerala for setting up of an Inter-State tiger reserve in the State;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA) : (a) to (c) "In principle approval" has been accorded for declaring Anamalai-Parambikulam Wildlife Sanctuaries as new Tiger Reserve spread over Tamil Nadu and Kerala States, based on proposals received from States and as recommended by the Steering Committee of the Project Tiger in its 37th meeting held on 23rd January, 2006.

[Translation]

Ban of Child Labour

1742. SHRIMATI BHAVANA PUNDALIKRAO GAWALI :
SHRI BAPU HARI CHAURE :
SHRI SANJAY DHOTRE :

Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state :

- (a) whether the Government had imposed a ban on child labour working in factories and hotels earlier;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether any decline was noticed in the child labour at that time; and

(d) if so, the percentage of decline in the child labour noticed at that time recorded after imposing ban on child labour?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Government had already prohibited employment of children under the Factories Act, 1948. Recently, Government has issued a Notification prohibiting employment of children in hotels also with effect from 10.10.2006.

(c) and (d) Census conducted by the Registrar General of India is the only authentic data in respect of population of child labour in the country. Occupation wise data on working children is not maintained prior to 2001 census. The number of working children recorded during 1971, 1981, 1991 and 2001 are 1.07, 1.36, 1.12 and 1.26 crore respectively. However, the percentage of working children in the age group of 5-14 years to that of child population in the corresponding age group has come down between 1991 and 2001. Since the present notification has been issued in October, 2006 only, it is too early to assess the impact of it at this stage.

[English]

Employment to SCs/STs and OBCs

1743. SHRI G. KARUNAKARA REDDY : Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state :

- (a) the steps taken by the Government to provide employment to Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes and other Backward Classes;
- (b) whether the Government proposes to impart job-oriented training to them to make them eligible to get jobs that are available to skilled persons; and
- (c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF

LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES) : (a) Tenth Plan envisaged creation of around 50 million employment opportunities; 30 million through normal growth process and 20 million through special employment generation schemes. This caters to Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes as per the quota fixed by the Government.

(b) and (c) Skill training, in various vocational trades to meet skilled manpower requirements for technology and industrial growth of the country, is imparted under craftsmen training scheme (CTS) and apprenticeship training scheme (ATS). Seats are reserved as per reservation quota fixed by the Government. Twenty two coaching cum-guidance centres for Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes functioning in twenty two States/Union Territories are also imparting vocational training and guidance through their various programmes like special coaching scheme, computer training and training in typing and shorthand etc.

Greenfield Steel Plants

1744. SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN : Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state :

(a) whether some of the private players have shown interest for investment in Greenfield steel plants and discussed the same with the Government in this regard;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the places which are identified for setting up of Greenfield steel plants, the expected output and the time by which it is likely to be set up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (DR. AKHILESH DAS) : (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Some of the Private Companies have signed Memorandum of Understandings with State Governments of Orissa, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand. The details are given in the statement enclosed.

Statement

List of Steel Plant Projects for which MoUs have been signed with the State Government of Orissa

| Sl. No. | Name of the Company | Location | Capacity in MTPA | Expected/projected time schedule for commissioning of manufacturing facilities from date of MoU/ Agreement facilities from date of MoU/Agreement |
|---------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 1. | M/s Bhushan Power and Steel Ltd. | Lapanga, Sambalpur | Phase-I 1.2 Phase-II 1.6 | 2005-2007 |
| 2. | M/s Aarti Steels Ltd. | Ghantikhal, Athagarh, Cuttack | Phase-I 0.5 Phase-II 0.5 | By 2007 |

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
|-----|------------------------------------|--|-------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| 3. | M/s Adhunik Metalicks (P) Ltd. | Chadrihariharpur, Rourkela, Sundergarh | Phase-I Phase-II | 0.26 0.15 | By 2006 |
| 4. | M/s Scaw Industries (P) Ltd. | Gundichapada, Dhenkanal | Phase-I Phase-II | 0.25 0.55 | By 2006 |
| 5. | M/s Deo Mines and Mineral (P) Ltd. | Bonai, Sundargarh | | 0.325 | Septmber, 2006 |
| 6. | M/s Visa Industries Ltd. | Jhakhapura, Dubri, Jajpur | | 0.35 | By 2006 |
| 7. | M/s SMC Power Generation Ltd. | Hirma, Jharsuguda | Phase-I Phase-II | 0.25 0.15 | By 2006 |
| 8. | M/s Shyam DRI Power Ltd. | Pandoli, Rengali, Sambalpur | | 0.27 | By 2007 |
| 9. | M/s Orissa Sponge Iron Ltd. | Gurla, Govindpur, Sambalpur | Phase-I Phase-II | 0.35 0.6 | By 2007 |
| 10. | M/s SPS Sponge Iron Ltd. | Badmal Growth Centre Jharsuguda | | 0.29 | By 2007 |
| 11. | M/s Maharashtra Seamless Ltd. | Kalinganagar Industrial Complex, Duburi, Jajpur | Phase-I Phase-II | 0.3 0.18 | By 2007 |
| 12. | M/s OCL India Ltd. | Rajgangpur, Sundargarh | | 0.25 | By 2009 |
| 13. | M/s Maheswary Ispat (P) Ltd. | Rampel, Khuntuni, Cuttack | | 0.25 | By 2007 |
| 14. | M/s Monnet Ispat Ltd. | Mangalpur, Dhenkanal | | 0.25 | By 2007 |
| 15. | M/s Aryan Ispat & Power (P) Ltd. | Bornlai, Rengali, Sambalpur | | 0.30 | By 2008 |
| 16. | M/s Maithan Ispat Ltd. | Kalinganagar Industrial Complex, Duburi | | 0.27 | By 2007 |
| 17. | M/s Sree Metaliks Ltd. | Loidapada, Barbil, Keonjhar | | 0.25 | By 2007 |

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|-----|-----------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|---------|
| 18. | M/s MSP Metalicks (P) Ltd. | Marakuta, Jharsuguda | 0.26 | By 2007 |
| 19. | M/s Action Ispat & Power (P) Ltd. | Pandiripathar and Marakuta, Jharsuguda | 0.25 | By 2007 |
| 20. | M/s Patnaik Steel & Alloys Ltd. | Purunapani, Joda, Keonjhar | 0.27 | By 2008 |
| 21. | M/s Rathi Udyog Ltd. | Pctapally-Sikridi, Sambalpur | 0.30 | By 2008 |
| 22. | M/s Viraj Steel & Energy Ltd. | Gurupali, Pandaloi, Sambalpur | 0.30 | By 2008 |
| 23. | M/s Deepak Steels & Power Ltd. | Topodih, Barbil, Keonjhar | 0.25 | By 2008 |
| 24. | M/s Konark Ispat Ltd. | Hirma, Jharsuguda | 0.25 | By 2008 |
| 25. | M/s Beekay Steel & Power Ltd. | Uliburu, Barbil, Keonjhar | 0.28 | By 2008 |
| 26. | M/s BRG Iron & Steel Co. (P) Ltd. | Khurunti, Dhenkanal | 0.25 | By 2008 |
| 27. | M/s Jain Sponge (P) Ltd. | Durlaga, Jharsuguda | 0.30 | By 2008 |
| 28. | M/s Jindal Stainless Ltd. | Duburi, Jaipur | Phase-I 0.8 Phase-II 0.8 | By 2008 |
| 29. | M/s Rungta Mines Ltd. | Kamando, near Koira, Sundargarh and Jharaband, Dhenkanal (1 MTPA each) | 2.00 | By 2008 |
| 30. | M/s Brand Alloys Ltd. | Palaspanga, Keonjhar | 0.27 | By 2008 |
| 31. | M/s Eastern Steels & Power Ltd. | Lahandabud, Jharsuguda | 0.25 | By 2008 |
| 32. | M/s Jai Balaji Jyoti Steels Ltd. | Tanisar, near Lathikata, Sundargarh | 0.33 | By 2009 |
| 33. | M/s. Welspun Power & Steel Ltd. | Bhadrak district or Cuttack or any other suitable location in the State of Orissa | 3.0 | By 2010 |

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|-----|--|---|--|---------|
| 34. | M/s Uttam Galva Steel Ltd. | Location is yet to finalized in Orissa | 3.0 | By 2010 |
| 35. | M/s Tata Steel Ltd. | Kalinganagar Industrial Complex, Duburi, Jajpur | 1st Module 3.00 2nd Module 3.00 | By 2008 |
| 36. | M/s Sterlite Iron and Steel Company Ltd. | Palasponga, Keonjhar | Phase-I 3.4 Phase-II 1.7 | By 2009 |
| 37. | M/s Hy-Grade Pellets Ltd. (ESSAR Group) | Paradeep | 4.00 | By 2010 |
| 38. | M/s POSCO India Project (P) Ltd. | Paradeep | 12.00 | By 2010 |
| 39. | M/s Jindal Steel & Power Ltd. | Beneficiation Plant at Deojhar, Keonjhar and Steel Plant at Angul | 6.00 | By 2011 |
| 40. | M/s Bhushan Steel & Strips Ltd. | Meramundali, Dhenkanal | 3.00 | By 2008 |

List of Iron and Steel Plant Projects for which MoUs have been signed with the State Government of Jharkhand

| Sl. No. | Name of the Company | Location | Capacity in MTPA | Expected/projected time schedule for commissioning of manufacturing facilities from date of MoU/Agreement |
|---------|---------------------------|------------|--|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 1. | M/s Monnet Ispat Limited | Hazaribagh | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.8 (b) Steel - 0.7 | — |
| 2. | M/s Vallabh Steel Limited | Gamharia | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.3 (b) Steel - 0.2 | — |

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|-----|---|---------------------|--|---|
| | | | (c) Pig Iron - 0.15 | ✓ |
| 3. | M/s Aadhunik Alloy & Power Ltd. | Kandra | (a) Sponge Iron - 1.98 (b) Steel - 2.6 | — |
| 4. | M/s Nilanchal Iron & Power Ltd., | Chandil | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.5, (b) Steel - 0.20 | — |
| 5. | M/s Jharkhand Ispat Pvt. Ltd. | Ramgarh | (a) Sponge Iron - 1.08, (b) Steel - 0.20 | — |
| 6. | M/s Abhijeet Infrastructure Pvt. Ltd. | Hazaribag | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.25, (b) Steel - 0.11 | — |
| 7. | M/s AML Steel & Power Ltd. | Saraikela-Kharsawan | (a) Sponge Iron - 1.54, (b) Steel - 0.20 | — |
| 8. | M/s Corporate Ispat Alloy Limited | Hazaribag | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.25, (b) Steel - 0.11 | — |
| 9. | M/s Annpurna Global Ltd. | W. Singhbhum | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.201, (b) Steel - 0.1 | — |
| 10. | M/s Prasad Groups, Resources, Pvt. Ltd. | Near Patratu | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.105, (b) Steel - 0.22 | — |
| 11. | M/s. Pakash Ispat | Chaibasa | Pig Iron - 0.2 | — |
| 12. | M/s. Horizon Loha Udyog Ltd. (M/s. Horizon Eximp Ltd.) | Chaibasa | Sponge Iron - 0.4 | — |
| 13. | M/s. Spectrum Mercantile Pvt. Ltd. | Chaibasa | Sponge Iron - 0.4 | — |
| 14. | M/s. Chaibasa Steel Pvt. Ltd. | Chaibasa | Sponge Iron - 0.4 | — |
| 15. | M/s Chattiegah Electricity Co. Ltd. | Karra, Ranchi | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.45 (b) Steel - 0.4 | — |

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|-----|--|---------------------|---|---|
| 16. | M/s Electro Steel Castings Ltd. | Chandil | (a) Sponge Iron - 1.3, (b) Steel 1.0 | — |
| 17. | M/s Balajee Industrial Product Ltd. Jaipur | Chaibasa | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.12 | — |
| 18. | M/s Pawanjai Steel & Power Ltd. | Lohardaga | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.2, (b) Steel - 0.4 | — |
| 19. | M/s Balaji Metal & Sponge Ltd. | Chaibasa | (a) Sponge Iron - 1.08, (b) Steel - 0.1 | — |
| 20. | M/s R G Steel Pvt.Ltd. | Near Patratu | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.09, (b) Steel - 0.06 | — |
| 21. | M/s Sunflag Iron & Steel Com. Ltd. | Saraikela-Kharsawan | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.06 (b) Steel - 0.49 | — |
| 22. | M/s Hy-Grade Pellets Ltd. | W. Singhbhum | (a) Sponge Iron - 7.5 (b) Steel - 10 (c) Pellet Plant 8 | — |
| 23. | M/s BMW Industries Ltd. | Chandil | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.21 (b) Steel - 0.5 (c) Pig Iron - 0.5 | — |
| 24. | M/s Anindita Traders & Investment Ltd. | Ramgarh | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.334 | — |
| 25. | M/s Narbheram Gas Point Pvt. Ltd. | Jamshedpur | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.135, (b) Steel - 0.045 | — |
| 26. | M/s Goel Sponge Pvt. Ltd. | W. Singhbhum | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.115, (b) Steel - 0.09 | — |
| 27. | M/s Rungta Mines Ltd. | Chaibasa | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.51 | — |
| 28. | M/s Raj Refractories (P) Ltd. | Bundu | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.6, (b) Steel - 0.06 | — |

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|-----|---|-------------------------|---|---|
| 29. | M/s Contisteel Limited, | Chandil | (a) Sponge Iron - 1.2, (b) Steel - 1.14 (c) Liquid Steel - 1.25 | — |
| 30. | M/s Kohinoor Steel Pvt. Ltd. | Buladih near Chandil | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.225, (b) Steel - 0.12, | — |
| 31. | M/s Jindal Steel & Power Ltd. | Ghatahila | (a) Sponge Iron - 5.0 (b) Steel - 5.0 | — |
| 32. | M/s Bhushan Limited, | Asanboni, Jamshedpur | (a) Sponge Iron - 1.5, (b) Steel - 1.5 | — |
| 33. | M/s Kalyani Steel Ltd. | Silli, Ranchi | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.23, (b) Steel - 1.0 | — |
| 34. | M/s. Tata Steel Ltd. (Green Field Project) | Manoharpur/Chandil | Integrated Steel Plant - 12.0 | — |
| 35. | M/s. Tata Steel Ltd. (Extension) | Jamshedpur | Integrated Steel Plant - 5.0 | — |
| 36. | M/s. V.S. Dempo & Company Pvt. Ltd. | Manoharpur | Integrated Steel Plant - 0.5 | — |
| 37. | M/s. Mittal Steel Co. N.V. | Not decided | Integrated Steel Plant - 12.0 | — |
| 38. | M/s. Jindal South-West Steel Ltd. | Hesalong, Chandil | Integrated Steel Plant - 10.0 | — |
| 39. | M/s. Ranchi Integrated Steel Limited | Silli, Near Muri | Integrated Steel Plant - 1.5 | — |

*List of Steel Plant Projects for which MoUs have been signed with the
State Government of Chhattisgarh*

| Sl. No. | Name of the Company | Location | Capacity in MTPA | Expected/projected time schedule for commissioning of manufacturing facilities from date of MoU/Agreement |
|------------|-------------------------|----------|---------------------|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 1. | M/s Jindal Organisation | Raigarh | (a) Steel - 0.205 | — |

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|-----|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|--|---|
| 2. | M/s Monnet Group of Industries | Raigarh and Raipur | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.6 (b) Steel - 0.9 | — |
| 3. | M/s Bhushan Limited | Raigarh | (a) Steel - 1.2 | — |
| 4. | M/s MSP Steel & Power Private Ltd. | Raigarh | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.4 (b) Steel - 0.21 | — |
| 5. | M/s Sunil Sponge Iron Ltd. | Raigarh | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.09 (b) Steel - 0.1 | — |
| 6. | M/s Visa Industries Ltd. Raigarh | Raigarh and Korba | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.45 (b) Steel - 0.2 | — |
| 7. | M/s Ind Agro Synergy Ltd. | Raigarh | (a) Sponge Iron and Steel Billet - 0.4 | — |
| 8. | M/s Sunvijay Rolling and Engg. Ltd. | Raigarh | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.32 (b) Steel Billet, Rolling Mill - 0.3 | — |
| 9. | M/s Anjani Steel Pvt. Ltd. | Raigarh | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.18 (b) Steel - 0.15 | — |
| 10. | M/s Agio Ind. Pvt. Ltd. | Bilaspur and Raigarh | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.099 (b) Steel Melting - 0.024 | — |
| 11. | M/s Superior sponge Pvt. Ltd. | Durg | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.2 (b) Steel Melting Shop - 0.3 (c) Pig Iron - 0.15 (d) Rolling Mill - 0.225 | — |
| 12. | M/s Nawbharat Group of Companies | Bestar, Korba, Raipur | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.5 | — |
| 13. | M/s Akshaya Investment Pvt. Ltd. | Rajnandgaon, | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.09 (b) Induction Furnace Unit - 0.105 | — |

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|-----|---|------------------|--|---|
| 14. | M/s Vandana Energy and Steel Pvt. Ltd. | Raipur and Korba | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.15 (b) Steel - N.A. | — |
| 15. | M/s Bajrang Power and Ispat Ltd. | Raipur | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.09 (b) Steel - 0.06 | — |
| 16. | M/s National Steel & Agro Industries Ltd. | Durg. | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.15 (b) Steel Melting Shop - 0.15 | — |
| 17. | M/s Aryan Ispat & Power Pvt. Ltd. | Bilaspur | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.46 (b) Steel Billets - 0.348 | — |
| 18. | M/s Ispat Godavari Ltd. | Raipur | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.65 (b) Steel Billets/Ingots - 0.55 | — |
| 19. | M/s Alliance Integrated Metallic Ltd. | Raipur | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.2 (b) Mini Steel Plant - 0.15 | — |
| 20. | M/s Vandana Global Ltd. | Raipur | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.351 (b) Furnance (Ingot/Billets) - 0.16752 | — |
| 21. | M/s SKS Ispat Pvt. Ltd. | Raipur | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.27 (b) Steel Melting Shop - 0.21 | — |
| 22. | M/s Magnum Steel Ltd. | Durg | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.3 (b) Semi and Rold Products - 0.3 | — |
| 23. | M/s GPT Metal Industries Ltd. | Bilaspur | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.105 (b) Induction Furnance - 0.06 | — |
| 24. | M/s BEC Project Ltd. | Durg | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.135 (b) Steel Melting Shop - N.A. | — |
| 25. | M/s Chhattisgarh Iron & Steel Ltd. | Durg/Raigarh | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.105 (b) Steel Melting Shop - 0.1 | — |

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|-----|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|---|---|
| 26. | M/s Mega Powers Builders Pvt. Ltd. | Durg/Raigarh | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.105 (b) Steel Melting Shop - 0.1 | — |
| 27. | M/s Anand Ispat Udyog Pvt. Ltd. | Dantewada | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.15 (b) Induction Furnance and Concast - 0.13 | — |
| 28. | M/s Feral Engineering Ltd. | Chhattisgarh | (a) Sponge Iron 0.2 (b) Steel Melting Shop 0.01 | — |
| 29. | M/s Jindal Steel & Power Ltd. | Raigarh | (a) Steel Melting Shop - 1.25 (b) Blast Furnance - 1.25 (c) Wire Rod/Rolling Mill - 0.7 | — |
| 30. | M/s Chhattisgarh Electricity Co. Ltd. | Raipur | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.6 (b) Steel Plant - 1.0 | — |
| 31. | M/s Prakash Industries Ltd. | Champa | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.4 (b) Steel Melting Shop - 0.9 (c) Pig Iron 0.25 (d) Rolling/Wire rod Mill - 0.6 | — |
| 32. | M/s Bigboss Steel & Allys Ltd. | Janjgir, Champa | Steel Plant - N.A. | |
| 33. | M/s Vasundhra Steel & Power Ltd. | Bilaspur | Integrated Steel Plant - 0.4 | — |
| 34. | M/s Rixon Strips Ltd. | Bilaspur | Integrated Steel Plant - 0.40 | |
| 35. | M/s Chhattisgarh Steel & Power | Janjgir, Champa | Sponge Iron - 0.38 | |
| 36. | M/s Pushp Steel & Mining Pvt. Ltd. | Borai Growth Centre, Durg | Sponge Iron - 0.315 | |
| 37. | M/s Salasar Sponge & Power Ltd. | Raigarh | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.165 (b) Steel - 0.1 | — |

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|-----|-------------------------------------|----------|--|---|
| 38. | M/s Shri Radhe Industries Pvt. Ltd. | Bilaspur | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.26 (b) Steel Melting Shop - 0.05 | — |
| 39. | M/s Satyarth Steel & Power Ltd. | Raipur | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.22 (b) Induction Furnace - 0.182 (c) Re-rolld Products 0.0314 | — |
| 40. | M/s API Ispat & Powertech Pvt. Ltd. | Raipur | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.315 (b) Steel Ingot - 0.0864 | — |
| 41. | M/s Topworth Steel Pvt. Ltd. | Durg | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.21 (b) Steel Melting Shop - 0.1 | — |
| 42. | M/s Shri Shyam Global Pvt. Ltd. | Raipur | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.165 (b) Induction Furnace - 0.072 (c) Re-rolld Products - 0.06 | — |
| 43. | M/s Crest Steel & Power Pvt. Ltd. | Durg | Sponge Iron - 0.231 | — |
| 44. | M/s Balaji Vidyut and Sponge Iron | Raipur | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.06 | — |
| 45. | M/s Texas Power Zen | Bilaspur | (a) Sponge Iron - 0.72 (b) Induction Furnace - 0.216 (c) Rolling Mill - 0.216 | — |
| 46. | M/s Tata Steel | Bastar | Integrated Steel Plant - 5.00 | — |
| 47. | M/s Essar Steel Chhattisgarh Ltd. | Bastar | Integrated Steel Plant - 3.2 | — |

Fix Policy to Advertisement

1745. SHRI KULDEEP BISHNOI : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any policy or mechanism to

show the advertisement as well as telecast rates on Doordarshan;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there is any monitoring system regarding the telecast of advertisements on Doordarshan as per the allotment of time schedule for it; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI) : (a) and (b) Prasar Bharati have informed that all advertisements telecast on Doordarshan are approved in accordance with the Commercial Code of Advertisement and care is also taken to see that the Programming Code of Doordarshan is not violated. So far as telecast rates are concerned the same are closely monitored in accordance with the market conditions from time to time.

(c) and (d) Prasar Bharati have informed that regular monitoring is done at the time of telecast by the concerned Doordarshan Kendra, as per the time schedule. They have further informed that at the end of the telecast, a telecast certificate is also issued which helps in proper billing.

Protection of Chiru

1746. SHRI DALPAT SINGH PARSTE :

SHRI MILIND DEORA :

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether any Sino-Indian agreement on protection of Chiru has been made or is proposed to be made;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the population of Chiru alongwith the steps to protect/increase their population?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA) : (a) and (b). An Indian delegation visited China during June 2006. During the meeting both the countries had agreed to strengthen joint efforts in combating poaching and illegal trade in endangered species, in particular big cats and Tibetan Antelope in compliance with national legislation as well as the provisions of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species

of Wild flora and fauna (CITES). However, no specific agreement in respect of Chiru has been made.

(c) As reported by the Government of Jammu and Kashmir, Tibetan Antelope (Chiru) are found in Ladakh region of Dhauliganga (D.B.O.) North of Ladakh in Karakoram Range and Chang Chenmo valley (Hot spring) in North East of Ladakh. As per the information available, a small migratory population of 200-250 Chiru has been found in the Ladakh region. The steps taken to protect the population of Chiru are as follows:

(i) Tibetan Antelope has been included in the Schedule-I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 thereby giving them highest degree of protection.

(ii) The Jammu and Kashmir Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1978 was amended during the year 2002 re-listing the Tibetan Antelope from Schedule-II to Schedule-I, hence providing maximum protection to the species.

(iii) The two prime habitats of Chiru have been declared as Wildlife Sanctuaries, viz, Karakoram Sanctuary (5000 Sq.kms) and Changthang Cold Desert Wildlife Sanctuary (4000 Sq. Kms).

(iv) The Ministry is providing financial assistance to both the Wildlife Sanctuaries under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme "Development of National Parks and Sanctuaries".

Telephone Cable through Dudhwa National Park

1747. SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether any proposal to lay telephone cable along the road passing through the Dudhwa National Park has been submitted for clearance;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which the said proposal is likely to be cleared?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA) : (a) No, Sir. No proposal to lay telephone cable along the road passing through the Dudhwa National Park has been received in the Ministry for clearance.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

Protection of Lake

1748. SHRI P. RAJENDRAN : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government of Kerala has submitted any proposal to preserve and protect the single fresh water lake at Sasthamcottah;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government has given any grant therefore; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA) : (a) Yes, Sir. Sasthamkottah has been identified as one of the wetlands under National Wetland Conservation Programme. A proposal has been received from Kerala Government for conservation of this wetland in 1999.

(b) to (d) So far, an amount of Rs.36.85 lakhs has been released to the Government of Kerala for conservation of this wetland for activities like Agroforstry, Pollution abatement, Weed control, Fisheries development, Catchment area treatment, Education and awareness, etc.

MoU with POSCO

1749. SHRI MILIND DEORA : Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state :

(a) whether a meeting was held recently between the Union Government and the representative of Phang Steel Company (POSCO);

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the POSCO project is proposed to be reviewed; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (DR. AKHILESH DAS) : (a) and (b) A meeting of the Foreign Investment Implementation Authority (FIIA) was held on 17.08.2006 in the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion to discuss the progress of M/s POSCO Steel Plant Project being set up in Orissa. The issues discussed in the meeting included progress of acquisition of land for the project, resettlement and rehabilitation measures undertaken by the State Government of Orissa and the Company, mining licenses and other infrastructure facilities like power, roads and railway lines.

(c) and (d) At present, there is no proposal under consideration of the Government to review the POSCO project.

Promotion of Community Radio

1750. SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATEL :
SHRI SUGRIB SINGH :

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government proposes to amend law for promotion of community radio in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by the Government in this regard;

(c) whether the Government has evaluated the success registered by II-Phase of FM Radio;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the time by which the policy for III-Phase FM Radio is likely to be prepared and finalised?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI) : (a) and (b) The Government has since taken a decision to grant permission for setting up community radio stations to 'Non-profit' organizations viz. Civil Society and Voluntary organizations, State Agricultural Universities, Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) institutions, Krishi Vigyan Kendas, Registered Societies and Autonomous bodies and Public Trusts registered under Societies Act or any other such act relevant for the purpose in addition to the educational institutions, subject to fulfillment of the eligibility conditions.

(c) and (d) The process of implementation of Phase II is in full swing and the success of the scheme can be evaluated only on completion of the entire process.

(e) There is no proposal for the FM Phase III at this stage and no time schedule has been fixed for the same.

Rehabilitation of Child Labour

1751.SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA : Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether many children are working as a bonded labour in Kaarkhana to create designer products which sold in India and abroad as reported in *The Hindustan Times* dated August 26, 2006;

(b) if so, the facts thereof; and

(c) the action taken to rescue children working as bonded labour and schemes formulated for their rehabilitation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR

FERNANDES) : (a) and (b) No specific complaint regarding incidence of bonded labour in Kaarkhana to create designer products including child bonded labour has been received. However, some instances of children working in the Zari Units of Delhi have come to the notice during the raids conducted by the Government of Delhi. Many of these were migrant children having come from other States. These children were withdrawn from work and sent back to their families at their native places.

(c) Children found working in hazardous occupations and processes are withdrawn from work and rehabilitated under the National Child Labour Project (NCLP) Scheme where these children are put into special schools and provided education, nutrition, stipend, vocational training and health care facilities etc.

Environmental Impact of Construction Project

1752.SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is necessary to obtain environment impact assessment certificate for all construction projects in the country;

(b) if so, the details of the guidelines issued by the Government in this regard;

(c) whether cases of violation of guidelines have come to the notice of the Government; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by the Government for compliance of the guidelines?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. According to the provisions of the Environmental Impact Assessment Notification of 14th September 2006, the Building and Construction Projects with built up area more than or equal to 20,000 square meters (sq.mts) and Townships and Area Development projects covering an area more than or equal to

50 hectare (ha) and/or built up area more than or equal to 1,50,000 sq.mtrs. are required to seek prior Environmental Clearance (EC).

(c) A few cases of violation of the earlier EIA notification 1994 have come to the notice of the Government.

(d) Monitoring of EC conditions, by this Ministry's Regional offices and the State Pollution Control Board/ Union Territory Pollution Control Committee concerned is stipulated when according Environment Clearance and project proponents are also directed to submit six monthly compliance reports to them.

[Translation]

Quantum of Electronic Waste

1753.SHRI HANSRAJ G. AHIR : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) the quantum of electronic waste generated in the country every year including the current year;

(b) the arrangements made for disposal of increasing e-waste in the country;

(c) whether technology for total destruction of the harmful elements like mercury, lead and cadmium found in e-waste is available in the country;

(d) if so, the details in this regard; and

(e) if not, the steps taken/proposed to ensure complete disposal of such wastes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA) : (a) Electronic waste comprises goods ranging from personal computers to various household appliances such as TV, refrigerator, cell phones etc. The process of inventorization of e-waste in the country is underway. According to a study commissioned by Central Pollution

Control Board, around 1,46,000 tonnes of waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) is generated annually.

(b) To (e) Safe management of e-waste include re-use, recycling, resource recovery and final disposal in secured landfills.

An e-waste recycling pilot plant of 10 MT/day capacity near Bangalore, Karnataka and an e-waste management and recycling unit at Navi Mumbai, Maharashtra have been set up. These have facilities for metal recovery. One major IT company has identified disposal agencies and set up complete process for disposal of e-waste for its customers.

According to the available information, mercury containing waste can be managed by installing mercury recovering system (vacuum distillation) and lead can be recovered by mechanical separation in solders.

With a view to promote the adoption of cleaner production technologies and motivate the electronics industry to minimize the generation of waste, the Department of Information Technology (DIT) has initiated measures to generate awareness in the industry and provide adequate information. A comprehensive technical guide "Environmental Management for Information Technology Industry in India" has also been released by the DIT.

Pollution in Rivers

1754.SHRI BRAJESH PATHAK :

SHRI HARIKEWAL PRASAD :

SHRI AVTAR SINGH BHADANA :

SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU :

SHRI SHAILENDRA KUMAR :

SHRI GANESH SINGH :

SHRI HITEN BARMAN :

SHRI NAVEEN JINDAL :

DR. RAJESH MISHRA :

SHRI V.K. THUMMAR :

SHRI SAJJAN KUMAR :

SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA :

SHRI LALIT MOHAN SUKLABAIIDYA :

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) the programmes launched and the extent of success achieved by the Union Government so far in cleaning of each of the rivers and lakes;

(b) the funds allocated/utilised so far under each of the programmes, State-wise;

(c) whether the Government proposes to create Yamuna Authority;

(d) if so, the details thereof alongwith the objectives envisaged thereunder;

(e) whether Central Ganga Authority has held its meeting recently; and

(f) if so, the details of the discussions held and the decisions arrived thereat?

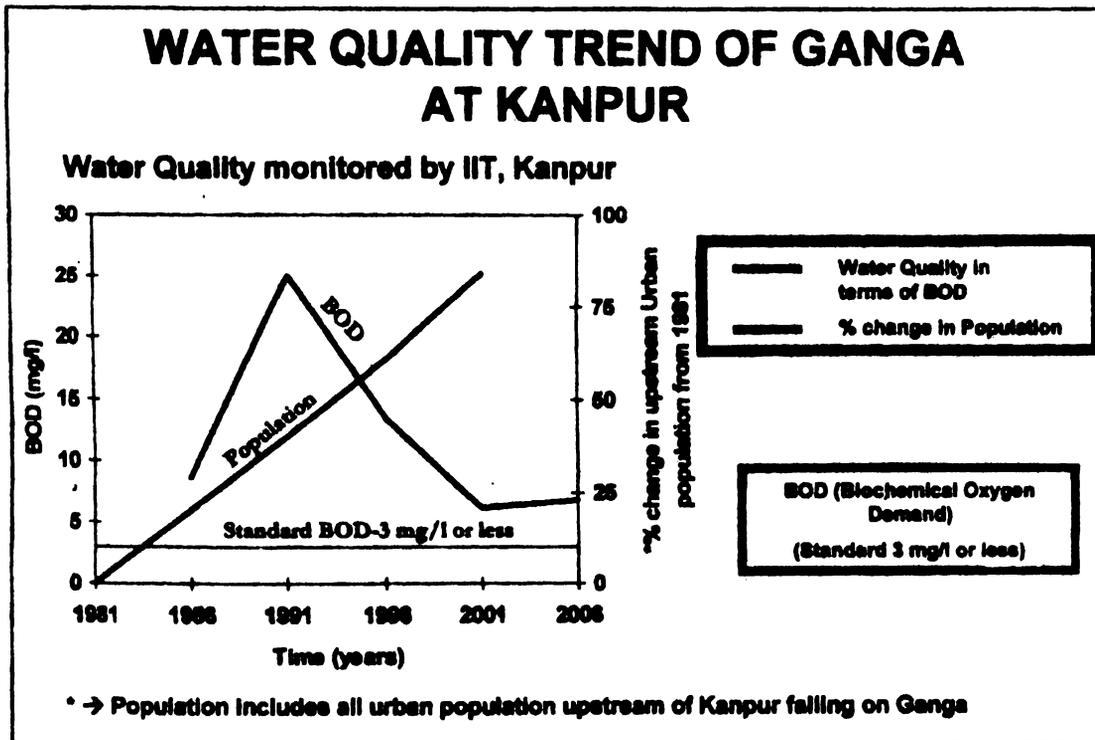
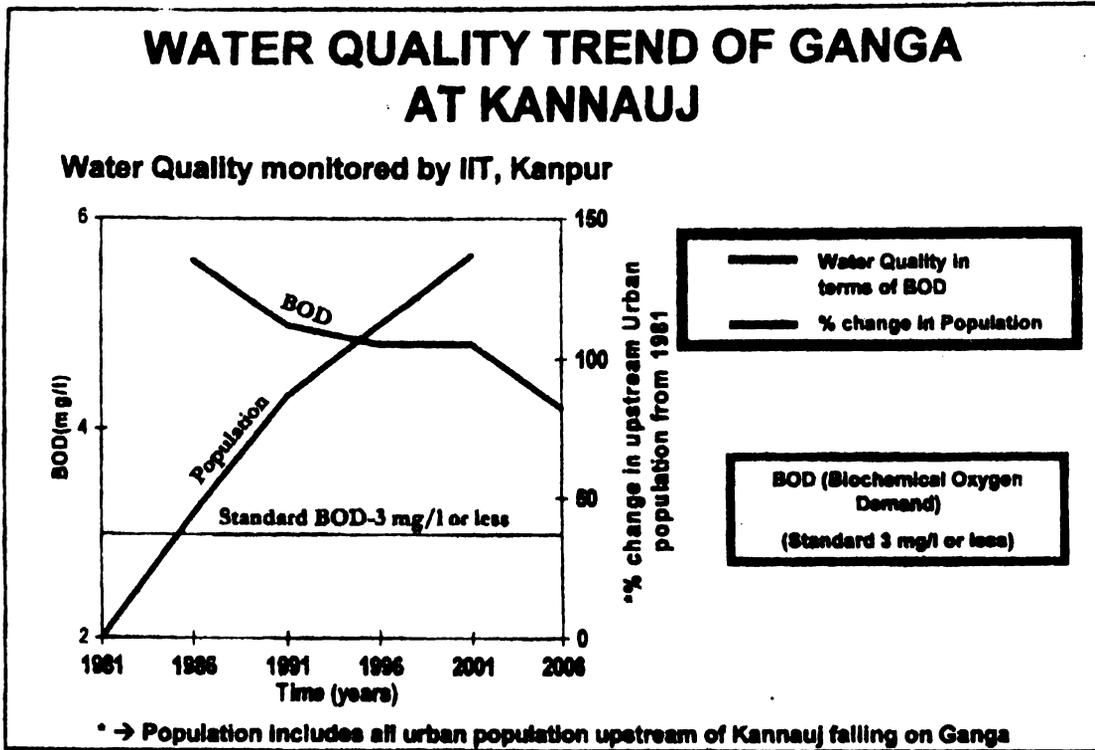
THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA) : (a) and (b) The Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) of National River Conservation Plan (NRCP) is under implementation in 160 towns along polluted stretches of 34 rivers spread over 20 States at an approved cost of Rs.4735.42 crore. The CSS of National Lake Conservation Plan (NLCP) launched in 2001 covers 42 lakes in 12 States with an approved cost of Rs.510.41 crore. The works of pollution abatement for all the rivers under NRCP are in various stages of progress in different States. For example, inspite of a phenomenal increase in urban population in cities along the bank of river Ganga, there has been a perceptible improvement in the water quality of river along its stretch with respect to its pre-Gange Action Plan quality. In this connection, a graphical representation of the change in the Bio-chemical Oxygen Demand (BOD), a key parameter indicating water quality, of the river versus percentage increase in upstream population at different monitoring points over the years is placed at statement-I enclosed. A total of 1872 million litres

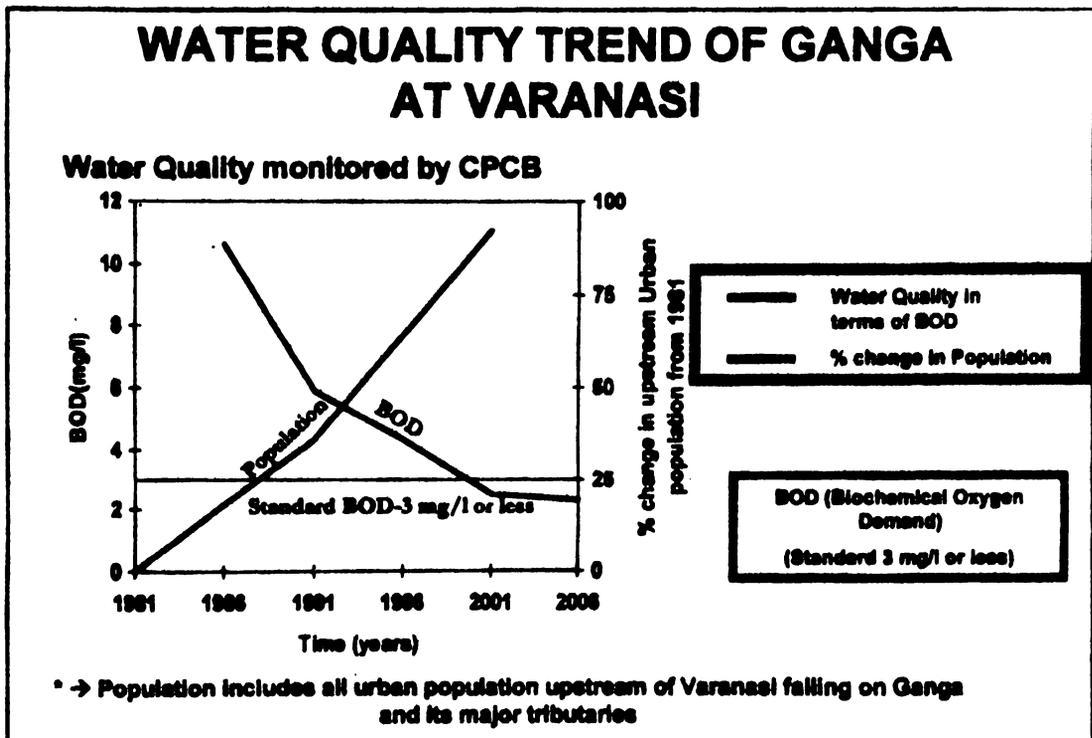
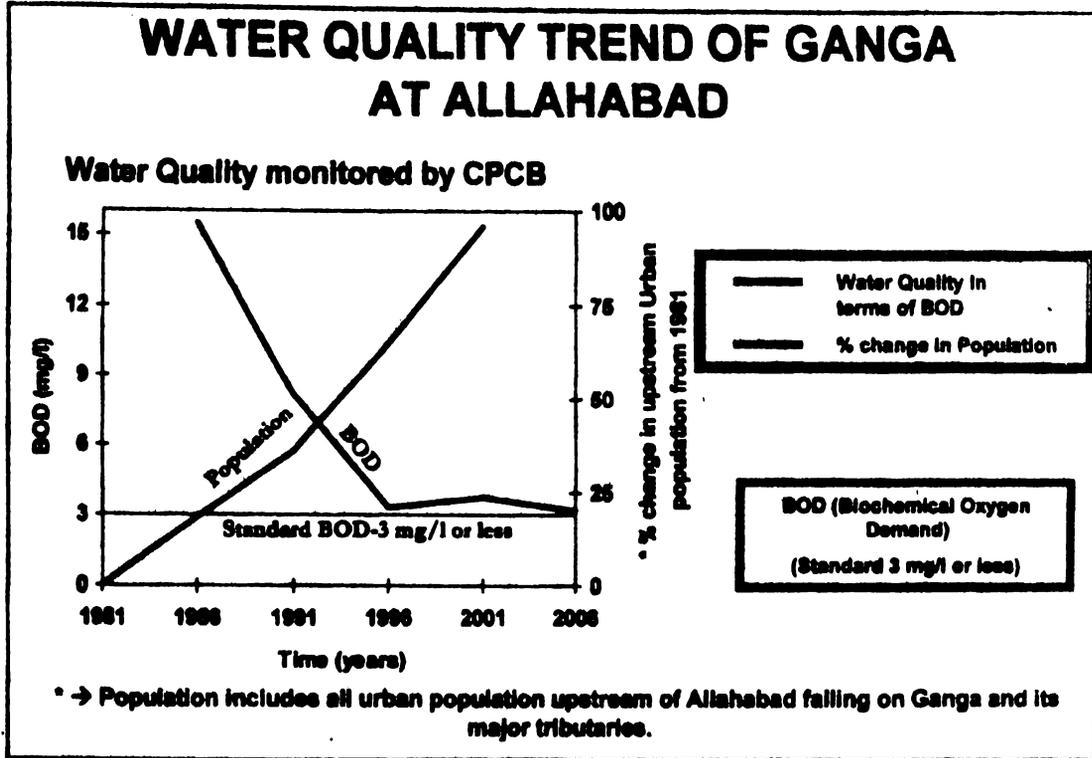
per day (mld) of sewage treatment capacity has been created under the NRCP in addition to the 865 mld of treatment capacity created under the first phase of Ganga Action Plan. Regarding the lakes, works in 10 lakes have been completed so far out of 42 lakes taken up for conservation under NLCP. A total of Rs.2051.71 crore has been released under NRCP and Rs.157.03 crore under NLCP to different States so far. The State-wise and programme-wise details are given in the enclosed statement-II.

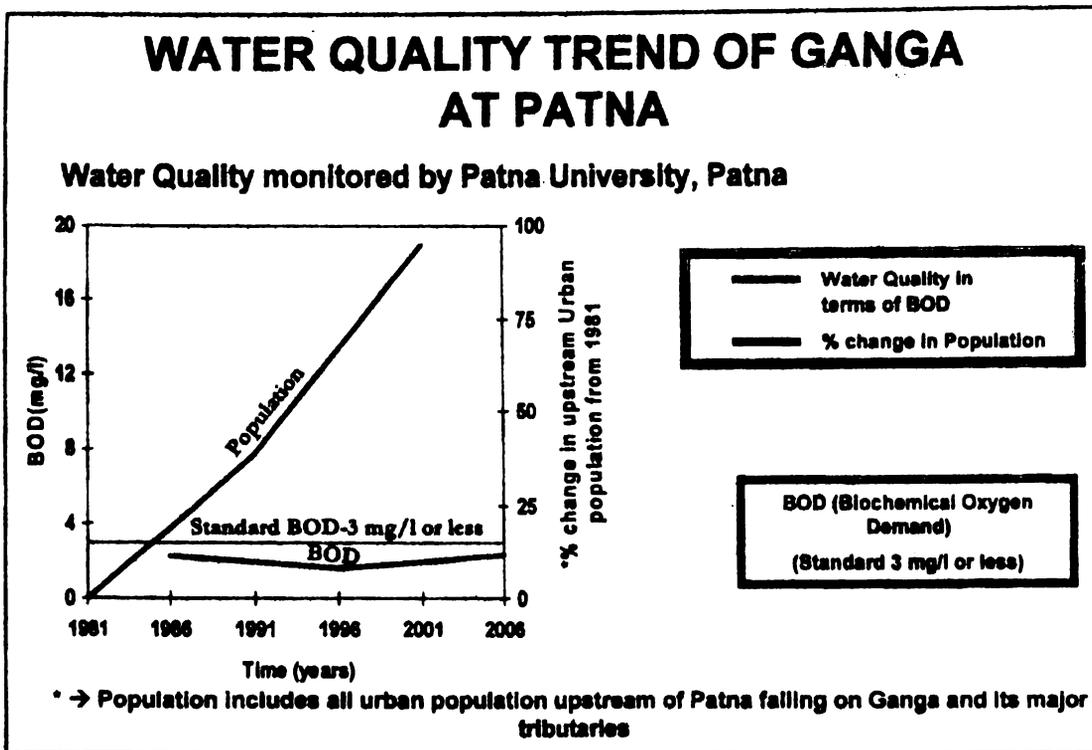
(c) and (d) The NRCP includes works under the Yamuna Action Plan. (YAP) for abatement of pollution of river Yamuna. The first phase of the Plan was completed in 2003 at a cost of Rs.688 crore and 750 mld. of sewage treatment capacity was created under this phase. The implementation of Phase-II has started in December, 2004 with an approved cost of Rs.624 crore. The progress of the YAP is monitored at the Central and State levels through the Steering Committee meetings regularly. There is no proposal at present under the consideration of the Ministry to create a Yamuna Authority.

(e) and (f) The Central Ganga Authority (CGA) was constituted in 1985. However taking in view the alarming pollution levels in other major rivers of the country, CGA was broad based and renamed as National River Conservation Authority (NRCA) in 1995 to tackle the pollution levels in the major rivers with the objective to improve their water quality. The 50th meeting of the Steering Committee of the NRCP was held in August, 2005. The major decisions taken in the meeting include the stipulation for the State Governments to submit a detailed plan for generation of revenue to facilitate Operation and Maintenance of the assets created under the NRCP and initiation of the process for a tripartite Memorandum of Understanding between the National River Conservation Directorate, the State Governments and the Implementing Agencies concerned for the conservation of rivers & lakes in the States.

Statement-I







Statement-II

Statewise funds released under National River/Lake Conservation Plan

(Rs. in lakh)

| S. No. | Action Plan/State | Funds Released (till 10/2006) |
|--------|-------------------|-------------------------------|
|--------|-------------------|-------------------------------|

| 1 | 2 | 3 |
|---|---|---|
|---|---|---|

A National River Conservation Plan

| | | |
|----|----------------|----------|
| 1. | Andhra Pradesh | 8772.20 |
| 2. | Bihar | 307.94 |
| 3. | Delhi | 18154.54 |
| 4. | Gujarat | 8791.86 |
| 5. | Goa | 856.00 |

| 1 | 2 | 3 |
|-----|----------------|----------|
| 6. | Haryana | 18098.40 |
| 7. | Jharkhand | 445.41 |
| 8. | Karnataka | 4187.37 |
| 9. | Kerala | 78.00 |
| 10. | Madhya Pradesh | 6800.10 |
| 11. | Maharashtra | 9550.15 |
| 12. | Orissa | 2626.93 |
| 13. | Punjab | 12339.64 |
| 14. | Rajasthan | 112.17 |
| 15. | Tamil Nadu | 53931.12 |
| 16. | Uttranchal | 1726.00 |
| 17. | Uttar Pradesh | 40633.28 |

| 1 | 2 | 3 |
|--|-------------------|-----------|
| 18. | Sikkim | 698.50 |
| 19. | West Bengal | 16611.37 |
| 20. | Nagaland | 450.00 |
| Total (River) | | 205170.98 |
| B National Lake Conservation Plan | | |
| 1. | Andhra Pradesh | 82.10 |
| 2. | Jammu and Kashmir | 7154.15 |
| 3. | Maharashtra | 719.82 |
| 4. | Tamil Nadu | 373.23 |
| 5. | Karnataka | 2240.14 |
| 6. | Uttranchal | 2661.17 |
| 7. | Rajasthan | 1500.00 |
| 8. | Madhya Pradesh | 58.00 |
| 9. | West Bengal | 400.00 |
| 10. | Tripura | 50.00 |
| 11. | Kerala | 429.80 |
| 12. | Orissa | 21.31 |
| NLCP General | | 13.66 |
| Total (Lake) | | 15703.38 |

Increase in Import of Mustard Oil

1755. SHRI TUFANI SAROJ : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government proposes to increase the import of mustard oil in view of the decline in the area under oilseeds production; and

(b) if so, the details thereof indicating the quantum likely to be imported alongwith the countries identified therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH) : (a) and (b) In order to ensure adequate supply of edible oils in the domestic market, the Government has permitted import of edible oils including mustard oil (excluding Coconut Oil) under Open General Licence (OGL). The quantum of imports depends upon commercial judgement of the importers. Presently, there is no proposal to import Mustard Oil on Government account.

[English]

GM crops

1756. MS. INGRID MCLEOD :

SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA :

SHRI AVTAR SINGH BHADANA :

SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI :

SHRI J.M. AARON RASHID :

DR. RAJESH MISHRA :

SHRI SAJJAN KUMAR :

SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL :

SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO :

SHRI M. SREENIVASULU REDDY :

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of GM (Genetically Modified) crops under contained trials as on date and the time by which these trials are likely to be completed;

(b) whether the Hon'ble Supreme Court has issued a notice to the Union Government directing a moratorium on commercialization of GM variety of crops until a regulatory structure is put in place;

- (c) if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA) : (a) The GM Crops presently under contained field trials include cotton, brinjal, cabbage, castor, cauliflower, corn, groundnut, okra, potato, rice, tomato and mustard. The contained trials would be over by December 2006 for all crops.

(b) and (c) The Hon'ble Supreme Court vide order dated 22.9.2006 in respect of the WP No.260/2005 in IA No. 4/2006, has directed the GEAC to withhold fresh approvals for field trials of GM crops until the matter is heard and further directions are issued by the Court.

- (d) The matter is currently subjudice.

[Translation]

Lift Irrigation Centres

1757.SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE : Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state :

(a) the total number of lift irrigation centers in working condition in the country particularly in tribal areas as on date alongwith the locations thereof, State-wise;

(b) whether more than fifty per cent lift irrigation centres are not in working condition;

- (c) if so, the details and reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government to provide water for irrigation and to deal with drought situation in the country particularly in Gujarat?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF

WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV) : (a) and (b) According to the latest minor irrigation census the number of lift irrigation schemes are 19110186. The number of lift irrigation schemes not in use is 2115675 which is 11% of the total lift irrigation schemes. The number of lift irrigation schemes in use as per State wise breakup is given in the statement enclosed.

(c) and (d) Irrigation is a State subject and the planning, execution, funding, operation and maintenance of irrigation projects are primarily the responsibility of the State Governments based on their priorities. Concerned with the delay in completion of the irrigation projects mainly due to the resource crunch being faced by the States, the Central Government launched the AIBP in 1996-97 to provide Central Assistance (CA) to such major/medium ongoing irrigation projects which are in advanced stage of construction and are beyond the resources capability of the States. Under the Programme, CA/Grant of Rs.19437.8837 crore has been provided to States upto March, 2006 for completion of Major, Medium and Minor Irrigation projects under AIBP. An amount of Rs.4492.522 crore has been provided as CA/Grant for the State of Gujarat by the Central Government upto March, 2006.

Statement

| S. No. | Name of States/UT | Lift Irrigation Schemes in Use |
|--------|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1. | Andhra Pradesh | 1692414 |
| 2. | Arunachal Pradesh | 12 |
| 3. | Assam | 76263 |
| 4. | Bihar | 717110 |

| 1 | 2 | 3 |
|-----|-------------------|---------|
| 5. | Chhattisgarh | 284018 |
| 6. | Goa | 6095 |
| 7. | Gujarat | 860335 |
| 8. | Haryana | 406192 |
| 9. | Himachal Pradesh | 5527 |
| 10. | Jammu and Kashmir | 4303 |
| 11. | Jharkhand | 318235 |
| 12. | Karnataka | 884916 |
| 13. | Kerala | 181670 |
| 14. | Madhya Pradesh | 1498114 |
| 15. | Maharashtra | 1694238 |
| 16. | Manipur | 50 |
| 17. | Meghalaya | 76 |
| 18. | Mizoram | 215 |
| 19. | Nagaland | 140 |
| 20. | Orissa | 346741 |
| 21. | Punjab | 1077498 |
| 22. | Rajasthan | 1007953 |
| 23. | Sikkim | 0 |
| 24. | Tamil Nadu | 1504394 |
| 25. | Tripura | 2600 |
| 26. | Uttar Pradesh | 3633134 |
| 27. | Uttranchal | 53683 |
| 28. | West Bengal | 720774 |

| 1 | 2 | 3 |
|--------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| 29. | Andaman and Nicobar Islands | 1261 |
| 30. | Chandigarh | 187 |
| 31. | Dadra and Nagar Haveli | 643 |
| 32. | Daman and Diu | 0 |
| 33. | Delhi | 10983 |
| 34. | Lakshadweep | 0 |
| 35. | Pondicherry | 4737 |
| Total | | 16994511 |

[English]

Low Cholesterol Desi Ghee

1758. SHRI SUGRIB SINGH :

SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATEL :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether National Dairy Research Institute (NDRI), Karnal has developed low cholesterol desi ghee;

(b) if so, the details of the quality of the ghee; and

(c) the time by which commercial production of ghee is likely to be started in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The average cholesterol in desi ghee is 0.3%. By using technology developed at NDRI, Karnal the cholesterol content can be reduced to 0.045%.

(c) The Technology is being scaled up and shall be sold for commercial use.

Export of Non-Basmati Rice

1759. SHRI M. SHIVANNA : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether huge quantity of non-basmati rice meant for rural poor particularly under Sampooma Grameena Abhivridhi Yojana was siphoned off from the Food Corporation of India godowns at Raichur, Gangavathi, Bellary and illegally exported through middlemen;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the action taken to prevent its recurrence; and

(c) the steps taken against the persons held responsible therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH) : (a) to (c) No, Sir. The Food Corporation of India (FCI) is having its depot at Raichur and Bellary and not at Gangavathi. The Depot at Gangavathi belongs to State Warehousing Corporation (SWC) under the control of State Government of Karnataka.

The investigations undertaken by FCI reveal that there is no involvement of staff/officers of FCI in diversion of rice ex-Karnataka for the alleged illegal exports.

The FCI is releasing foodgrains (wheat and rice) to the State Governments or their nominees as per allocations made by the Government and the responsibility of its distribution to the end consumers rests with the respective State/UTs Governments.

NCPP of Maharashtra

1760. SHRI MOHAN RAWALE : Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government of Maharashtra has

submitted a National Coastal Protection Project (NCPP) to Central Water Commission (CWC) for approval;

(b) if so, whether the necessary approval has been accorded to the project;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor and the time by which it is likely to be approved?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV) : (a) to (d) A proposal, amounting to Rs.195.50 crore was received from the Maharashtra Maritime Board, Mumbai, in July, 2002, for inclusion in the National Coastal Protection Project (NCPP). The proposal includes construction of 72.36 Km of anti-sea erosion works in Mumbai, Mumbai Suburban, Thana, Raigad, Ratnagiri and Sindhudurg Districts. The proposal has been considered acceptable for inclusion in the NCPP.

The National coastal Protection Project, covering all maritime States/UTs is to be formulated for protection of coastal areas of maritime States/UTs from sea erosion with a view to explore possibilities of funding through external resources or other domestic resources. The formulation of consolidated report of NCPP depends upon receipt of final proposal of all maritime States/UTs. The proposals of maritime States/UTs are at various stages of finalization with the State Governments in consultation with Central Water Commission.

Contaminated Drinking Water

1761. SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA :

SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR :

SHRI SHAILENDRA KUMAR :

SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU :

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY :

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Central Pollution Control Board has

carried out any study on tap water as reported in 'The Hindustan Times' dated November 11, 2006;

- (b) if so, the outcome of the study;
- (c) its implications on human body; and
- (d) the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) has informed that it had clarified the position to all concerned about facts pertaining to the tap water supply in Delhi, during July, 2006, relating to the levels of all four individual Trihalomethanes (THMs) and Total Trihalomethanes (THMs). The levels of individual THMs as well as Total THMs at tap water points have been found within World Health Organisation (WHO) Drinking Water Guidelines as well as other International Standards of United States Environment Protection Agency (USEPA), Environment Canada and European Union.

(c) and (d) The prolonged consumption of potable water containing Trihalomethane compounds exceeding the limits specified under Drinking Water Guidelines, may pose carcinogenic risk and other health problems. However, the levels of Trihalomethanes in Drinking Water in Delhi are not cause of concern because these were found well within the Drinking Water Guidelines.

[Translation]

Production Rate of Foodgrains

1762.DR. CHINTA MOHAN :

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

- (a) whether the production rate of foodgrains in the country varies from State to State;
- (b) if so, the production rate of foodgrains registered in the country on an average, State-wise;

(c) whether the Government has identified the reasons for variance in foodgrain production rate;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the cost of production each of the foodgrains also varies from State to State; and

(f) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The production rate in terms of average yield of foodgrains in the country varies from State to State. The State-wise average yield (average of 5 years from 2000-01 to 2004-05) in terms of kilogram of foodgrains per hectare is given in the enclosed statement. It varies from 834 kg/hectare in Maharashtra to 3974 kg/hectare in Punjab against all-India average of 1657 kg/hectare.

(c) and (d) The main reasons for variation in the yield of foodgrains in different States are varying agro-climatic conditions, rainfall pattern, soil fertility, incidence of pests and diseases, use of inputs, availability of irrigation water and farm management.

(e) and (f) The cost of production of each of the foodgrain crops varies from State to State. The reasons responsible for these variations are differences in climatic conditions prevalent in different States, use of hybrid/local seeds, use of fertilizers, adoption of technology/practices and techniques of production.

Statement

State-wise Average Yield (average of 5 years from 2000-01 to 2004-05) of Foodgrains

| State | Yield (kg/Hectare) |
|----------------|-----------------------|
| 1 | 2 |
| Andhra Pradesh | 2013 |

| 1 | 2 |
|-------------------|------|
| Arunachal Pradesh | 1197 |
| Assam | 1443 |
| Bihar | 1550 |
| Chhattisgarh | 919 |
| Goa | 2443 |
| Gujarat | 1305 |
| Haryana | 3090 |
| Himachal Pradesh | 1673 |
| Jammu and Kashmir | 1524 |
| Jharkhand | 1218 |
| Karnataka | 1192 |
| Kerala | 2110 |
| Madhya Pradesh | 1090 |
| Maharashtra | 834 |
| Manipur | 2328 |
| Meghalaya | 1672 |
| Mizoram | 1908 |
| Nagaland | 1499 |
| Orissa | 1146 |
| Punjab | 3974 |
| Rajasthan | 1050 |
| Sikkim | 1355 |
| Tamil Nadu | 1971 |

| 1 | 2 |
|-----------------------------|------|
| Tripura | 2194 |
| Uttar Pradesh | 2086 |
| Uttanchal | 1665 |
| West Bengal | 2388 |
| Andaman and Nicobar Islands | 2702 |
| Dadra and Nagar Haveli | 1446 |
| Delhi | 2742 |
| Daman and Diu | 1571 |
| Pondicherry | 2305 |
| All India | 1657 |

[English]

Project Proposal for Eco-System

1763.SHRI P.C. THOMAS : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government of Kerala has submitted projects for assistance under 100% Centrally Sponsored Scheme for conserving the special eco-system of sacred groves; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the response of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA) : (a) and (b) A project for the Protection and Conservation of Sacred Groves in Kerala has been submitted by Government of Kerala vide letter dated 21.11.2006 with an outlay of Rs.127.50/- Lakhs. Proposals for conservation of biodiversity received from various State

Governments are examined as per the laid down procedures and guidelines, keeping in view the budgetary allocations.

Loss of Fish and Sea Food

1764. SHRIMATI MANORAMA MADHAVRAJ : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has studied the report by World's top scientists predicting total disappearance of fish and other sea food by 2048 due to over fishing and excessive pollution of oceans;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps the Government proposes to take in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Dr. Boris Worm, Department of Biology, Dalhousie, University, Halifax, Canada and others (13) have published a research article entitled "Impacts of Biodiversity Loss on Ocean Ecosystem Services" in the journal, 'Science', Vol. 314, on 3rd November, 2006.

The Scientists analyzed the effects of changes in marine biodiversity on fundamental ecosystem services, by combining available data from different sources ranging from small experiments to global fisheries. These included effects of variations in marine diversity on primary and secondary productivity, resource use, nutrient cycling and ecosystem stability in 32 controlled experiments. Long term trends from 12 coastal and estuarine ecosystems were analyzed.

The authors of the paper observed that systems with higher regional species richness appeared more suitable and records over the past millennium revealed a decline of native species diversity since the onset of industrialization. While analyzing the data from large marine ecosystems

(LMEs), the authors observed that 29% of the currently fish species were considered collapsed in 2003. These were species whose catches dropped below 10% of the recorded maximum.

On the other hand, the Scientists have stated that fish diversity varied widely across LMEs, from 20 to 4000 species. With increasing species richness, the proportion of collapsed fisheries reduced and further, the other fisheries increased. The recovery process has been discussed in the paper, that increased with fish biodiversity, the complimentary functional roles of related fish species has also been brought out in the paper. An approach to enhance the recovery is to target other species, offering overfished species a chance of recover. The role of Marine reserves and Fishery closures in reversing the process of loss of diversity has been analyzed, with positive results in increasing species richness. These increases in biodiversity have been reported to be associated with large increases in fish productivity, up to four times the average catch.

It is clear in the Conclusions of paper that the study was highlighting the societal concurrence of the erosion of biodiversity and that is where they have stated about the possible global collapse of all taxa by 2048, based on extrapolations. However, they also have indicated the limitations of the study and also positive contributions of high diversity systems. An approach for restoring marine biodiversity through suitable fishery population control, maintenance of essential habitats and creation of marine reserves has been indicated to mitigate the problem of reduction in marine biodiversity and productivity.

(c) As regards Indian marine fisheries, there has been an increase in the annual catch from 22.99 lakh tones during 1990-91 to 29.42 lakh tones during 2003-04, though the production has plateaued from 1996-97 onwards at about 29 lakh tones. As many as 57 different groups of marine fish are landed in the country, the large ones being oil sardine, mackerel, Bombay duck, croakers, anchovies, seer fish and different species of prawns and cephalopods.

Both the Union and the State Governments have been implementing the Marine Fishing Policy and the Marine Fishing Regulation Acts incorporating closed seasons (not fishing during monsoon season), mesh size regulations, quota for different class of fishing vessels, prohibition of juvenile fishes and other measures in coastal fisheries, also in accordance with the Code of Conduct for Responsible fisheries, which have been able to sustain the catches. In order to enhance the fisheries potential, fish aggregating devices (FADs) and artificial reefs are being employed and the programmes of mariculture, sea ranching, and sea cage farming are being taken up. Further, diversified fishing and deep sea fishing are being encouraged with long liners in place of trawlers and Island fisheries development in both Andaman and Nicobar and Lakshadweep islands are being emphasized.

With these in place, the marine fish production is expected to be around 30 lakh tones annually as against the projected potential of 39 lakh tones. Efforts are also being made to concentrate on deep sea fishing to realize and sustain estimated potential in future.

GDP Share in Agriculture

1765. SHRI M. SREENIVASULU REDDY :
SHRI K. SUBBARAYAN :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) the share of agriculture in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) as on date;

(b) whether it has declined in the recent past;

(c) if so, the details thereof alongwith with reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps proposed/taken to check this trend and to improve public investment therein?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC

DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) According to the latest advance estimates of Central Statistical Organisation (CSO), the share of Agriculture including allied sectors of forestry, logging and fisheries in total Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in real terms (at 1999-00 prices) was 19.9 percent for the year 2005-06. It stood at 19.2 percent for the first quarter (April-June) of 2006-07.

(b) and (c) The share has declined from 25.3 percent during the year 1999-2000 to 19.9 percent in 2005-06 and to 19.2 percent for the first quarter of 2006-07. The details are given in the following table:

Table : Trend of Share of Agriculture and Allied Sectors in Total GDP of India.

| Year | Percentage share in real terms (at 1999-2000 prices) of agriculture including allied sectors of forestry, logging and fisheries in total GDP |
|-------------------------|---|
| 1999-2000 | 25.3 |
| 2000-01 | 24.3 |
| 2001-02 | 24.4 |
| 2002-03 | 21.9 |
| 2003-04 | 22.2 |
| 2004-05 | 20.6 |
| 2005-06 | 19.9 |
| 2006-07 (April-June) | 19.2 |

The reasons for the decline of the share of agriculture including allied sectors of forestry, logging and fisheries in total GDP is attributed to the fact that manufacturing and services sector constitute relatively increased shares vis-a-vis the agricultural sector. This is expected for any developing economy including India.

(d) Some of the steps/policy measures initiated by the Government to arrest the declining trend in share of agricultural sector in total GDP, and to improve public investment in the agriculture and allied sectors are as follows:

- Increase in the rate of public investment in sectors like irrigation, watershed development in rainfed areas, rural road connectivity, rural electrification.
- Revitalization of agricultural extension system through Krishi Vikas Kendras in each district.
- Agricultural diversification through horticulture and floriculture.
- Development/strengthening of modern agricultural markets.
- Reorientation of banks towards extending credit, especially production credit, to rural and farmers' households at concessional rate of interests.
- Revitalization of Agricultural research to ensure full exploitation of scientific advances for improving productivity according to agro-climatic conditions.
- Contract farming to attract corporate investors.

Special Package for North Eastern Region

1766. SHRI ANWAR HUSSAIN : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

- (a) whether there is any proposal to include North East Package for All India Radio (AIR) and Doordarshan (DD) in Eleventh Plan;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the amount sanctioned, released and utilized during the 1st phase of North East Package?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Details are being framed.

(c) The amount sanctioned and utilized during the first phase is as follows:

(Rs. in crores)

| | Sanctioned | Utilized |
|-----------------|------------|----------|
| All India Radio | 24.80 | 17.56 |
| Doordarshan | 380.55 | 98.33 |

Irrigation Projects of Maharashtra

1767. SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE : Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state :

- (a) the names of the irrigation projects in Maharashtra which got foreign assistance;
- (b) the quantum of foreign assistance received during the last three years, project-wise;
- (c) the amount out of the above spent on the said irrigation projects in the State during the said period;
- (d) the number of irrigation proposals pending with the Government and the reasons therefor; and
- (e) the time by which the proposals are likely to be approved?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV) : (a) to (c) At present two projects for irrigation are under implementation in Maharashtra with external assistance. A statement indicating names of the ongoing externally assisted irrigation projects and quantum of funds disbursed by the funding agency during the last three

years is enclosed. The Government of Maharashtra is also participating in the Hydrology Project which is under implementation with World Bank assistance.

(d) and (e) No proposal of Maharashtra for external assistance for irrigation project is pending with the Ministry of Water Resources.

Statement

| Sl. No. | Name of the Irrigation Project | Name of Funding Agency | Date of agreement/ termination | Disbursement (Rs. in crore) received during | | |
|---------|--|------------------------|--------------------------------|---|---------|---------|
| | | | | 2003-04 | 2004-05 | 2005-06 |
| 1. | Maharashtra Minor Irrigation Project | Kfw Germany | 31.12.1998/ 31.12.2008 | 7.051 | 4.145 | 8.922 |
| 2. | Maharashtra Water Sector Improvement Project | World Bank | 19.8.2005/ 31.3.2012 | — | — | 143.206 |

Sale of Eatables at Higher Price

1768. SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether complaints regarding sale bottled mineral water and other eatables above the Minimum Retail Price (MRP) by some restaurants and hotels have been received;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the action taken against such establishments; and

(c) the steps taken to ensure the compliance of MRP by all such establishment?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR) : (a) Yes, Sir. However it is informed that the acronym "MRP" stands for "Maximum Retail Price" and not "Minimum Retail Price".

(b) As per information available from States/UTs, 20 instances of specific complaint were received by State enforcement authorities. Of these, 4 cases have been compounded, 14 are under process and 2 are before the Court.

(c) Action is taken as per the provisions of the Standards of weights and Measures Act, 1976 and the Standards of Weights and Measures (packaged Commodities) Rules, 1977.

Damage of Groundnut Crop

1769. SHRI BADIGA RAMAKRISHNA : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether any report from the Government of Andhra Pradesh has been received in connection with damage of groundnut crop in the State;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) to (c) An area of 2544 hectares of groundnut crop was damaged in Vizianagaram, Kurnool, Srikakulam, Visakhapatnam, Krishna, West Godavari, Prakasam and Guntur districts of Andhra Pradesh by floods during kharif 2006. An assistance of Rs.55.03 lakhs has been provided as input

subsidy to the affected groundnut farmers under Calamity Relief Fund during 2006-07.

Historical Speeches of Freedom Fighters

1770. SHRIMATI NIVEDITA MANE :
SHRI EKNATH MAHADEO GAIKWAD :
SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH :

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has sold the historical speeches of the freedom fighters to mobile phone operators; and

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI) : (a) and (b) A proposal was received from M/s. Rajshri Media (Pvt.) Ltd., Mumbai for the telecom rights of Films Division. Films Division entered into an agreement with that company for sale of telecom rights etc. M/s. Rajshri Media (Pvt.) Ltd. sent a Banker's cheque of Rs.2,47,334/-. However as Films Division was not empowered to enter into such an agreement and the sale of telecom rights was not delegated to them, FD did not encash the cheque received from M/s. Rajshri Media (Pvt.) Ltd.

Authenticity of Labels

1771. SHRI LALIT MOHAN SUKLABAIIDYA : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any mechanism/agency to authenticate the claims made by the manufacturers on the labels of their products;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the manner in which the authenticity of such claims is monitored by the Government?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

Bureau of Indian Standards is the agency to authenticate the claims made by the manufacturers on the labels of ISI marked product. The authentication is limited to the requirements of making clause of the relevant Indian Standard. Fruit products are licenced under Fruit Products order, 1955 (FPO) The claim made by the manufacturer on the labels of FPO marked product are authenticated under FPO.

(c) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Setting Up of Krishi Vyapar Kendras

1772. SHRI RAGHURAJ SINGH SHAKYA :
SHRI ANANT GUDHE :
SHRI SRICHAND KRIPLANI :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Krishi Clinic and Krishi Vyapar Kendras (KVK) have been set up in the country particularly in Uttar Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof; State-wise; and

(c) the amount released and actually utilized on Krishi Clinic and KVKs during the last three years and the current year, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) The Department of Agriculture and Cooperation has launched the Central Sector Scheme of Agri-Clinics and Agri-Business Centres in 2002 for Xth Five Year Plan under which graduates in agriculture and allied areas are provided training so that they could set up Agri-Clinics and Agri-Business Centre (ACABC), as self-employment venture. Such Centres have been set up in the country, including UP.

(b) As on 28.11.2006, 3594 ACABCs have been established by trained agri-preneurs in the country. The State-wise details are given in the enclosed statement-I.

(c) The State-wise amount released to Nodal Training Institutions and utilized by them during the last three years and the current year is given in the enclosed statement-II.

Statement-I

Agri-clinics and Agri-Business Centres Scheme
Statewise number of Agri-Clinics set up
(As on 28.11.2006)

| S. No. | Name of the State | No. of Agri-clinics established |
|--------|-------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1. | Andhra Pradesh | 204 |
| 2. | Assam | 15 |
| 3. | Bihar | 335 |
| 4. | Chhattisgarh | 42 |
| 5. | Goa | 1 |
| 6. | Gujarat | 141 |
| 7. | Haryana | 12 |
| 8. | Himachal Pradesh | 7 |

| 1 | 2 | 3 |
|-------|-------------------|------|
| 9. | Jammu and Kashmir | 9 |
| 10. | Jharkhand | 8 |
| 11. | Karnataka | 564 |
| 12. | Kerala | 15 |
| 13. | Madhya Pradesh | 121 |
| 14. | Maharashtra | 672 |
| 15. | Manipur | 20 |
| 16. | Orissa | 74 |
| 17. | Pondicherry | 1 |
| 18. | Punjab | 12 |
| 19. | Rajasthan | 475 |
| 20. | Tamil Nadu | 167 |
| 21. | Uttar Pradesh | 613 |
| 22. | Uttranchal | 35 |
| 23. | West Bengal | 51 |
| Total | | 3594 |

Statement-II

Agri-Clinics and Agri-Business Centres Scheme

State-wise releases and Expenditure from 2003-04 to 2006-07

(Rs. in lakh)

| Sl. No. | Name of the State | Year 2003-04 | | Year 2004-05 | | Year 2005-06 | | Year 2006-07 | |
|---------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------|-----------------|-------------|-----------------|-------------|-----------------|-------------|
| | | Amount Released | Expenditure |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 1. | Andhra Pradesh | 11.25 | 13.55 | 29.71 | 25.3 | 14.95 | 21.07 | 9.52 | 8.09 |

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|-----|----------------------|-------|-------|--------|-------|--------|--------|-------|-------|
| 2. | Assam | 3.5 | 0 | 3 | 3.3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 3. | Bihar | 14.45 | 21.18 | 108.84 | 66.04 | 63.45 | 66.67 | 50.62 | 30.8 |
| 4. | Chhattisgarh | 0 | 0 | 20.95 | 4.42 | 0.65 | 9.29 | 3.43 | 0 |
| 5. | Delhi | 3.5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 6. | Gujarat | 9.95 | 14.42 | 35.12 | 17.51 | 2.55 | 6.65 | 0 | 0 |
| 7. | Haryana | 3.5 | 0 | 9.23 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 8. | Himachal Pradesh | 3.5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 12.87 | 5.44 |
| 9. | Jammu and Kashmir | 3.5 | 0 | 19.38 | 0 | 9.7 | 0 | 0 | 9.38 |
| 10. | Jharkhand | 4.5 | 7.44 | 12.46 | 0 | 0.1 | 3.54 | 0 | 1.95 |
| 11. | Karnataka | 15 | 22.28 | 76.43 | 49.24 | 72.55 | 76.89 | 29.14 | 25.76 |
| 12. | Kerala | 4.5 | 0 | 18.73 | 4.82 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.45 |
| 13. | Madhya Pradesh | 14.9 | 0 | 42.38 | 13.19 | 9.11 | 8.46 | 0 | 10.09 |
| 14. | Maharashtra | 19.2 | 26.73 | 128.17 | 59.51 | 79.98 | 106.59 | 55.83 | 41.51 |
| 15. | Manipur | 3.5 | 4.8 | 9.65 | 0 | 2.66 | 0 | 4.87 | 13.23 |
| 16. | Orissa | 6.4 | 14.4 | 33.69 | 11.9 | 0 | 11.51 | 0 | 0 |
| 17. | Pondicherry | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 18. | Punjab | 0 | 1.85 | 11.68 | 0.88 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 19. | Rajasthan | 24.65 | 37 | 96.32 | 34.55 | 56.93 | 99.22 | 16.65 | 15.49 |
| 20. | Tamil Nadu | 10.5 | 3.75 | 23.25 | 12.17 | 25.17 | 25.02 | 17.8 | 17.85 |
| 21. | Uttar Pradesh | 19.45 | 15.04 | 114.96 | 30.41 | 112.84 | 126.89 | 74.73 | 83.6 |
| 22. | Uttranchal | 3.5 | 0 | 14.27 | 0 | 0 | 4.5 | 4.25 | 10.17 |
| 23. | West Bengal | 10.2 | 9.57 | 24.93 | 10 | 5.87 | 13.08 | 0 | 1.39 |

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|------------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|----|
| 24. Coordination charges of Manage | 0 | 37.93 | 0 | 10.11 | 0 | 12.83 | 0 | 4.31 | |
| 25. Service Charge | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 15.8 | |
| Total | 189.45 | 225.94 | 833.15 | 353.35 | 456.51 | 592.21 | 279.71 | 299.31 | |

[English]

(in '000 Tonnes)

**Per-capita supply of Coarse Grains in
Andhra Pradesh**

1773. SHRI L. RAJAGOPAL : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) the quantum of rice provided to the poor people in Andhra Pradesh during each of the last three years under the Public Distribution System (PDS), Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) and Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY).

(b) whether any request has been received from the Government of Andhra Pradesh for increasing the percapita supply of coarse grain particularly jawar and ragi in lieu of rice and wheat to increase the per capita availability of foodgrains under the said schemes;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the time by which a final decision is likely to be taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH) : (a) The quantum of rice provided under the Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY), Below Poverty Line (BPL) and Above Poverty Line (APL) during each of the last three years under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) is as under:

| Year | AAY | BPL | APL | Total |
|---------------------------------|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| 2003-04 | 337.97 | 1368.43 | 2113.08 | 3819.48 |
| 2004-05 | 476.28 | 1230.12 | 2113.08 | 3819.48 |
| 2005-06 | 620.22 | 1086.09 | 2113.08 | 3819.39 |
| 2006-07 (upto October 06) | 381.64 | 613.69 | 1232.63 | 2227.96 |

(b) No such request has been received from the State Government of Andhra Pradesh.

(c) and (d) Question does not arise in view of (b).

[Translation]

**Registration of New Newspapers and
Magazines**

1774. DR. DHIRENDRA AGARWAL :
SHRI V.K. THUMMAR :

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether the owners of new newspapers and new magazines are facing a number of difficulties in getting themselves registered with the Registrar of Newspapers of India;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps being taken by the Government in this regard and outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The process of title verification is now online. The process of registration of publication has been streamlined and computerization is underway. The details of documents required for registration is also available online.

[English]

Loan to Agriculture Sector

1775. SHRI G.M. SIDDESWARA : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether loan given to the agriculture sector is being increased constantly during the recent years;

(b) if so, the percentage of increase in the loan provided to agriculture sector during each of the last three years;

(c) whether agricultural production has not increased on year to year basis despite increase made in availability of loan; and

(d) if so, the quantity of yearly agricultural production recorded during each of the said years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The details are as under:-

| Year | Agriculture Credit (Rs. Crore) | % Growth |
|---------|-----------------------------------|----------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 2003-04 | 86981 | 25.04 |

| 1 | 2 | 3 |
|---------|--------|-------|
| 2004-05 | 125309 | 44.06 |
| 2005-06 | 167775 | 33.89 |

(c) and (d) The details are given in the statement enclosed.

Statement

Details of yearly agriculture production during the last three years are as under

| Year | Food grain production (in million tonnes) | Oil seed production (in million tonnes) | Sugarcane production (in million tonnes) | Cotton production (million bale)\$ |
|----------|--|--|---|---------------------------------------|
| 2003-04 | 213.19 | 25.19 | 233.86 | 13.73 |
| 2004-05 | 198.36 | 24.35 | 237.09 | 16.43 |
| 2005-06* | 208.30 | 27.73 | 278.39 | 19.57 |

Source: Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Ministry of Agriculture, New Delhi.

*4th Advance Estimates.

\$One bale of 170kg.

[Translation]

Demand of Onion by Pakistan

1776. PROF. MAHADEORAO SHIWANKAR : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government of Pakistan has placed demand for Onion to the Union Government for the current year;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith quantity in tonnes demanded;

(c) the action taken thereon;

(d) whether the traders of the country have increased the prices of Onion and started its hoarding due to increasing demand of the neighbouring country; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) to (c) No demand for Onion from the Government of Pakistan has been received in this Ministry during the current year.

(d) and (e) The prices of agricultural commodities depend on demand and supply and various other macro-economic factors. No hoarding of onion has been reported so far. The arrivals of the new kharif crop of onion have already started and availability as well as prices in the domestic market is normal.

[English]

Cross-breeding of Lions

1777. SHRI K.C. SINGH "BABA" : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether cross-breeding of Asiatic and African lions is being discouraged by the Government;

(b) if so, the reasons thereof; and

(c) if not, the details about the number of hybrid lions during the last five years and the current year, Zoo-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA) : (a) Yes, Sir. The cross breeding of Asiatic and African lions is being discouraged by the Government.

(b) The Recognition of Zoo Rules, 1992 [Rule 10(41)] prohibits hybridisation (cross-breeding) between different species of animals or different races of the same species of the animals.

(c) Does not arise.

Agriculture Summit

1778. SHRI PRABODH PANDA : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether an Agriculture Summit was held in New Delhi, recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the decisions arrived thereat?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) and (b) Agriculture Summit, 2006 was organized jointly by the Department of Agriculture and Cooperation, Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India and FICCI at Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi on October 18-19, 2006. The Theme of the Summit was 'Reforms for Empowering the Farmer'. Dr. Manmohan Singh, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, inaugurated the Summit.

(c) It was emphasized that for achieving higher growth in agriculture sector, an adequate support framework is required for promoting higher investments, technology dissemination, linking farmers to consumers, mitigating crop risk, enhancing agri-exports etc., particularly in public private partnership mode.

[Translation]

Project proposal from Rajasthan

1779. SHRI JASWANT SINGH BISHNOI : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government of Rajasthan has submitted any project for Khojngli Shahidi in Jodhpur District;

(b) if so, the cost involved in the said project; and

(c) the time by which this project is like to be sanctioned?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA) : (a) and (b) No project has been received from the Government of Rajasthan for Khojngli Shahidi in Jodhpur District. However, a project proposal for financial assistance to the tune of Rs. 499.00 lakh has been received for the construction of National Paryavaran Shahid Smarak at Khejarli, Jodhpur.

(c) The Ministry of Environment and Forests does not have any operational scheme under which financial assistance could be provided for the proposed project for the construction of National Paryavaran Shahid Smarak at Khejarli, Jodhpur and the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests has been informed accordingly by the Ministry.

[English]

Dairy Development

1780. SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) the number of proposals received from various States particularly from Bihar and Uttar Pradesh under Consolidated Dairy Development Scheme; and

(b) the measures being taken by the Government thereon and for achieving the objectives and targets fixed by the Government under the scheme?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR) : (a) No, Sir. The

Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries is not implemented such "consolidated dairy development scheme".

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

Indebtedness among Farmers

1781. SHRI VIJOY KRISHNA : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether excessive mechanization of farms have reduced the labour absorption capacity leading to severe implications for poverty;

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

(c) the number of farm households under debt, State-wise and

(d) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to save the farmers from the debt by informing them to avail credit schemes from the banks?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) and (b) Mechanization is necessary for adoption of New technology and to carry out farm operations timely and precisely and to economize agricultural production and value addition processes. The present level of mechanization has been estimated at 1.50 kilowatt per hectare in 2005-06 in the country whereas the optimal requirement as per report of ICAR is 2 kilowatt per hectare. The study conducted by NABARD during 1996-97 reveals additional annual employment generation of 189 man days per tractor and 170 man days per power tiller.

The Census of India-2001 indicates an increase in number of agricultural workers from 210.5 million in 1991 to 234.0 million in 2001.

(c) A statement is enclosed.

(d) A comprehensive credit policy has been announced by the Government on 18th June, 2004. This policy has been implemented from 2004-05.

The highlights of the policy are:-

- Credit flow to agriculture sector to increase @30% per year.
- Debt restructuring in respect of farmers in distress and in arrears making all farmers eligible for fresh credit.
- Special one time settlement scheme for settling the old and chronic loan accounts of small and marginal farmers.
- Banks allowed to finance for redeeming the loans taken by farmers from private money-lenders.
- Commercial Banks to finance @100 farmers/branch; 50 lakh new farmers to be financed by the banks in a year.
- New investments in agriculture and allied activities @2 to 3 projects/branch.
- Refinements in Kisan Credit Cards (KCC) and fixation of scale of finance.

During 2006-07 a target of agriculture credit flow has been fixed at Rs. 1,75,000/- crore and achievement till September, 2006 has been Rs. 94,345.54 crore which is 53.91% of the target.

During 2006-07 about 23.31 lakh new farmers have been financed by the Public Sector Commercial Banks (PSCBs) and 2.05 lakh new farmers by the Private Sector Commercial Banks. Besides, Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) have financed 8.71 lakh new farmers during the year. In addition, the Cooperative Banks have financed 6.97 lakh new farmers during the year. Thus 41.04 lakh new farmers have been financed by the banking system during the year.

An Amount of Rs. 4520.77 crore has been provided as debt relief to the farmers in distress, farmers in arrears and under One Time Settlement (OTS), till September, 2006 during 2006-07.

PSCBs have provided Rs. 26.57 crore as advances to 4120 farmers to enable them to redeem their debts from money lenders. The corresponding figures for Cooperative Banks and RRBs are Rs. 7.85 crore (5514 accounts) and Rs. 3.85 crore (1633 accounts), respectively.

Statement

| S. No. | Name of the State | Estimated number of indebted Farmer Households (in hundreds) |
|--------|-------------------|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1. | Andhra Pradesh | 49493 |
| 2. | Arunachal Pradesh | 72 |
| 3. | Assam | 4536 |
| 4. | Bihar | 23383 |
| 5. | Chhattisgarh | 11092 |
| 6. | Gujarat | 19644 |
| 7. | Haryana | 10330 |
| 8. | Himachal Pradesh | 3030 |
| 9. | Jammu and Kashmir | 3003 |
| 10. | Jharkhand | 5893 |
| 11. | Karnataka | 24887 |
| 12. | Kerala | 14126 |
| 13. | Madhya Pradesh | 32110 |
| 14. | Maharashtra | 36098 |

| 1 | 2 | 3 |
|-------------------|---|--------|
| 15. Manipur | | 533 |
| 16. Meghalaya | | 103 |
| 17. Mizoram | | 184 |
| 18. Nagaland | | 294 |
| 19. Orissa | | 20250 |
| 20. Punjab | | 12069 |
| 21. Rajasthan | | 27828 |
| 22. Sikkim | | 174 |
| 23. Tamil Nadu | | 28954 |
| 24. Tripura | | 1148 |
| 25. Uttar Pradesh | | 69199 |
| 26. Uttranchal | | 644 |
| 27. West Bengal | | 34896 |
| 28. UTs | | 372 |
| All India | | 434242 |

Source : Agricultural Statistics At a Glance 2005.

[Translation]

New Wages for Agricultural Labourers

1782. SHRI KAILASH NATH SINGH YADAV :
PROF. MAHADEORAO SHIWANKAR :

Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has contemplated/sanctioned an increase in the wages of the agricultural labourers as reported in '*Rashtriya Sahara*', November 23, 2008;

(b) If so, whether this increase has been sanctioned for certain States only;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether the rates of wages announced in recent years by the Government are being adopted in all the States; and

(e) If not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES) : (a) The Chief Labour Commissioner (Central) has revised Variable Dearness Allowance (VDA) for different category of workers employed in agriculture with effect from 1st October, 2008 on the basis of rise in prices as measured in terms of All India Consumer Price Index Number for Industrial Workers. The basic rates and VDA fixed for a agriculture as applicable to different areas in the Central Sphere are as under:-

Area Wise Basic + V.D.A. Rates (In Rs.)

| Category | Area 'A' | Area 'B' | Area 'C' |
|----------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Unskilled | <u>114.00+6.37</u> 120.37 | <u>104.00+5.79</u> 109.79 | <u>102.00+5.78</u> 107.78 |
| Semi-Skilled | <u>125.00+6.95</u> 131.95 | <u>116.00+6.38</u> 122.38 | <u>107.00+5.81</u> 112.81 |
| Skilled | <u>137.00+7.54</u> 144.54 | <u>125.00+6.95</u> 131.95 | <u>115.00+6.37</u> 121.37 |
| Highly Skilled | <u>153.00+8.41</u> 161.41 | <u>141.00+7.82</u> 148.82 | <u>125.00+6.78</u> 131.78 |

Area 'A', 'B' and 'C' are defined as per the Statement enclosed.

(b) to (e) These rates are not applicable for scheduled employment relating to agriculture in the States sphere as under the provisions of Minimum Wages Act, 1948, the Central and State Governments/Union Territories are the appropriate Governments to fix and revise the rates for minimum wages in the scheduled employment under their respective jurisdictions.

Statement**AREA 'A'**

| | | | | | |
|-----------|--------|----------------|--------|---------|--------|
| Ahmedabad | (U.A.) | Greater Bombay | (U.A.) | Chennai | (U.A.) |
| Bangalore | (U.A.) | Hyderabad | (U.A.) | Nagpur | (U.A.) |
| Kolkata | (U.A.) | Kanpur | (U.A.) | Delhi | (U.A.) |
| Lucknow | | | | | |

AREA 'B'

| | | | | | |
|------------------|--------|---------------|--------|--------------------|--------|
| Agra | (U.A.) | Ghaziabad | (U.A.) | Meerut | (U.A.) |
| Ajmer | (U.A.) | Gorakhpur | (U.A.) | Moradabad | (U.A.) |
| Aligarh | (U.A.) | Guwahati | | Mysore | (U.A.) |
| Allahabad | (U.A.) | Guntur | | Nasik | (U.A.) |
| Amravati | (U.A.) | Gwalior | (U.A.) | Pune | (U.A.) |
| Aurangabad | (U.A.) | Indore | (U.A.) | Patna | (U.A.) |
| Bareilly | (U.A.) | Hubli-Dharwad | | Raipur | |
| Bhavnagar/Bhopal | | Jabalpur | (U.A.) | Rajkot | |
| Bikaner | | Jaipur | (U.A.) | Ranchi | (U.A.) |
| Bhubaneswar | | Jalandhar | | Sholapur | (U.A.) |
| Amritsar | | Jamshedpur | (U.A.) | Srinagar | (U.A.) |
| Calicut | (U.A.) | Jodhpur | | Surat | (U.A.) |
| Chandigarh | (U.A.) | Kolhapur | (U.A.) | Thiruvananthapuram | (U.A.) |
| Cochin | (U.A.) | Kalyan | | Ulhasnagar | |
| Coimbatore | (U.A.) | Kota | | Vadodara | (U.A.) |
| Cuttack | (U.A.) | Ludhiana | | Varanasi | (U.A.) |
| Durgapur | | Madurai | (U.A.) | Vajayawada | (U.A.) |
| | | | | Vishakhapatnam | (U.A.) |
| | | | | Warangal | |

Faridabad Complex

Area 'C' will comprise all areas not mentioned in this list.

NB : U.A. stands for Urban Area.

[English]

Polavaram Project

1783. SHRI G. NIZAMUDDIN : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether objection raised regarding Polavaram Project in the Khammam District of Andhra Pradesh has been addressed by the Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the time by which it is likely to be done?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Main objections, raised by different stakeholders pertained to the following:

(i) Suitability of the proposed site.

(ii) Compensation for land

(iii) Submergence of areas in the States of - Orissa and Chhattisgarh.

(iv) Public hearing.

These have been duly considered while according Environmental Clearance (EC).

(c) Does not arise in view of the reply to part (b) above.

Cotton Farmers

1784. SHRI VIKRAMBHAI ARJANBHAI MADAM : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether on account of world-wide increase in cotton production, Indian cotton farmers are facing a difficult situation with the likelihood of import of cotton; and

(b) if so, the steps being taken or proposed to be taken to discourage import and create more demand for domestic cotton to protect the interest of domestic cotton growers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) There is a decline in the world wide production of cotton in 2005-06 compared to 2004-05, while in India the production has gone up from 240 lakh bales in 2004-05 to 270 lakh bales in 2005-06.

(b) Industry imports mainly cotton of very high count long staple fibres such as Suvin and Pima, since these are in short supply in the country. The total import is less than 2% of total consumption. The import of Cotton has declined from 252,900 tonnes in 2003-04 to 98,240 tonnes in 2005-06.

[Translation]

Sale of CD/DVD through Post

1785. SHRIMATI BHAVANA PUNDALIKRAO GAWALI :
SHRI BAPU HARI CHAURE :
SHRI SANJAY DHOTRE :

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government proposes to distribute or sell CDs and DVDs of Doordarshan (DD) and Akashvani through Postal Department;

(b) if so, whether any agreement has been signed to this effect between Prasar Bharati and Indian Postal Department; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI) : (a) Prasar Bharati

has held preliminary discussions on possible sale of CDs/ VCDs/DVDs with India Post.

- (b) No, Sir.
(c) Does not arise.

[English]

**Amendment to Sugarcane Control
Order, 1966**

1786. SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATEL :
SHRI SUGRIB SINGH :

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

- (a) whether the Government has amended Sugarcane (Control) Order, 1966;
(b) if so, the details thereof;
(c) the reaction of sugar industry thereto; and
(d) the extent to which sugar manufacturers are likely to be benefited by such amendments?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Central Government has amended the Sugarcane (Control) Order, 1966 vide Notification dated 10th November, 2006. A copy of the Notification is enclosed as statement.

(c) The Government has so far received reaction from the Maharashtra Rajya Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana Sangh Ltd. the apex body of cooperative sugar factories in Maharashtra and the South Indian Sugar Mills Association (Karnataka). Both these organisations have appreciated this step of the Government.

(d) It is not possible to quantify the benefits of such amendments.

Statement

[Published in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary,
Part-II—Section 3-Sub-section (ii)]

No.1349 MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION)

ORDER

New Delhi, the 10th November, 2006

S.O. 1940(E) – In exercise of the powers conferred by Section 3 of the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 (10 of 1955), the Central Government hereby makes the following Order further to amend the Sugarcane (Control) Order, 1966, namely:-

1. (1) This Order may be called the Sugarcane (Control) (Amendment) Order, 2006.
(2) It shall come into force on the date of its publication in the Official Gazette.

2. In Sugarcane (Control) Order, 1966, after clause 6, the following clauses shall be inserted, namely:-

*6A. Restriction on setting up of two sugar factories within the radius of 15 Kms. – Notwithstanding anything contained in clause 6, no new sugar factory shall be set up within the radius of 15 kms. of any existing sugar factory or another new sugar factory in a State or two or more States:

Provided that the State Government may with the prior approval of the Central Government, where it considers necessary and expedient in public interest, notify such minimum distance higher than 15 kms. or different minimum distances not less than 15 kms. for different regions in their respective States.

Explanation 1 - An existing sugar factory shall mean a sugar factory in operation and shall also include a sugar factory that has taken all effective steps as specified in Explanation 4 to set up a sugar factory but excludes a sugar factory that has not carried out its crushing operations for last five sugar seasons.

Explanation 2 - A new sugar factory shall mean a sugar factory, which is not an existing sugar factory, but has filed the Industrial Entrepreneur Memorandum as prescribed by the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion, Ministry of Commerce and Industry in the Central Government and has submitted a performance guarantee of rupees one crore to the Chief Director (Sugar), Department of Food and Public Distribution, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution for implementation of the Industrial Entrepreneur Memorandum within the stipulated time or extended time as specified in clause 6C.

Explanation 3 - The minimum distance shall be determined as measured by the Survey of India.

Explanation 4 - The effective steps shall mean the following steps taken by the concerned person to implement the Industrial Entrepreneur Memorandum for setting up of sugar factory:-

- (a) purchase of required land in the name of the factory;
- (b) placement of firm order for purchase of plant and machinery for the factory and payment of requisite advance or opening of irrevocable letter of credit with suppliers;
- (c) commencement of civil work and construction of building for the factory;

- (d) sanction of requisite term loans from banks or financial institutions;
- (e) any other step prescribed by the Central Government, in this regard through a notification.

6B. Requirements for filing the Industrial Entrepreneur Memorandum-

- (1) Before filing the Industrial Entrepreneur Memorandum with the Central Government, the concerned person shall obtain a certificate from the Cane Commissioner or Director (Sugar) or Specified Authority of the concerned State Government that the distance between the site where he proposes to set up sugar factory and adjacent existing sugar factories and new sugar factories is not less than the minimum distance prescribed by the Central Government or the State Government, as the case may be, and the concerned person shall file the Industrial Entrepreneur Memorandum with the Central Government within one month of issue of such certificate falling which validity of the certificate shall expire.
- (2) After filing the Industrial Entrepreneur Memorandum, the concerned person shall submit a performance guarantee of rupees one crore to Chief Director (Sugar), Department of Food and Public Distribution, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution within thirty days of filing the Industrial Entrepreneur Memorandum as a surety for implementation of the Industrial Entrepreneur Memorandum within the stipulated time or extended time as specified in clause 6C falling which Industrial Entrepreneur

Memorandum shall stand de-recognized as far as provisions of this Order are concerned.

6C. Time limit to implement Industrial Entrepreneur Memorandum.-

The stipulated time for taking effective steps shall be two years and commercial production shall commence within four years with effect from the date of filing the Industrial Entrepreneur Memorandum with the Central Government, failing which the Industrial Entrepreneur Memorandum shall stand de-recognized as far as provisions of this Order are concerned and the performance guarantee shall be forfeited:

Provided that the Chief Director (Sugar), Department of Food and Public Distribution, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution on the recommendation of the concerned State Government, may give extension of one year not exceeding six months at a time, for implementing the Industrial Entrepreneur Memorandum and commencement of commercial production thereof.

6D. Consequences of non-implementation of the provisions laid down in clauses 6B and 6C. If an Industrial Entrepreneur Memorandum remains unimplemented within the time specified in clause 6C, the performance guarantee furnished for its implementation shall be forfeited after giving the concerned person a reasonable opportunity of being heard.

6E. Application of clauses 6B, 6C and 6D to the person whose Industrial Entrepreneur Memorandum has already been acknowledged.

- (1) Except the period specified in sub-clause (2) of clause 6B of this Order, the other provisions specified in clauses 6B, 6C

and 6D shall also be applicable to the person whose Industrial Entrepreneur Memorandum has already been acknowledged as on date of this notification but who has not taken effective steps as specified in Explanation 4 to the clause 6A.

- (2) The person whose Industrial Entrepreneur Memorandum has already been acknowledged as on date of this notification but who has not taken effective steps as specified in Explanation 4 to the clause 6A shall furnish a performance guarantee of rupees one crore to the Chief Director (Sugar), Department of Food and Public Distribution, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution within a period of six months of issue of this notification failing which the Industrial Entrepreneur Memorandum of the concerned person shall stand de-recognized as far as provisions of this Order are concerned."

[File No.27(4)/2006-ST]

Dr. Joy I. Cheenath, Jt. Secy.

Footnote:-The principal Order was published in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary under Order number G.S.R. 1126, (E), Ess. Com/Sugarcane dated the 16th July, 1966 and was subsequently amended vide:-

1. G.S.R. 35/Ess. Com/Sugarcane dated 05.06.1967
2. G.S.R. 159/Ess. Com/Sugarcane dated 17.10.1967
3. G.S.R. 945/Ess. Com/Sugarcane dated 18.05.1968
4. G.S.R. 1456/Ess. Com/Sugarcane dated 02.08.1968
5. G.S.R. 402(E)/Ess. Com/Sugarcane dated 25.09.1974
6. G.S.R. 492(E)/Ess. Com/Sugarcane dated 12.09.1975
7. G.S.R. 542(E)/Ess. Com/Sugarcane dated 27.10.1975

8. G.S.R. 484(E)/Ess. Com/Sugarcane dated 26.07.1974
 9. G.S.R. 799(E)/Ess. Com/Sugarcane dated 13.09.1976
 10. G.S.R. 913(E)/Ess. Com/Sugarcane dated 09.12.1976
 11. G.S.R. 197(E)/Ess. Com/Sugarcane dated 29.03.1978
 12. G.S.R. 79(E)/Ess. Com/Sugarcane dated 24.02.1982
 13. G.S.R. 695(E)/Ess. Com/Sugarcane dated 09.09.1983
 14. G.S.R. 903(E)/Ess. Com/Sugarcane dated 29.11.2000
 15. G.S.R. 113(E)/Ess. Com/Sugarcane dated 20.02.2003
 16. G.S.R. 204(E)/Ess. Com/Sugarcane dated 22.03.2004

Agricultural Export Zones

1787. SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

- (a) whether the Government has any plan to set up

crop based Agricultural Export Zones in the country to increase production and export of agricultural commodities;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the States where these would be set up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) to (c) The Government of India has sanctioned 60 Agri Export Zones (AEZs) in 20 States of the country. A list of such Agri Export Zones is enclosed as statement. The Government, on the basis of a review of the existing AEZs, has decided not to consider setting up new AEZs unless there are strong compelling reasons.

Statement

List of Sanctioned 60 Agri Export Zones

| S.No. | State | AEZ Project | Districts/Area |
|-------|-------------|-------------------|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 1. | West Bengal | 1. Pineapple | Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri, Uttar Dinajpur, Cooch Behar, Howrah |
| | | 2. Lychee | Murshidabad, Malda, 24 Pargana(N) and 24 Pargana(S) |
| | | 3. Potatoes | Hooghly Burdhaman, Midnapore (W), Uday Narayanpur, Howrah |
| | | 4. Mango | Maldah and Murshidabad |
| | | 5. Vegetables | Nadia, Murshidabad and North 24 Parganas |
| | | 6. Darjeeling Tea | Darjeeling |
| 2. | Karnataka | 7. Gherkins | Tumkur, Bangalore Urban, Bangalore Rural, Hassan, Kolar, Chitradurga, Dharwad and Bagalkot |

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|----|---------------|--|---|
| | | 8. Rose Onion | Banglore Urban, Banglore Rural, Kolar |
| | | 9. Flowers | Banglore Urban, Banglore Rural, Kolar, Tumkur, Kodagu and Belgaum |
| | | 10. Vanilla | Districts of Dakshin Kannada, Uttara Kannada, Udupi, Shimoga, Kodagu, Chickamagalur |
| 3. | Uttaranchal | 11. Lychees | Udham singh Nagar, Dehradun and Nainital, |
| | | 12. Flowers | Dehradun, Pantnagar, Udham Singh Nagar, Nainital and Uttarkashi |
| | | 13. Basmati Rice | Udham Singh Nagar, Nainital, Dehradun and Haridwar |
| | | 14. Medicinal and Aromatic Plants | Uttarkashi, Chamoli, Pithoragarh, Dehradun, Nainital, Haridwar and Udham Singh Nagar |
| 4. | Punjab | 15. Vegetables (Cabbage Broccoli, Okra, Peas, Carrot, Baby Corn, Green Chillies, Green Beans, Tomato | Fatehgarh Sahib, Patiala, Sangrur, Ludhiana and Ropar |
| | | 16. Potatoes | Singhpura, Zirakpur Distt. Patiala and Satellite Centres at Rampura Phul, Muksar, Ludhiana, Julundur |
| | | 17. Basmati Rice | Gurdaspur, Amritsar, Kapurthala, Jalandhar, Hoshiarpur and Nawanshahar |
| 5. | Uttar Pradesh | 18. Potatoes | Agra, Hathras, Farrukhabad, Kannoj, Meerut, Baghpat and Aligarh, Janpad Badaiyun, Rampur, Ghaziabad and Firozabad |
| | | 19. Mangoes and Vegetables | Lucknow, Unnao, Hardoi, Sitapur and Barabanki |
| | | 20. Mangoes | Saharanpur, Muzaffarnagar, Bijnaur, Meerut, Baghpat and Bulandshar, Jyotifulenagar |
| | | 21. Basmati Rice | Bareilly, Shahjahanpur, Pilibhit, Rampur, Badaun, Bijnor, Moradabad, JB Phulenagar, Sharanpur, Muzaffarnagar, Meerut, Bulandshahar, Ghaziabad and Baghpat |

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|-----|-------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| 6. | Maharashtra | 22. Grape and Grapevine | Nasik, Sangli, Sholapur, Satara, Ahmednagar |
| | | 23. Mangoes | Ratnagiri, Sindhudurg, Raigarh and Thane |
| | | 24. Kesar Mango | Aurangabad, Beed, Jaina, Ahmednagar and Latur |
| | | 25. Flowers | Pune, Nasik, Kolhapur and Sangli |
| | | 26. Onion | Nasik, Ahmednagar, Pune, Satara, Jalgaon, Solapur |
| | | 27. Pomegranate | Districts of Solapur, Sangli, Ahmednagar, Pune, Nasik, Osmanabad and Latur |
| | | 28. Banana | Jalgaon, Dhule, Nandurbar, Buldhana, Parbhani, Hindoli, Nanded and Wardha |
| | | 29. Oranges | Nagpur and Amraoti |
| 7. | Andhra Pradesh | 30. Mango Pulp and Fresh Vegetables | Chittoor |
| | | 31. Mango and Grapes | Rangareddy, Medak, Mehboobnagar |
| | | 32. Mangoes | Krishna |
| | | 33. Gherkins | Districts of Mahboobnagar, Rangareddy, Medak, Karimnagar, Warangal, Anathapur and Nalgonda |
| | | 34. Chilli | Guntur |
| 8. | Jammu and Kashmir | 35. Apples | Srinagar, Baramulla, Anantnag, Kupwara, Kathua and Pulwana |
| | | 36. Walnut | Baramulla, Anantnag, Pulwama, Budgam, Kupwara, Srinagar, Doda Poonch, Udhampur, Rajouri and Kathua |
| 9. | Tripura | 37. Pineapple | Kumarghat, Manu, Melaghar, Matabari and Kakraban Blocks |
| 10. | Madhya Pradesh | 38. Potatoes, Onion and Garlic | Malwa, Ujjain, Indore, Dewas, Dhar, Shajapur, Ratlam, Neemuch, Mandsaur and Khandwa |
| | | 39. Seed Spices | Guna, Mandsaur, Ujjain, Rajgarh, Ratlam Shajapur and Neemuch |

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|-----|------------------|---|---|
| | | 40. Wheat (including Sharbati wheat for Bhopal Zone | Ujjain Zone (Neemuch, Ratlam, Mandsaur and Ujjain), Indore Zone (Indore, Dhar, Shajapur and Dewas) and Bhopal Zone (Sehore, Vidisha, Raisen, Hoshangabad, Harda, Narsinghpur and Bhopal |
| | | 41. Lentil and Grams | Shivpuri, Guna, Vidisha, Raisen, Narsinghpura, Chhindwara |
| | | 42. Oranges | Chindwara, Hoshangabad, Betul |
| 11. | Tamil Nadu | 43. Cut Flowers | Dharampuri |
| | | 44. Flowers | Nilgiri |
| | | 45. Mangoes | Districts of Madurai, Theni, Dinndigul, Virudhunagar and Tirunelveli |
| | | 46. Cashewnut | Cuddalore, Thanjvur, Pudukottai and Sivaganga |
| 12. | Bihar | 47. Lychee, Vegetables and Honey | Muzaffarpur, Samastipur, Hajipur, Vaishali, East and West Champaran, Bhagalpur, Begu Sarai, Khagaria, Sitamarhi, Saran and Gopalganj |
| 13. | Gujarat | 48. Mangoes and Vegetables | Ahmedabad, Khaida, Anand, Vadodara Surat Navsari, Valsad, Bharuch, Narmada |
| | | 49. Value Added Onion | Districts of Bhavnagar, Surendernagar, Amreli, Rajkot, Junagadh and Jamnagar Districts |
| | | 50. Sesame Seeds | Amerili, Bhavnagar, Surendranagar, Rajkot, Jamnagar |
| 14. | Sikkim | 51. Flowers (Orchids) and Cherry Pepper | East Sikkim |
| | | 52. Ginger | North, East, South and West Sikkim |
| 15. | Himachal Pradesh | 53. Apples | Shimla, Sirmaur, Kullu, Mandi, Chamba and Kinnaur |
| 16. | Orissa | 54. Ginger and Turmeric | Kandhamal |
| 17. | Jharkhand | 55. Vegetables | Ranchi, Hazaribagh and Lohardaga |

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|-----|-----------|--------------------------------|--|
| 18. | Kerala | 56. Horticulture Products | Thrissur, Ernakulam, Kottayam, Alpuza, Pathanamthitta, Kollam, Thiruvanthapuram, Idukki and Pallakad |
| | | 57. Medicinal Plant | Wayanad, Mallapuram, Palakkad, Thrissur, Ernakulam, Idukki Kollam, Pathanamitth, Thiruvananthapuram |
| 19. | Assam | 58. Fresh and Processed Ginger | Kamrup, Nalbari, Barpeta, Darrang, Nagaon, Morigaon, Karbi Anglong and North Cachar |
| 20. | Rajasthan | 59. Corriander | Kota, Bundi, Baran, Jhalawar and Chittoor |
| | | 60. Cumin | Nagaur, Barmer, Jalore, Pali and Jodhpur |

Schemes for Development of Forests

1788. SHRI ASADUDDIN OWASI : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Union Government is implementing various schemes for the protection, conservation and development of forests in the country;

(b) if so, the total grants so far provided by the Union Government to States for maintenance of forests in 2005-06 and 2006-07, State-wise;

(c) whether 12th Finance Commission has recommended an additional grant of Rs.1000 crores for a period of five years for the maintenance of forests; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and steps taken or being taken by the Government to ensure that grants provided are utilized judiciously?

THE MINISTER OF STATE-~~IN~~ THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN

MEENA) : (a) Yes, Sir. The Ministry is implementing various Centrally Sponsored Schemes for protection, conservation and development of forests in the country. These schemes are Integrated Forest Protection Scheme (IFPS), Development of National Parks and Sanctuaries, National Afforestation Programme (NAP) and Management of gregarious flowering of bamboo in North Eastern States.

(b) Details of central assistance provided to the States and Union Territories for protection of forests during the financial year 2005-06 and during 2006-07 are placed at statement-I enclosed.

(c) Yes, Sir. XIIth Finance Commission has recommended an additional grant of Rs. 1000 crores for maintenance of forests for a period of five years (2005-06 to 2009-10).

(d) Details of additional grant-in-aid to States provided for maintenance of forests by XIIth Finance Commission are placed at Statement-II enclosed. The guidelines for release and utilization of grants-in-aid provide for a monitoring mechanism to ensure proper utilisation of the grants-in-aid.

Statement

Details of Central Assistance provided in Financial Year 2005-06 and 2006-07 for maintenance of forests

| S.No. | Name of the State | Assistance provided under various Centrally Sponsored Schemes | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------|-------------------|---|----------------------------------|---|---|---|--|---|---|---|--|---|---|
| | | 2005-06 | | | | | 2006-07 | | | | | | |
| | | Integrated Forest Protection Scheme | National Afforestation Programme | Development of National Parks and Sanctuaries | Management of Gregarious Flowering of Bamboos in North Eastern States | Integrated Forest Protection Scheme (Upto 30.11.2006) | National Afforestation Programme (Upto 31.10.2006) | Development of National Parks and Sanctuaries | Management of Gregarious Flowering of Bamboos in North Eastern States | Integrated Forest Protection Scheme (Upto 30.11.2006) | National Afforestation Programme (Upto 31.10.2006) | Development of National Parks and Sanctuaries | Management of Gregarious Flowering of Bamboos in North Eastern States |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | | | | |
| 1. | Andhra Pradesh | 175.00 | 754.00 | 104.245 | Nil | Nil | 376.00 | 101.36 | Nil | | | | |
| 2. | Bihar | 128.88 | 342.00 | Nil | Nil | 12.53 | 293.00 | Nil | Nil | | | | |
| 3. | Chhattisgarh | 104.31 | 1763.00 | 359.817 | Nil | 400.00 | 315.00 | 214.31 | Nil | | | | |
| 4. | Gujarat | 192.00 | 1205.00 | 275.93 | Nil | 200.00 | 386.00 | 236.45 | Nil | | | | |
| 5. | Goa | Nil | Nil | 14.40 | Nil | 29.01 | Nil | 5.00 | Nil | | | | |
| 6. | Haryana | 75.00 | 435.00 | 24.20 | Nil | 58.19 | 604.00 | 48.45 | Nil | | | | |
| 7. | Himachal Pradesh | 180.186 | 908.00 | 283.83806 | Nil | Nil | 581.00 | 184.53 | Nil | | | | |
| 8. | Jammu and Kashmir | Nil | 528.00 | 113.50 | Nil | Nil | 207.00 | 168.68 | Nil | | | | |

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|-----|-------------------|--------|---------|----------|--------|---------|--------|--------|--------|
| 9. | Jharkhand | 75.00 | 785.00 | 124.90 | Nil | 112.263 | 857.00 | 96.54 | Nil |
| 10. | Karnataka | 119.63 | 2303.00 | 474.9931 | Nil | 122.88 | 362.00 | 414.62 | Nil |
| 11. | Kerala | 125.00 | 499.00 | 284.5412 | Nil | 200.00 | 414.00 | 206.17 | Nil |
| 12. | Madhya Pradesh | 125.00 | 1261.00 | 613.553 | Nil | 200.00 | 406.00 | 329.02 | Nil |
| 13. | Maharashtra | Nil | 1469.00 | 241.66 | Nil | Nil | 797.00 | 217.60 | Nil |
| 14. | Orissa | 110.00 | 1205.00 | 325.649 | Nil | 76.36 | 384.00 | 143.22 | Nil |
| 15. | Punjab | Nil | 397.00 | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil |
| 16. | Rajasthan | 100.00 | 726.00 | 192.62 | Nil | 120.00 | 247.00 | 156.22 | Nil |
| 17. | Tamil Nadu | 150.00 | 2082.00 | 197.20 | Nil | 158.40 | 609.00 | 189.58 | Nil |
| 18. | Uttar Pradesh | 49.25 | 1704.00 | 345.63 | Nil | 150.00 | 204.00 | 232.20 | Nil |
| 19. | Uttaranchal | 150.00 | 1310.00 | 85.65 | Nil | 463.22 | 351.00 | 78.65 | Nil |
| 20. | West Bengal | 140.00 | 592.00 | 313.9437 | Nil | 190.17 | 402.00 | 214.22 | Nil |
| 21. | Arunachal Pradesh | 274.66 | 289.00 | 144.845 | 10.00 | 181.68 | 141.00 | 73.54 | Nil |
| 22. | Assam | 400.00 | 560.00 | 193.205 | 325.00 | 150.26 | 704.00 | 72.87 | Nil |
| 23. | Manipur | 126.80 | 630.00 | 101.03 | 241.00 | 354.29 | 511.00 | 67.27 | 103.40 |
| 24. | Meghalaya | 80.00 | 518.00 | 59.30 | 171.00 | 150.00 | 284.00 | 38.20 | Nil |
| 25. | Mizoram | 300.00 | 1006.00 | 221.28 | 300.00 | 79.71 | 581.00 | 70.50 | 516.60 |

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|-------|-----------------------------|---------|----------|---------|---------|-----------|----------|---------|--------|
| 26. | Nagaland | 54.00 | 537.00 | 1.50 | 210.00 | 237.72 | 205.00 | 8.00 | 80.80 |
| 27. | Sikkim | Nil | 623.00 | 118.84 | 525.00 | 141.70 | 461.00 | 89.02 | 206.50 |
| 28. | Tripura | 16.00 | 427.00 | Nil | Nil | 162.915 | 263.00 | 31.60 | Nil |
| 29. | Andaman and Nicobar Islands | Nil | Nil | 63.55 | Nil | Nil | Nil | 57.75 | Nil |
| 30. | Chandigarh | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil |
| 31. | Dadra and Nagar Haveli | 8.26 | Nil | 20.00 | Nil | 3.8552 | Nil | 14.50 | Nil |
| 32. | Daman and Diu | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil |
| 33. | Lakshadweep | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil |
| 34. | Delhi | Nil | Nil | 19.50 | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil |
| 35. | Pondicherry | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil | Nil |
| Total | | 3260.98 | 24856.00 | 5319.34 | 1782.00 | 3959.0532 | 10946.00 | 3762.35 | 907.30 |

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
|---------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| Nagaland | 13345 | 5.00 | 5.00 | 5.00 | 5.00 | 5.00 | 25.00 |
| Orissa | 48838 | 15.00 | 15.00 | 15.00 | 15.00 | 15.00 | 75.00 |
| Punjab | 2432 | 0.40 | 1.40 | 0.40 | 0.40 | 0.40 | 2.00 |
| Rajasthan | 16367 | 5.00 | 5.00 | 5.00 | 5.00 | 5.00 | 25.00 |
| Sikkim | 3193 | 1.60 | 1.60 | 1.60 | 1.60 | 1.60 | 8.00 |
| Tamil Nadu | 21482 | 6.00 | 6.00 | 6.00 | 6.00 | 6.00 | 30.00 |
| Tripura | 7065 | 3.00 | 3.00 | 3.00 | 3.00 | 3.00 | 15.00 |
| Uttar Pradesh | 13746 | 4.00 | 4.00 | 4.00 | 4.00 | 4.00 | 20.00 |
| Uttanchal | 23938 | 7.00 | 7.00 | 7.00 | 7.00 | 7.00 | 35.00 |
| West Bengal | 10693 | 3.00 | 3.00 | 3.00 | 3.00 | 3.00 | 15.00 |
| Total States | 668200 | 200.00 | 200.00 | 200.00 | 200.00 | 200.00 | 1000.00 |

Shortage of Plastic Raw Materials

1789. SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN : Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state :

- whether there is shortage of raw materials for plastic goods;
- if so, whether the prices of raw materials has been increased to manifold for the past few months;
- if so, the details thereof;
- whether the Government proposes to reduce its prices and to impose a ban on export of plastic raw materials;
- if so, the details thereof and the time by which a final decision is likely to be taken in this regard;
- whether there is proposal to open plastic raw material industries in various parts of the country;

(g) if so, the details and locations thereof; and

(h) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILISERS AND MINISTER OF STATE OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE) : (a) to (e) Plastic raw materials are manufactured by the domestic industry and also can be imported under open general license. However, All Indian Plastic Manufacturers Association (AIPMA), All India Plastic Industries Associations have given representations on inordinate and frequent price rise in Commodity Plastics and requested for restricting the export of polymers, custom duty reduction from the current level of 5% to 0% removal of anti-dumping duty on PVC resin and reduction of excise duty from 16% to 8%. While the Chemicals and Petrochemicals Manufacturers' Association have mentioned that the volatility in prices is a global phenomenon and not only specific to India. The Petrochemicals Industry is deregulated and delicensed. Government has not

proposed to put any ban on export of plastic raw materials as on date. The prices of raw materials for plastic are market driven and prices are not controlled by Government.

(f) to (h) The Government has approved the setting up of the Assam Gas Cracker Project, at Lepet Kata in Assam which will produce polymers.

Improvement In Consumer Protection Council

1790. SHRI G. KARUNAKARA REDDY :

SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL :

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether steps have been taken to strengthen and enhance the effectiveness of working of Central Consumer Protection Council for better consumer protection;

(b) if so, the status of the various working groups constituted in this regard alongwith the recommendations made by these working groups;

(c) the status of implementation of the said recommendations;

(d) whether a New National Consumer Policy is proposed to be framed; and

(e) if so, the time by which it is likely to be framed?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR) : (a) Yes, Sir. The Central Consumer Protection Council (CCPC) has been restructured and the number of its members has been reduced from one hundred fifty to thirty five so as to facilitate frequent meetings as also for more meaningful and focussed discussions.

(b) No such working group was constituted to strengthen and enhance the effectiveness of working of CCPC.

(c) In view of (b) above, does not arise.

(d) A draft National Consumer Policy prepared by the Department of Consumer Affairs is being finalized in consultation with other Ministries/Departments.

(e) The time frame cannot be indicated at this stage.

[Translation]

Vacant Posts in Labour Courts

1791. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE : Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether several posts of the Presiding Officers are lying vacant in the Labour Courts at present particularly in the tribal areas of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes posts out of these posts as on date State-wise; and

(c) the steps taken or proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES) : (a) to (c) In respect of Industrial disputes arising in the Central Sphere, Central Government is the Appropriate Government for setting up the Central Government Industrial Tribunal - cum - Labour Courts (CGIT's) as per the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947. Out of the 22 CGIT's, the posts of the Presiding Officers in the following Central Government Industrial Tribunal - cum - Labour Courts (CGIT's) are lying vacant from the dates indicated against each:

| CGIT's | From |
|-----------------------|------------|
| 1 | 2 |
| (i) CGIT-I, Dhanbad | 01.09.2006 |
| (ii) CGIT-II, Dhanbad | 28.10.2006 |

| 1 | 2 |
|-----------------------|------------|
| (iii) CGIT, Ahmedabad | 01.07.2006 |
| (iv) CGIT, Jaipur | 04.07.2006 |

Presiding Officers in the CGIT's are appointed as per the provisions of Section 7, 7-A, 7-B and 7-C of the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947. Government has already initiated action to fill up the vacant posts of Presiding Officers as per the provisions under the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947.

Sponge Iron Plants

1792. SHRI SUGRIB SINGH : Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state :

(a) the number of sponge iron plants as on date in the country, State-wise and location-wise;

(b) the details of installation capacity and actual production of sponge iron during each of the last three years in these plants; and

(c) the quantity of sponge iron exported by each of these plants during the said period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (DR. AKHILESH DAS) : (a) As per the available information, the total number of sponge iron units as on date is 241. State-wise details of these units are given in the statement enclosed.

(b) Details of installed capacity and actual production of sponge iron during each of the last three years in these plants are as under:—

(In '000 tonnes)

| Item | 2003-04 | 2004-05 | 2005-06 |
|--------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Installed capacity | 9985 | 12971 | 18951 |
| Actual production | 8085 | 10296 | 12649 |

(Source: Joint Plant Committee)

(c) Details of export of sponge iron during the said period are as under:-

(In '000 tonnes)

| Year | Export |
|---------|--------|
| 2003-04 | 8.905 |
| 2004-05 | 29.800 |
| 2005-06 | 41.454 |

(Source: Joint Plant Committee)

Statement

| State | No. of Units |
|----------------|--------------|
| Andhra Pradesh | 16 |
| Chhattisgarh | 51 |
| Goa | 4 |
| Gujarat | 1 |
| Jharkhand | 33 |
| Karnataka | 21 |
| Maharashtra | 7 |
| Orissa | 73 |
| Tamilnadu | 4 |
| West Bengal | 31 |
| Total | 241 |

Over Exploitation of Ground Water

1793. SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA :
SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL :
SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO :
SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR :

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government has urged the State Governments to enact legislation for checking over exploitation of ground water as reported in *The Hindu* dated September 29, 2006;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the response of the State Governments thereto; and

(d) the steps taken by the Union Government to regulate development and augmentation of ground water resources?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. To facilitate enactment of suitable ground water legislation by the States, Ministry of Water Resources has circulated to the State and Union Territories, a draft Model Bill to regulate and control the development and management of ground water. The Bill was initially circulated in 1970 which has been re-circulated in 1992, 1996 and 2005 for adoption.

The Union Minister of Water Resources in his letter dated 11.9.2006 addressed to the Chief Ministers of States and Administrators of Union Territories, while expressing concern at the indiscriminate withdrawal of ground water in various parts of the country, has appealed to the State Governments to enact ground water legislation for checking over-exploitation of ground water.

(c) So far ground water legislation has been enacted by the States of Andhra Pradesh, Goa, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Lakshadweep, Pondicherry, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal. The response of the State/UT Governments is given in the statement enclosed.

(d) The steps taken by the Union Government to regulate the development of ground water and its augmentation are as follows:—

— Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA) constituted under Environment (Protection) Act of

1986 is regulating withdrawal of ground water by new industries/projects in Over-exploited, Critical and Semi-critical areas.

- CGWA has notified 20 severely Over-exploited areas in the country for regulation of ground water development and management. In these notified areas, installation of new ground water abstraction structures is not permitted without prior specific approval of the Authority.
- CGWA has also notified 51 Over-exploited areas for registration of ground water abstraction structures in various States which showed a very steep decline in ground water levels and required action for regulation.
- CGWA has issued directions to all the Chief Secretaries of States having Over Exploited blocks to take all necessary measures to promote Rain Water Harvesting for Artificial Recharge to Ground Water.
- Based on various studies carried out to demarcate the areas where decline of ground water level is on continuous basis and identify areas feasible for recharge, a concept report titled 'Master Plan for Artificial Recharge to Ground Water' has been prepared which has identified a total of 4.5 lakh sq.km. area in the country needing artificial recharge of ground water. It has been estimated that annually about 36 bcm of surplus monsoon run off can be recharged to augment ground water. The document has been circulated to all the States/UTs.
- The Board has circulated Manual/Guide on Artificial Recharge to Ground Water to the States/ Union Territories to enable them to formulate area specific artificial recharge schemes to check the declining trend of ground water levels.

- Central Ground Water Board provides technical guidance on rain water harvesting for Artificial Recharge of Ground Water to various agencies including State Government agencies, educational institutions, Resident Welfare Associations, Group Housing Societies, private entrepreneurs and individuals.
- To create awareness among the public on rain water harvesting for Artificial Recharge to Ground Water mass awareness programmes are regularly organized by the Central ground Water Authority. Further, to generate resource persons as a measure of capacity building, training programmes are conducted in various parts of the country.
- Central Ground Water Board has implemented 165 demonstrative recharge projects in various States under the central sector scheme on 'Study of recharge to ground water' during the IX Plan.
- The Central Ground Water Authority has directed the Chief Secretaries of the concerned States to take all measures to adopt artificial recharge to ground water/ promote rain water harvesting in all the Over-exploited areas falling under their jurisdiction and ensure inclusion of roof top rain water harvesting in the building bye-laws.
- Government has constituted Artificial Recharge of Ground Water Advisory Council under the Union Minister of Water Resources with the objective of popularizing the concept of Artificial Recharge among all stakeholders. It has representations from various Ministries concerned with rain water harvesting like Ministry of Rural Development, Urban Development, Agriculture, Environment and Forests, States/UTs, financial institutions, Industries/ Public Undertakings and NGOs.

- Ministry of Water Resources has requested other Central Ministries/ Departments of Railways, Defence, Posts, Telecommunications, Central Public Works Department and National Highways Authority of India to provide roof top rain water harvesting structures in the buildings under their control.

Statement

Response of State/UT Governments on Enactment of Legislation on the Lines of Model Bill Circulated by the Union Ministry of Water Resources

States/UTs where Legislation Enacted and Being Implemented

| S. No. | States/UTs | Status of Implementation of Enactment of Legislation |
|--------|----------------|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1. | Andhra Pradesh | Andhra Pradesh Water, Land and Trees Act, 2002 covering whole State has been enacted with effect with 19.04.2002 |
| 2. | Goa | The "Goa Ground Water Regulation Act, 2002" has already been enacted by the State Legislature on 25.01.2002 and come into force on 17.03.2003. |
| 3. | Tamil Nadu | The State Government of Tamil Nadu has passed an Act "Tamil Nadu Ground Water (Development and Management) Act, 2003" on 04.03.2003 which includes provision for setting up Tamil Nadu Ground Water Authority to regulate and control water development in the State of Tamil Nadu, Framing of rules |

| 1 | 2 | 3 |
|----|------------------|--|
| | | and constitution of State Ground Water Authority is under consideration of State Government |
| 4. | Lakshadweep | Lakshadweep Ground Water (Development and Control) Regulation, 2001 has been enacted with effect from 01.11.2001. |
| 5. | Kerala | The "Kerala Ground Water (Control and Regulation) Act, 1997" has since been passed by the State Legislative Assembly. |
| 6. | Pondicherry | Pondicherry Ground Water (Control and Regulation) Act, 2002 to regulate and control the development of ground water has been notified in the Gazette of Pondicherry vide No.6 dated 04.03.2003. |
| 7. | West Bengal | "West Bengal Ground Water Resources (Management, Control and Regulation) Act 2005" came into effect on 15th September, 2005. |
| 8. | Himachal Pradesh | The State Government has enacted "Himachal Pradesh Ground Water (Regulation and Control of Development and Management) Act, 2005" (Act No.31 of 2005) in the State of Himachal Pradesh which has also been notified on 28.10.2005. The Rules under this Act are being finalized. |

**States/UTs where Bills Passed
But not Enacted**

| 1 | 2 | 3 |
|----|-------------|---|
| 1. | Maharashtra | Maharashtra Ground Water (Regulation for Drinking Water Source) Act, 1993 was enacted on 16.8.1993 for the limited purposes of regulating the exploitation of ground water for the protection of public drinking water sources in the State and the situation of ground water in the State is good. Maharashtra Ground Water Regulation Act has also been drafted and being laid on the Table of the House. |
| 2. | Gujarat | Gujarat Ground Water Authority (CGWA) has been formed vide Government of Gujarat, notification No. GWR/1095/61/1-1/-1 dated 19.09.2001 for control and regulation of ground water resources. Model Bill to regulate and control the development of ground water is under preparation. |

**States/UTs which have Initiated Action
for Preparing Legislations**

| | | |
|----|-------|---|
| 1. | Assam | "The Assam Ground Water Bill" has been prepared the Government of Assam to regulate and control the development of ground water, which has been referred to Law Department for vetting. Necessary action is being taken for finalisation. |
| 2. | Bihar | Ground Water (Control and |

| 1 | 2 | 3 |
|----|-------------------|---|
| | | Regulation) Bill, 2003 has been prepared and referred to Law Department for clearance. |
| 3. | Haryana | Draft Bill is under preparation by the State Government. The representative of the State Government in the meeting held on 28.01.2005 with AS (WR) informed that the new Government will be able to bring out the Bill after they take over the charge. |
| 4. | Jammu and Kashmir | The ground water bill is under consideration of the State Government. However, CGWB was requested to suggest the State Government whether such a legislation is required or not in view of low development of ground water in the State. |
| 5. | Karnataka | The Karnataka Ground Water (Regulation and Control) Bill, 2002 has been finalized and efforts are being made to get it passed from the State Legislature. |
| 6. | Mizoram | Preparation of draft Bill for regulation ground water with reference to Model Bill for the State is under process in PHED. |
| 7. | Orissa | Draft Bill namely, "Orissa Ground Water (Regulation and Control of Development and Management) Bill, 2006" has been referred Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India for Administrative approval. |

| 1 | 2 | 3 |
|-----|---------------|--|
| 8. | Rajasthan | The State Government of Rajasthan has presented "The Rajasthan Regulation Control of the Development and Management of Ground Water Bill, 2006" in the Rajasthan Vidhan Sabha on 07.04.2006 which is presently under consideration of the House. |
| 9. | Uttar Pradesh | Draft Bill on Ground Water Regulation on the lines of Model Bill circulated by this Ministry has been prepared and sent to the State Water Board for its approval. After the approval of the State Water Board, further action to enact the legislation will be taken. |
| 10. | Daman and Diu | The UT Administration has informed that they have already started necessary procedure to regulate the over exploitation of ground water by enacting the Model Bill. As soon as the Model Bill is finalized, would be intimated to MOWR. |
| 11. | NCT Delhi | The State Government proposes to amend the Delhi Water Board Act to accommodate concerns expressed in the Model Bill, draft of which has since been prepared and at consultation stage. |
| 12. | Jharkhand | Enactment of legislation for regulating the extraction and use of ground water on the lines of the Model Bill Circulated by this Ministry, is under active |

| 1 | 2 | 3 |
|----------------------------|---|--|
| | | consideration of the State Government. Model Draft Bill for the legislation has already been formulated and is likely to be finalized shortly. |
| 13. Meghalaya | | The State Government has informed that action for enactment of the legislation for regulating the extraction and use of ground water will be submitted as soon as the reports are received from the concerned Departments. |
| 14. Dadra and Nagar Haveli | | Administration of Dadra and Nagar Haveli vide letter dated 16.11.2004 has intimated that a draft Bill has been prepared and submitted for consideration and appraisal of concerned authorities which is expected to be approved in near future. |
| 15. Madhya Pradesh | | "Madhya Pradesh Peyjal Parirakshan Adhiniyam, 1986" for protection of drinking water sources exists. However, Model Bill on the lines of MOWR has been drafted and circulated to different Departments of the State for comments and the matter will be further considered after obtaining their comments. |
| 16. Uttaranchal | | The Uttaranchal Bill to Regulate and Control the Development and Management of Ground Water has been prepared on the lines of Model Bill circulated by MOWR with the help of Regional Office of CGWB. Necessary action |

| 1 | 2 | 3 |
|-------------------------|---|--|
| | | for approval by the State Cabinet is being taken before the same is introduced in the Assembly. The State Government informed that, Uttaranchal being a small State, in place of establishing a Ground Water Board, a Ground Water Cell would be established for regulation of the Bill. |
| 17. Andaman and Nicobar | | The Andaman and Nicobar Administration is examining and initiating the action for enactment of Legislation. |
| 18. Chhattisgarh | | The State Government have drafted the Ground Water Bill which will be placed on the floor of the House after the same is vetted by the Law Department. Further, the State Government informed that at present only 20% of the available ground water is being utilized in the State and position is considered within control. However, action in respect of legislation is in progress. |

**States/UTs which feel it not Necessary
to Enact Legislation**

| | | |
|-------------|--|---|
| 1. Nagaland | | In view of very low development of ground water, State Government feels that the ground water regulation and management law may be deferred at present. |
| 2. Sikkim | | In view of very low development of ground water, State Government feels it not necessary to enact any law at present. |

| 1 | 2 | 3 |
|----|------------|---|
| 3. | Tripura | In view of very low development of ground water, State Government feels it not necessary to enact any law at present. |
| 4. | Punjab | The Punjab Ground Water (Control and Regulation) Act, 1996 was prepared on the basis of Model Bill and was submitted to the Punjab State Water Resource Committee (SWRC). However, the Committee observed that the draft is too harsh on users. SWRC, in its meeting on 11.01.2005, decided after considering the report of the expert group to first control the demand, to make some corrective measures for optimum use of ground water and its augmentation. They also opined that Punjab being a irrigation State and dependence upon ground water, adoption of Model Bill is not in the larger interest of the farmers and suggested that a system of incentives is better. |
| 5. | Chandigarh | In UT of Chandigarh, Bye-law requiring permission of Chandigarh Administration for withdrawal of ground water in Capital Project Areas exists. Opined, no action is required. |
| 6. | Manipur | There is no over-exploitation of ground water resources in the State. As such, at present there is no need for such legislation in the State. |

| 1 | 2 | 3 |
|----|-------------------|--|
| 7. | Arunachal Pradesh | In view of very low development of ground water, the State has not enacted any legislation for regulation of ground water. |

Micro Propagation of Sugarcane

1794. SHRI M. SHIVANNA :

SHRI G.M. SIDDESWARA :

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government of Karnataka had submitted a proposal for consideration of the Union Government for establishment of Large Scale Micro Propagation of Sugarcane at the Karnataka Sugar Institute;

(b) if so, the details of the proposal and the estimated cost of the project;

(c) whether the Union Government has considered the request of the Government of Karnataka; and

(d) if so, the time by which the Government is likely to accord its approval for this proposal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH) : (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. The Karnataka Sugar Institute submitted a proposal for 'Establishment of Large Scale Micro Propagation of Sugarcane' for sanction of grant-in-aid from Sugar Development Fund (SDF) in August, 2006, with estimated cost of Rs.501.80 lakhs. The proposal was placed before the Standing Research Advisory Committee in its meeting held on 28.11.2006 and the Committee, after detailed consideration, observed that the activities proposed in the scheme do not fall within the purview of research activities, as such, the project can not be recommended for sanction of grant-in-aid from SDF.

Assamese News Bulletin

1795. SHRI ANWAR HUSSAIN : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal to start an Assamese News Bulletin from Doordarshan Kendra (DDK), Guwahati;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there is any proposal to increase the frequency of Assamese News in DDK, Guwahati;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefore?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI) : (a) to (d) Prasar Bharati have informed that DDK, Guwahati is already telecasting two Assamese News Bulletins at 9.00 a.m. and 7.00 p.m. However, it has been proposed to start additional four Assamese News Bulletins for the North East of 10 minutes duration each at 7.00 a.m., 11.00 a.m., 5.30 p.m. and 9.00 p.m. They have further informed that they are considering to advance the existing Assamese News Bulletin of 10 minutes duration from 9.00 a.m. to 8.45 a.m.

(e) Does not arise.

Poultry Production

1796. SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Poultry production has increased in the country during 2004-05;

(b) if so, the details of the production recorded as compared to previous year;

(c) the number of poultry processing plants set

up in various parts of the country during the said period;

(d) the assistance provided for promotion of poultry production to various States during the said period and the current financial year; and

(e) the estimated number of persons engaged in Poultry Sector in the country?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Following are the details of poultry production in 2003-04 and 2004-05:

| Item of Production | 2003-04 | 2004-05 |
|--|---------|---------|
| Eggs (billion) | 40.4 | 45.2 |
| Chicken Meat (Million Metric Tonne). These FAO figures are for calendar years 2003 and 2004. | 1.60 | 1.65 |

(c) There is no information of any new poultry processing plant having being established in the country in 2004-05.

(d) The Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries provide following financial assistance to various States and Union Territories during the relevant period:

Amount in Rs. crore

| 2004-05 | 2005-06 | 2006-07 (Till Nov. 2006) |
|---------|---------|-----------------------------|
| 14.37 | 23.18 | 12.86 |

(e) The number of persons engaged in poultry related activities, directly or indirectly, are estimated at around three million.

Ban on Import of Bulk Drugs

1797. SHRI L. RAJAGOPAL : Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILISERS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Pakistan has banned import of bulk drugs from India; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILISERS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE) : (a) and (b) Based on the information made available by the High Commission of India, Islamabad in July, 2006 import of pharmaceuticals into Pakistan is presently permitted on the basis of a Positive List of Imports from India and is restricted to only a few items.

In the aftermath of the earthquake on 8th October, 2005 the Pakistan Government had for a limited period allowed import of relief items including certain medicines through Wagah land (road) border.

Both India and Pakistan signed and ratified the South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA) Agreement. The Notification issued by Government of Pakistan on 01 July, 2006, to give effect to SAFTA however, limits SAFTA tariff concessions subject to import policy notified by Ministry of Commerce within the parameters of the Positive List for imports from India. No change in this position has been made in the Trade Policy for 2006-2007 announced by Government of Pakistan on 17.7.2006.

Conservation of Mangroves

1798. SHRI G.M. SIDDESWARA : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Karnataka Government has submitted a proposal to the Union Government for conservation and development of Mangroves;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the estimated cost of the project;

(c) whether the Union Government has approved the proposal of the Karnataka Government; and

(d) if not, the time by which the final decision in this regard is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA) : (a) and (b) The State Government of Karnataka has submitted proposals, seeking assistance for an amount shown against each site, for four mangrove sites namely Mangalore (Rs. 170/- lakhs), Karwar (Rs. 19/- lakhs), Honnavar (Rs. 20.54/- lakhs), and Coondapur (Rs. 80.80/- lakhs).

(c) and (d) The Central Government has approved the proposals in respect of Mangalore, Karwar and Honnavar. All proposals are examined as per prescribed guidelines for the scheme, and keeping in view the budgetary allocation. It is not possible to indicate the time frame, within which the decision on remaining proposals will be taken.

[Translation]

Ban on Khesari Dal

1799. SHRI HANSRAJ G. AHIR : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has constituted a Committee to review the ban on Khesari Dal;

(b) if so, whether the said Committee has submitted any report/provisional report to the Government;

(c) if so, the details thereof and recommendations made therein; and

(d) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to lift ban from Khesari Dal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF

AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) to (d) Government has constituted an Expert Committee under the Chairmanship of Agriculture Commissioner, Government of India, to study the issues connected with the ban on Khesari Dal. The report of the Committee is yet to be received. Consequently, lifting of ban on Khesari Dal is not under consideration of the Government at this stage.

Target for Production of Fertilizers

1800. PROF. MAHADEORAO SHIWANKAR :
SHRIMATI PRIYA DUTT :

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILISERS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the target fixed for production of fertilizers has been achieved by all the fertilizer units in the country during the first six months of the current year;

(b) if not, the reasons therefor;

(c) the details of the subsidy provided to the fertilizers producing units during 2005-06 and the percentage increased in the subsidy amount during 2006-07 as compared to the previous year?

(d) whether the Government is considering an alternative calculation method for providing more subsidy on fertilizers in the country; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILISERS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE) : (a) and (b) For the first six months of the current year the target for production of fertilizers by all fertilizers units was fixed at 57.24 LMT of Nitrogen and 23.45 LMT of Phosphate. As against this, the production achieved was 55.39 LMT of Nitrogen and 21.36 LMT of Phosphate. The shortfall in production is primarily attributable to heavy rains and floods in Gujarat leading to a disruption in gas supply as also the limited availability

of phosphoric acid and temporary suspension of production in Gujarat State Fertilizers and Chemicals Co. Ltd. (GSFC) - Baroda.

(c) The total subsidy disbursed during 2005-06 was Rs. 18299 crores which included Rs. 11749 crores subsidy on Urea and Rs. 6550 crores subsidy on decontrolled phosphatic and potassic fertilizers. The budget allocation for the payment of concession/subsidy during 2006-07 was Rs. 17252.91 crores. In addition to it, an amount of Rs. 1500 crores has also been provided in the first supplementary grant making the total availability of funds of Rs. 18752.91 crores. As per the revised estimate, the total requirement of funds for fertilizer subsidy during 2006-07 is Rs. 32952.94 crores which includes the carry over liability of Rs. 5913.94 crores of the previous years.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

[English]

Environmental Clearance to Infrastructure Projects

1801. SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) the mining and infrastructure projects that have been cleared under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986;

(b) whether such projects have complied with all the conditions and implemented all the safeguards imposed by the Government; and

(c) if not, the steps proposed/taken in this regard.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA) : (a) Ministry of Environment and Forests has granted environmental clearance to 551 mining projects

and 257 infrastructure projects, which relate to the areas of thermal and hydropower, highways, airports, industrial estates/parks, SEZ and IT Parks, during the period January, 2004 to October, 2006.

(b) and (c) Regular monitoring of the projects is carried out by the respective Regional Office of Ministry of Environment and Forests and a follow-up action in the form of continuous persuasion with the project authorities is undertaken for ensuring an effecting compliance of the stipulated conditions. In cases of significant non-compliances, to begin with show cause notices are issued.

Purchase of Flats by SAIL

1802. SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATEL : Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state :

(a) whether Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) has purchased flats in Asiad Village in New Delhi;

(b) if so, whether SAIL has in the recent past renovated these flats;

(c) if so, the details of expenditure actually incurred as compared to estimated expenditure assessed by the contractor before completion of job;

(d) whether there has been a misuse of Government money while executing renovation work by SAIL;

(e) if so, whether the Government has conducted any investigation to find out the officials responsible for such misuse of funds;

(f) if so, the details thereof and the outcome of such investigations; and

(g) the action taken against the persons found responsible therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (DR. AKHILESH DAS) : (a) Yes, Sir. The Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) had purchased 7 (seven)

flats in Asiad Village, New Delhi in 1984 and 2 (two) flats in 1986 at a total cost of Rs. 1,27,79,300/-.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. These flats were constructed 26 years back. After 20 years, the condition of these flats became dilapidated due to seepage, leakages, caving in floors etc. Because of financial ill-health of the company, the required major repairs/renovation could not be taken up earlier. In the recent past i.e. 2004-06 four flats namely Flat No. A341, B248, B249 and C15 have been renovated. The Company incurred expenditure in making the flats habitable for its senior functionaries. After assessing the condition of the flats, the work of renovation was awarded to L1 tenderer after following due procedures.

No estimate was assessed by the contractor. Based on the preliminary inspection, a Block Estimate of around Rs. 12 lakhs for each flat was prepared departmentally for getting the administrative approval. During execution of the renovation work, several deviations and extra items cropped up on account of the conditions of flats revealed during process of renovation. The expenditure involved in renovation of these 4 flats was Rs. 72.52 lakhs.

(d) There has been no evidence of misuse of Company's money.

(e) Since there is no evidence revealed of misuse of Company's funds, no inquiry was required.

(f) Not applicable.

(g) Not applicable.

Stock of Foodgrains

1803. SHRI G. KARUNAKARA REDDY : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) the current stock of foodgrains in the country as on October '31, 2006;

(b) the quantum of foodgrains spoiled/rotten during the last three years alongwith the value thereof; and

(c) the reasons for not distributing the foodgrains stored in the godowns in various parts of the country among the poor people at subsidised rates?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH) : (a) The stock of foodgrains (wheat and rice) as on 31.10.2006 in the Central Pool is as under:

| (in lakh tonnes) | |
|-----------------------|------------------|
| Stock in Central Pool | As on 31.10.2006 |
| Rice | 125.11 |
| Wheat | 59.94 |
| Total | 185.05 |

(b) Accrual of damaged foodgrains with the FCI during the last three years is as under:

| (in lakh MTs) | | | |
|---------------|-------------|-------------|----------------------|
| Year | Wheat | Rice | Value (Rs/crores) |
| 2003-04 | 0.22 | 0.54 | 45.5 |
| 2004-05 | 0.12 | 0.85 | 54.6 |
| 2005-06 | 0.15 | 0.80 | 57.2 |
| Total | 0.49 | 2.19 | 157.3 |

(c) The distribution of foodgrains under the Public Distribution System (PDS) is the Joint responsibility of the Central and the State Governments. While the Central Government is responsible for procurement, storage, transportation and bulk allocation of foodgrains, the responsibility for effectively distributing the same to the consumers through the network of Fair Price Shops (FPSs) lies with the State Government. The Central Government has directed all the State Governments/Union Territories to

ensure that the foodgrains (including wheat) allocated under the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) are distributed amongst the actual beneficiaries of the TPDS.

The Food Corporation of India (FCI) has been carrying out various operations of foodgrains under the Central Pool on a massive scale and in diverse geographic and climatic conditions. For such enormous operations as the FCI, and in adverse conditions, getting a normal quantity of stocks damaged during the normal course of operation cannot be ruled out altogether. Besides some other factors, generally stocks get damaged when stocks are retained for a long period inadvertently or when the observance of the principle of First-In-First-Out (FIFO) cannot be ensured in unavoidable circumstances.

Fee for use of Captive Mines

1804. SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA :
SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL :
SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO :

Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government proposes to levy certain fee for use of iron ore from captive mines in the country;

(b) if so, the details of the plan prepared therefor; and

(c) the benefits likely to accrue to the Government therefrom?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (DR. AKHILESH DAS) : (a) to (c) Information is being collected and will be laid on the table of Lok Sabha.

Conservation of Moger Lake

1805. SHRI M. SHIVANNA : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government of Karnataka has submitted a proposal for the conservation and development of Mogeke Lake in Bangalore; and

(b) if so, the time which this proposal is likely to be cleared?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA) : (a) Yes Sir.

(b) Under the National Lake Conservation Plan, proposals for new lakes are considered on the basis of their prioritisation, pollution status and availability of funds under the Plan. The prioritisation list conveyed to the Ministry by Lake Development Authority, a body set up by the Government of Karnataka, does not include Mogeke Lake

**News Correspondent/Reporter at DDK,
Guwahati**

1806. SHRI ANWAR HUSSAIN : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is no permanent News Correspondent/Reporter posted at Doordarshan Kendra (DDK), Guwahati;

(b) if so, whether the Government proposes to appoint permanent news correspondence at DDK, Guwahati; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the time by which it is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI) : (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. There is no permanent News Correspondent/Reporter posted at Doordarshan Kendra, Guwahati. However, the regular permanent News staff posted at DDK Guwahati, comprising of one Director (News), one News Editor and

two Assistant News Editors are doing reporting work from time to time. In addition, the Kendra has engaged three casual news reporters who are all operating from Guwahati. At present, there is no proposal to appoint a permanent News correspondent/Reporter at Doordarshan Kendra, Guwahati.

**Funds to NGOs for Eradication of
Child Labour**

1807. SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY : Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state :

(a) the number of children benefited under National Child Labour Projects during 2005-06 and 2006-07, State-wise so far;

(b) whether the Government provides funds to voluntary organisations for eradication of child labour in the country;

(c) if so, the organisations to whom grants-in-aid allocated during the said period, State-wise; and

(d) the name of projects under implementation to check child labours in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES) : (a) Government is implementing the National Child Labour Project (NCLP) Scheme in 250 districts of 20 States in the country for the rehabilitation of children withdrawn from work. The number of children covered under this scheme is given in the enclosed Statement-I.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. In addition to the NCLP Scheme, Government is implementing the scheme of Grants-in-aid to voluntary organisations for the benefit of children withdrawn from work in the districts which are not covered by NCLP Scheme.

List of the NGOs to whom grants-in-aid were allocated

during 2005-06 and 2006-07 is given in the enclosed Statement-II.

(d) Government is implementing two Schemes for the rehabilitation of children withdrawn from work namely, National Child Labour Projects and Grants-in-aid to Voluntary Organisations. Apart from these two schemes, Government is implementing three other projects in collaboration with ILO i.e. INDUS, an Indo-US project being implemented in 21 districts of five States and Andhra Pradesh State Based Project being implemented in 3 districts in Andhra Pradesh. The third project is being implemented in Karnataka for the welfare of working children in two districts of the State.

Statement-I

Present Sanctioned coverage of child labour under NCLP Scheme

| Name of State | No. of Children |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| 1 | 2 |
| Andhra Pradesh | 56900 |
| Assam | 4750 |
| Bihar | 49400 |
| Chhattisgarh | 15050 |
| Gujarat | 450 |
| Haryana | |
| Jammu and Kashmir | |
| Jharkhand | 9600 |
| Karnataka | 18600 |
| Maharashtra | 11450 |
| Madhya Pradesh | 29000 |

| 1 | 2 |
|---------------|--------|
| Orissa | 38400 |
| Punjab | 5350 |
| Rajasthan | 50950 |
| Tamil Nadu | 24800 |
| Uttaranchal | |
| Uttar Pradesh | 72200 |
| West Bengal | 33200 |
| Total | 420100 |

Statement-II

List of NGOs who have been Granted Financial Assistance during 2005-06

Assam

- Sadau Asom Gramya Puthibhaval Santha, Nagaon
- Bahumukhi Krishi Aru Samaj Kalyan Samity Nagaon
- Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust, Guwahati
- Dr. Ambedkar Mission, Dist. Kamrup

Bihar

- Sidharth Gyan Kendra, Samastipur
- Shakuntala Prabha Bai Avam Mahila Seva Kendra, Vaishali

Jharkhand

- Deep Jyoti, Deoghar
- Gyan Niketan, Sahibganj,

Chhattisgarh

Naveen Ankur Mahila Mandal, Raipur

Jammu and Kashmir

Social Welfare of India

National Development Institute, Jammu

Madhya Pradesh

Gram Vikas Sangh, Jabalpur

Mahila Seva Mandal, Satna

Ravindra Bhardwaj Kalyan Evam Shodh Sansthan

Gayanpath Shiksha Evam Samaj Kalyan Samiti,
Bhopal

Maharashtra

Madhya Pradesh Education Society, Gondia

Bal Vikas Academy, Aurangabad

Gramin Vikas S and P Sansthan, Nagpur

Samajik Bahuudeshiya Sanstha Nagpur

Sonali Shikshan Sanstha Nagpur

Anusaya Mata Mahila K and G Bhandara

Ujjawal Gondwana Mahila Mandal Nagpur

Lok Kalyan Shikshan Sansthan, Gondia

Veer Arjun Yuvak Mandal, Nagpur

Bahujan Hitaya Bahujan Sukhaya Prasarak Mandal

Ganpat Rao Nimbalkar Smruti Mukti Ashram

Manipur

Urban Welfare Association

APARD

CARE Manipur

Rural Voluntary Org. Pastoi Part-II Imphal(W)

United Rural Development Services, Thoubal

Manipur State Council for Child Welfare, Imphal

Centre of Rural Upliftment Service, Warangal

Awangiri Nupi Marup, Imphal

Ashufiime Development Society

United Rural Development Services, Wang.

Nagaland

Dzevi Society Kohima

Sanenuoko Child Welfare Society, Kohima

Association of Tribal Welfare Development, Dimapur

Old Home Multipurpose Co-op. Society

Alongmen Multipurpose Co-Op. Society Ltd.

New Delhi

Multi Vision Foundation Narela

Chetna Janhit Society, Dilshad Garden

Pragati Foundation, East Azad Nagar

SPANDAN Vasant Kunj

All India Konark Educ and Welfare Society

Orissa

Association for Health Education and Deve.

Sakuntala Gramodyog and Social Action, Nayagarh

Manab Seva Sadan, Dhenkanal, Orissa

Centre for Children and Women Development,
(CCWD)

Council for Awareness and Rural Development
(CARD)

Gopinath Jew Youth Club

Narayani Mahila Mandal Khurda

Orissa Multipurpose Dev. Centre, Chandrasekharpur

Vishwa Jeevan Seva Sangh, Khurda

Org. for Rural Develop. and Energy Research, Bhub

Org. for Rural Develop. and Energy Research, Bhub

Gania Unmoolan Committee, Nayagarh

Saradhanjili Bhubneshwar

Jan Kalyan Seva Sansthan, Kendrapara

Bharat Jyoti, Keonjhar

Gandhian Instt. Of Technical Advancement

Harijan Adovasi Mangal Samithi, Nayagarh

Subhadra Women's Welfare Develop. Orgn., Khurda

Org. for Rural Reconstruction and Social Service

Institute for Communication and Dev. Action

Rajasthan

Social Welfare Charitable Trust, Bharatpur

Karma Bal Vidhya Nikatan Samiti Kota

Divya Jyoti Vidya Mandir School Samiti, Kota

Navodaya Bal Vidyalaya Samiti, Kota

Deep Vidya Mandir Samiti, Dosa

Kota Shikshan Sansthan, Kota

Darshan Shiksha Samiti, Kota

Jan Jati Mahila Vikas Sansthan

Lok Shakti Sansthan, Jaipur

Shivam Shikshan Samiti, Karoli

Mahila Yuva Vikash Foundation, Karoli

Academy of Education Society, Baran

Radha Swamy Mahila Mandal Society, Jaipur

Dayanand Saraswati Shiksha Samiti, Baran

Harsh Vikas Sansthan, Jaipur

Uttar Pradesh

Sant Kabir Das Sewa Sansthan, Sidharth Nagar

Manav Samajothan Seva Sansthan

Jan Hitkari Sansthan Khushinagar

Samaj Kalyan Shikshan Sansthan Basti

MM Malviya Viklang Sewa Sansthan

Gram Vikas Sansthan Gazipur

National Women and Child care Society, Mau

Harijan Avam Nirbal Shikshan Vikas Samiti

Life Line Welfare Society, Sant Kabir Nagar

Tribal Welfare Society, Shrawasti

Navodaya Gramodyog Samiti JP Nagar

Jan Priya Seva Sanstha

Harijan Vikas Avam Samajik Utthan Samiti, Allahabad

Sant Ravidas Shiksha Samiti, Kushinagar

Bhartiya Samajothan Sewa Sansthan, Deoria

Shanti Mahila Evam Bal Vikas Parishad, Balia

Jagruti Foundation, Sant Kabir Nagar

West Bengal

Ikhupatrika Social Welfare Organisation, Midnapore,

Keorakhali Jan Sewashram, South 24 Parganas

Mukti Rural Dev. and Child in need Society, St.24 Parganas

Ranjapur Mitali Sangha, Hoogli

Gopalpur Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Kishore Seva Sangha

Bidhichandrapur Bharat Sangha, Howrah

Comprehensive Area Development Society, Nadia

Scotlane Poverty Eradication Centre

COSMOS, Kolkata

Badkulla Luna Silk Khadi Society, Nadia

Dum Dum Park Unnayani Sanabhay, Kolkata,

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Assam

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Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust, Guwahati

Dr. Ambedkar Mission, Dist. Kamrup - 05-06

Bihar

Sidharth Gyan Kendra, Samastipur

Jharkhand

Deep Jyoti, Deoghar

Gyan Niketan, Sahibganj,

Chhattisgarh

Naveen Ankur Mahila Mandal, Raipur

Madhya Pradesh

Gram Vikas Sangh, Jabalpur

Mahila Seva Mandal, Satna

Gayanpath Shiksha Evam Samaj Kalyan Samiti, Bhopal

Maharashtra

Bal Vikas Academy, Aurangabad

Gramin Vikas S and P Sansthan, Nagpur

Samajik Bahuudeshiya Sanstha Nagpur

Sonali Shikshan Sanstha Nagpur

Anusaya Mata Mahila K and G Bhandara

Ujjawal Gondwana Mahila Mandal Nagpur

Suyojini Seva Bhavi Sanstha, Parbhani (M.S.)

Veer Arjun Yuvak Mandal, Nagpur 2005-06

Bahujan Hitaya Bahujan Sukhaya Prasarak Mandal

Ganpat Rao Nimbalkar Smruti Mukti Ashram

Manipur

Urban Welfare Association

APARD

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Sanenuoko Child Welfare Society, Kohima

Association of Tribal Welfare Development, Dimapur

Old Home Multipurpose Co-op. Society

Nagaland Tea Planters Association, Kohima, Nagaland.

Alongmen Multipurpose Co-op. Society Ltd. 2005-06

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Vishwa Jeevan Seva Sangh, Khurda

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Gania Unmoolan Committee, Nayagarh

Saradhanjili Bhubneshwar

Jan Kalyan Seva Sansthan, Kendrapara

Bharat Jyoti, Keonjhar

Gandhian Instt. Of Technical Advancement

Harijan Adovasi Mangal Samithi, Nayagarh

Subhadra Women's Welfare Develop. Orgn., Khurda

Org. for Rural Reconstruction and Social Service

Institute for Communication and Dev. Action 05-06

Rajasthan

Social Welfare Charitable Trust, Bharatpur

Karma Bal Vidhya Nikatan Samiti Kota

Divya Jyoti Vidya Mandir School Samiti, Kota

Navodaya Bal Vidyalaya Samiti, Kota

Deep Vidya Mandir Samiti, Dosa

Kota Shikshan Sansthan, Kota

Darshan Shiksha Samiti, Kota

Jan Jati Mahila Vikas Sansthan

Lok Shakti Sansthan, Jaipur

Shivam Shikshan Samiti, Karoli

Mahila Yuva Vikash Foundation, Karoli

Academy of Education Society, Baran 2005-06

Radha Swamy Mahila Mandal Society, Jaipur 2005-06

Dayanand Saraswati Shiksha Samiti, Baran 2005-06

Harsh Vikas Sansthan, Jaipur

Uttar Pradesh

Sant Kabir Das Sewa Sansthan, Sidharth Nagar
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 Jan Hitkari Sansthan Khushinagar
 Samaj Kalyan Shikshan Sansthan Basti
 MM Malviya Viklang Sewa Sansthan
 Gram Vikas Sansthan Gazipur
 National Women and Child care Society, Mau
 Harijan Avam Nirbal Shikshan Vikas Samiti
 Life Line Welfare Society, Sant Kabir Nagar
 Tribal Welfare Society, Shrawasti
 Navoidya Gramodyog Samiti JP Nagar
 Jan Priya Seva Sansthan
 Harijan Vikas Avam Samajik Utthan Samiti, Allahabad
 Sant Ravidas Shiksha Samiti, Kushinagar
 Sardar Hameedi Taleemi wa Samaj Mission, J.P. Nagar (U.P.)
 Shanti Mahila Evam Bal Vikas Parishad, Balia
 Jagriti Foundation, Sant Kabir Nagar

West Bengal

Ranjapur Mitali Sangha, Hoogly
 Gopalpur Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Kishore Seva Sangha
 Bidhichandrapur Bharat Sangha, Howrah
 Comprehensive Area Development Society, Nadia
 Scotlane Poverty Eradication Centre

COSMOS, Kolkata

Badkulla Luna Silk Khadi Society, Nadia

Dam Dam Park Unnayani Sanabhay, Kolkata,

*[Translation]***Investment of EPF Money**

1808. PROF. MAHADEORAO SHIWANKAR :
 SHRI SHISHUPAL PATLE :

Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has revised their plan to invest the money collected from the Employees Provident Fund and Pension Fund as reported in the *Rashtriya Sahara*, dated November 18, 2006;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the areas wherein such funds are being invested;

(d) whether the Employees Provident Funds for all employees are reserved for the years to come; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) All monies belonging to the Funds are invested in Central Government Securities, State Development Loans/State Government Securities, Government Guaranteed Securities and Public Sector Undertaking Bonds etc. in accordance with the pattern of investment prescribed by the Government from time-to-time.

(d) and (e) Yes, Sir. The funds are invested in safe and

secure investments like Government Securities/Government Guaranteed Securities/Public Sector Undertakings Bonds etc.

[English]

Vocational Rehabilitation Centres

1809. SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAIISI : Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether there are only 17 Vocational Rehabilitation Centres (VRCs) in operation to cater to the needs of more than 18.53 million handicapped people in the country;

(b) if so, whether the proposal of setting up of 7 more VRCs in the country during the Tenth Plan period has been implemented in toto;

(c) if so, the details thereof, State-wise;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor;

(e) the details of VRCs where hostel facilities are available, State-wise; and

(f) the steps taken or being taken by the Government to ensure more facilities to handicapped persons?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES) : (a) At present there are 20 Vocational Rehabilitation Centres functioning in 19 States of the country.

(b) to (d) Out of proposed 7 new VRCs, 3 VRCs have been set up at Srinagar, Pondicherry and Una (H.P.) Remaining VRCs are in the process of being set up.

(e) Hostel facilities are available in VRCs at Delhi. Some hostel facilities have been arranged in Mumbai, Ahmedabad, Chennai, Thiruvantapuram, Kanpur, Ludhiana, Jaipur with the help of other State Governments, Training Institutes and NGOs.

(f) Building for Vocational Rehabilitation Centre at Delhi has been constructed. Three more buildings at Kanpur, Bhubaneswar and Kolkata conforming to the requirements of Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995 are under construction.

Broadcasting Regulation Bill, 2006

1810. SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY :
SHRI K.S. RAO :

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government proposes to make changes in Broadcasting Regulation Bill, 2006 as reported in the Times of India dated November 13, 2006;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government has since consulted various stakeholders in this regard; and

(d) if so, the details and the action taken by the Government on each of the suggestions received from various stakeholders?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI) : (a) to (d) Government has received comments from various stakeholders, industry and media groups and others on the proposed draft of Broadcasting Services Regulation Bill, 2006. The comments are being studied to consider appropriate changes in the draft wherever required.

Meeting of Delhi Dhaka Water Commission

1811. SHRIMATI MINATI SEN :
PROF. MAHADEORAO SHIWANKAR :
SHRI BALESHWAR YADAV :
SHRI JAI PRAKASH (MOHANLAL GANJ) :

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state :

- (a) whether any Ministerial level meeting of Delhi-Dhaka Water Commission was held recently;
- (b) if so, the details of decisions taken therein;
- (c) the other steps taken to solve the bilateral water problems including erosion of soil due to silting of rivers flowing in both the countries; and
- (d) the amount spent on the desilting of the rivers flowing near the border between India and Bangladesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV) : (a) and (b) In pursuance to the decisions taken in 36th meeting of Indo Bangladesh Joint Rivers Commission (JRC) held at Dhaka in September, 2005, Ministers of Water Resources of India and Bangladesh jointly visited a number of sites of bank protection, minor lift irrigation and drinking water supply schemes on common/border rivers during September 13-21, 2006; including a part of Ichhamati river where it forms international boundary between West Bengal (India) and Bangladesh. Final discussions were held on 20th September, 2006 at Dhaka but no consensus could be reached on mutually agreed solutions for want of certain technical details.

(c) A permanent JRC is functioning under the Chairmanship of Ministers of Water Resources of India and Bangladesh where-in pending bilateral issues pertaining to water resources sector are discussed. Meetings of JRC are regularly held in both the countries alternatively.

(d) No amount has been spent on desilting of rivers flowing near the border between India and Bangladesh for lack of agreement with Bangladesh.

[Translation]

Expansion of PDS Coverage

1812. SHRI MODH. TAHIR :

SHRI SHISHUPAL PATLE :
SHRI KAILASH NATH SINGH YADAV :
SHRI TUKARAM GANGADHAR GADAKH :

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

- (a) whether a large number of poor families including those Below Poverty Line (BPL) have been left out of the purview of the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS);
- (b) if so, the reasons therefor; and
- (c) the steps taken by the Government to supply subsidised foodgrains to all the poor families under TPDS?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH) : (a) to (c) The allocation of foodgrains under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) is made on the basis of number of household estimated on the basis of poverty estimates of the Planning Commission for 1993-94 projected on the population projection of Registrar General as on 01.03.2000 or the number of ration cards issued by the State Government whichever is less. As against the 6.52 crore Below Poverty Line/Antyodaya Anna Yojana (BPL/AAY) house holds, as per the poverty estimates of Planning Commission for the year 1993-94, being followed for allocation of foodgrains under TPDS, about 9.73 crore (7.46 crore BPL and 2.25 crore AAY) families have been identified and issued distinctive ration cards by the State Governments in the country.

The TPDS is operated under the joint responsibility of the Central and the State Governments wherein the Central Government is responsible for procurement of foodgrains (Rice and Wheat), storage and their transportation upto the Principal Distribution Centres of FCI and the State Governments are responsible for identification of beneficiaries, issue them ration cards and distribute

foodgrains through a vast net work of 4.89 lakh Fair Price Shops scattered all over the country.

Identification of beneficiaries and issue of ration cards to them comes under the purview of State Governments, keeping in view the overall poverty estimates of the Planning Commission. As per TPDS (Control) Order, 2001, review of the BPL/AAY households is to be carried out by State Governments every year, so as to include BPL/AAY families under the scheme and exclude the ineligible families.

[English]

Grant of Loans from SDF

1813. SHRI C.H. VIJAYASHANKAR :
SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE :

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) the number of proposals received by the Government seeking financial assistance from Sugar Development Fund (SDF) for expansion and modernisation of sugar mills as on date, State-wise;

(b) the name of sugar mills which have been provided financial assistance from said fund during the last three years till date, State-wise;

(c) whether these sugar mills have fully utilised these funds;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor;

(e) the number of proposals seeking financial assistance from SDF still pending with the Government alongwith the reasons therefor;

(f) whether the Government has finalised any policy for speedy clearance of such proposals; and

(g) if so, the details thereof and the time by which it is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH) : (a) A Statement-I showing Statewise number of proposals received during the previous 3 years seeking financial assistance from SDF is attached.

(b) A statement-II indicating names of the sugar-mills (State-wise) who have been provided financial assistance from SDF during the last three years is enclosed.

(c) Out of 25 numbers of disbursements made during the previous three years as well as the current year (as shown in Statement-II), funds in 16 cases have been fully utilized.

(d) After sanction, the sugar mills have to enter into an agreement with the Government and also provide a security for repayment of the SDF loans. The loans are normally disbursed in two instalments, wherein the second instalment is released only on submission of utilization certificate for satisfactory utilization of the 1st instalment. Therefore, there is normally a time lag between the date of sanction and disbursement of first/second instalment and utilization of the same by the mills.

(e) to (g) The Government has 17 pending proposals for modernization/expansion projects as on 1.11.2006. Proposals can be considered only when complete documents are submitted by the sugar mills. Receipt of application and sanction of loan is a continuous process wherein loan applications are first scrutinized by the Sub Committee and thereafter by the Standing Committee on SDF. Recommendations of the Standing Committee are placed before the Government and on its acceptance, sanction of SDF loan is issue. There is always a time gap, between receipt of loan application/proposal and sanction of the same. However, in order to speed up the disposal of cases, the Department is holding at least one meeting of the Sub-Committee/Standing Committee, on an average, every month.

Statement-I

State-wise number of proposals seeking financial assistance from SDF for modernization of sugar mills

| Name of the State | Number of Applications | | | |
|-------------------|------------------------|---------|---------|---------------------------|
| | 2003-2004 | 2004-05 | 2005-06 | 2006-07 (upto 31.10.2006) |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Madhya Pradesh | 1 | — | — | 1 |

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|----------------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|
| Uttar Pradesh | 1 | 2 | 5 | 6 |
| Uttanchal | 1 | — | 1 | — |
| Andhra Pradesh | — | 1 | 1 | — |
| Maharashtra | — | 1 | — | 2 |
| Karnataka | — | 1 | 3 | 1 |
| Tamil Nadu | — | — | 3 | 1 |
| Bihar | — | — | — | 2 |
| Total | 3 | 5 | 13 | 13 |

Statement-II

Names of the sugar mills (State-wise) who have been provided financial assistance from SDF during the years 2003-04, 2004-05, 2005-06 and 2006-07 (upto 31.10.2006)

Year 2003-04

| S.No. | Name of the sugar mills | Amount disbursed (Rs. in lakhs) |
|----------------------|--|---------------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Uttar Pradesh | | |
| 1. | M/s Mawana Sugar Works, Mawana, Distt. Meerut | 381.74 |
| 2. | M/s Simbhaoli Sugar Mills Ltd., Distt. Ghaziabad | 486.06 |
| 3. | M/s J.K. Sugar Ltd., Sindhaul Road, Meeranaj, Distt. Bareilly. | 169.54 |
| Maharashtra | | |
| 1. | M/s Jawahar Shetkari SSK Ltd., Hupari, Distt. Kolhapur | 795.00 |
| 2. | M/s Rajarambapu Patil SSK Ltd., Rajaramnagar | 1730.91 |

| 1 | 2 | 3 |
|----------------------|--|---------|
| Karnataka | | |
| 1. | M/s Davangere Sugar Co. Ltd., Davangere, Distt. | 608.84 |
| 2. | M/s The India Sugar and Refineries Ltd., Chitwadgi, Hospet, Distt. Bellary | 264.00 |
| Year 2004-05 | | |
| 1. | M/s Mansurpur Sugar Mills Ltd., Mansurpur, Distt. Muzaffarnagar | 2134.33 |
| 2. | M/s Triveni Engg. and Inds. Ltd., Sugar Unit Deoband, Distt. Saharanpur | 1127.40 |
| Maharashtra | | |
| 1. | M/s Jawahar Shetkari SSK Ltd., Hupari, Distt. Kolhapur | 794.00 |
| 2. | M/s Shri Siddeshwar SSK Ltd., Kumathe, Distt. Solapur | 632.23 |
| Uttaranchal | | |
| 1. | M/s Uttam Sugar Mills, Village Libberheri, Tehsil Roorkee, Distt. Haridwar | 1664.56 |
| Karnataka | | |
| 1. | M/s The India Sugar and Refineries Ltd., Chitwadgi, Hospet, Distt. Bellary | 264.00 |
| 2. | M/s SCM Sugars Ltd., Village Koppa, Madur Taluk, Distt. Mandya | 3164.40 |
| 3. | M/s Davangere Sugar Co. Ltd., Kukkuwada Village, Distt. Davangere | 608.84 |
| Year 2005-06 | | |
| Uttar Pradesh | | |
| 1. | M/s Triveni Engg. and Inds. Ltd., Sugar Unit Deoband, Distt. Saharanpur | 751.60 |
| 2. | M/s J.K. Sugar Ltd., Sindhauli Road, Meeranji, Distt. Bareilly. | 169.54 |
| 3. | M/s Triveni Engg. and Inds. Ltd., Sugar Unit Khatauli, Distt. Muzaffarnagar | 1569.00 |

| 1 | 2 | 3 |
|---------------------------------------|---|---------|
| Maharashtra | | |
| 1. | M/s Shree Pandurang SSK Ltd., Shreepur, Malshiras Tehsil, Distt. Solapur | 210.30 |
| Andhra Pradesh | | |
| 1. | M/s G.S.R. Sugars Pvt. Ltd., Maggi village, Nizam Sagar Mandal, Distt-Nizamabad. | 995.80 |
| Year 2006-07 (upto 31.10.2006) | | |
| Uttar Pradesh | | |
| 1. | M/s Tikaula Sugar Mills Ltd., Tehsil - Jansath, Distt-Muzaffarnagar | 605.40 |
| 2. | M/s Chitwaria Sugar Mills, Distt-Bahraich, U.P. (a unit of Ms The Simbhaoli Sugar Mills Ltd.) | 836.00 |
| Andhra Pradesh | | |
| 1. | M/s G.S.R. Sugar Pvt. Ltd., Maggi village, Nizam Sagar Mandal, Distt-Nizamabad. | 995.80 |
| Tamil Nadu | | |
| 1. | M/s EID Parry (India) Ltd. at Kurumbur Village, Aranthangi Taluk Puddukottai | 320.00 |
| 2. | M/s Kothari Sugars and Chemicals Ltd., Kattur, Lalgudi-Taluk, Trichy District | 1283.10 |

Schemes Under PDS

1814. SHRI G.V. HARSHA KUMAR : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether various schemes meant for providing foodgrains to the poor have become non-functional due to lack of supply under the Public Distribution System (PDS);

(b) if so, the details thereof indicating the foodgrains supplied and shortfall under various schemes, scheme-wise;

(c) whether the Government is monitoring the supply and demand ratio from time to time to ensure proper implementation of schemes;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the Government proposes to change

the foodgrains policy to improve the availability of foodgrains; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Question Does not arise.

(c) and (d) The Central Government makes allocation of foodgrains @ 35 kg. per family per month under TPDS on the basis of number of ration cards issued by the States/UTs or the number of house-holds on the basis of poverty estimates of the Planning Commission for 1993-94 and the population projection of Registrar General of India as on 1.3.2000 whichever is less. The States/UTs undertake review of the lists for the purpose of deletion of ineligible families and inclusion of eligible families and report to the Central Government for revision of allocation accordingly.

(e) and (f) As per the existing policy Government agencies carry out Minimum Support Price (MSP) operations in areas producing foodgrains. The foodgrains procured through these MSP operations are utilized for distribution under the Targetted Public Distribution System (TPDS) and Welfare Schemes. In order to procure sufficient quantity of foodgrains to meet the requirement of TPDS and other welfare schemes an incentive bonus of Rs.50 per quintal for wheat in Rabi Marketing Season 2006-07 and Rs.40 per quintal for rice in Kharif Marketing Season 2006-07 (upto 31.3.2007) over the announced MSP has been given.

An alternative strategy for procuring sufficient quantity of wheat in Rabi Marketing Season 2007-08 has also been formulated in the Department.

[Translation]

Forest Fire

1815. SHRIMATI SANGEETA KUMARI SINGH DEO :

SHRI KRISHNA MURARI MOGHE :
SHRI GIRIDHARI YADAV :

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether many States have suffered losses on account of forest fire;

(b) if so, the details thereof during the last three years and the current year, State-wise; and

(c) the efforts made by the Government to stop recurrence of such incidents?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Every year during fire season, forests in many States suffer losses on account of forest fires. Majority of the forest fires are ground fires. The losses are mainly in the nature of loss of biodiversity, soil nutrients and moisture, release of Carbon dioxide (CO₂) gas in atmosphere etc. Details of incidences of forest fire during last three years and current year, State-wise, are given in the enclosed statement.

(c) Efforts made by the Government to minimize incidence of forest fires are as under:—

(i) Central assistance is provided to States and Union Territories every year under Integrated Forest Protection Scheme to take effective steps for prevention and control of forest fires. The activities undertaken by States / Union Territories include creation and maintenance of firelines, firewatchers, communication, construction of watch towers, mobility etc.

(ii) During fire season, Forest Survey of India, an organization under the Ministry, Provides information on active forest fire locations for the entire country using remote sensing data on daily basis.

- (iii) Respective State Forest Departments also take measures to prevent and control forest fires including eliciting support of local communities to prevent and control forest fires.

Statement

| S. No. | States | Fire Season (Calendar Year) | Number of fire incidents | Burnt Area (in ha) |
|--------|----------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 1. | Andhra Pradesh | 2003 | 154 | 2429 |
| | | 2004 | 274 | 2879 |
| | | 2005 | Not Available | Not Available |
| | | 2006 | Not Available | Not Available |
| 2. | Bihar | 2003 | 1 | 18 |
| | | 2004 | 17 | 162 |
| | | 2005 | 32 | 212 |
| | | 2006 | 65 | 471 |
| 3. | Chhattisgarh | 2003 | 205 | 2232 |
| | | 2004 | 235 | 2459 |
| | | 2005 | 118 | 1733 |
| | | 2006 | 220 | |
| 4. | Gujarat | 2003 | 695 | 9148 |
| | | 2004 | 885 | 7836 |
| | | 2005 | 582 | 5304 |
| | | 2006 | 620 | 5319 |

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|----|-------------------|------|---------------|---------------|
| 5. | Goa | 2003 | 1 | 30 |
| | | 2004 | 1 | 50 |
| | | 2005 | 9 | 32 |
| | | 2006 | 3 | 70 |
| 6. | Haryana | 2003 | 25 | 455 |
| | | 2004 | 46 | 282 |
| | | 2005 | 67 | 386 |
| | | 2006 | Not Available | Not Available |
| 7. | Himachal Pradesh | 2003 | 729 | 10993 |
| | | 2004 | 459 | 7958 |
| | | 2005 | 474 | 8503 |
| | | 2006 | 132 | 1426 |
| 8. | Jammu and Kashmir | 2003 | 23 | 332 |
| | | 2004 | Not Available | Not Available |
| | | 2005 | Not Available | Not Available |
| | | 2006 | Not Available | Not Available |
| 9. | Jharkhand | 2003 | Not Available | Not Available |
| | | 2004 | 148 | 561 |
| | | 2005 | 125 | 495 |
| | | 2006 | 31 | 382 |

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|--------------------|------|---------------|---------------|---|
| 10. Karnataka | 2003 | 40 | 375 | |
| | 2004 | 180 | Not Available | |
| | 2005 | 501 | 3007 | |
| | 2006 | Not Available | Not Available | |
| 11. Kerala | 2003 | 258 | 3825 | |
| | 2004 | 1119 | 14301 | |
| | 2005 | 174 | 877 | |
| | 2006 | 334 | 1121 | |
| 12. Madhya Pradesh | 2003 | 451 | 7633 | |
| | 2004 | 547 | 9137 | |
| | 2005 | 785 | 10361 | |
| | 2006 | 752 | 9434 | |
| 13. Maharashtra | 2003 | 1969 | 41652 | |
| | 2004 | 1178 | 20079 | |
| | 2005 | 1907 | 33888 | |
| | 2006 | 2769 | 39554 | |
| 14. Orissa | 2003 | 157 | 352 | |
| | 2004 | Not Available | Not Available | |
| | 2005 | 205 | Not Available | |
| | 2006 | 356 | Not Available | |
| 15. Punjab | 2003 | 455 | 11622 | |
| | 2004 | 254 | 1837 | |

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|-----------------------------|------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| | | 2005 | 183 | 1688 |
| | | 2006 | Not Available | Not Available |
| 16. Rajasthan | 2003 | 7 | 167 | |
| | 2004 | 1 | 40 | |
| | 2005 | NA | NA | |
| | 2006 | NA | NA | |
| 17. Tamil Nadu | 2003 | 263 | 1274 | |
| | 2004 | 383 | 1796 | |
| | 2005 | 259 | 1311 | |
| | 2006 | 450 | 2275 | |
| 18. Uttar Pradesh | 2003 | 84 | 745 | |
| | 2004 | 48 | 413 | |
| | 2005 | 138 | 999 | |
| | 2006 | 77 | 597 | |
| 19. Uttranchal | 2003 | 1025 | 4983 | |
| | 2004 | 1138 | 4850 | |
| | 2005 | 940 | 3652 | |
| | 2006 | 222 | 562 | |
| 20. West Bengal | 2003 | 82 | 222 | |
| | 2004 | 202 | 1010 | |
| | 2005 | 70 | 501 | |
| | 2006 | — | — | |
| North Eastern States | | | | |
| 1. Assam | 2003 | Not Available | Not Available | |

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|----------------------|---|------|---------------|---------------|-------------|---|------|---------------|---------------|
| | | 2004 | Not Available | Not Available | 5. Mizoram | | 2003 | 13 | 885 |
| | | 2005 | Not Available | Not Available | | | 2004 | 31 | 2154 |
| | | 2006 | Not Available | Not Available | | | 2005 | 117 | 8459 |
| | | | | | | | 2006 | Not Available | Not Available |
| 2. Arunachal Pradesh | | 2003 | 1 | 200 | 6. Nagaland | | 2003 | | 2 |
| | | 2004 | Not Available | Not Available | | | 2004 | Not Available | Not Available |
| | | 2005 | Not Available | Not Available | | | 2005 | Not Available | Not Available |
| | | 2006 | Not Available | Not Available | | | 2006 | 15 | 7200 |
| 3. Manipur | | 2003 | Not Available | Not Available | 7. Sikkim | | 2003 | 18 | 37 |
| | | 2004 | Not Available | Not Available | | | 2004 | 25 | 185 |
| | | 2005 | Not Available | Not Available | | | 2005 | Not Available | Not Available |
| | | 2006 | Not Available | Not Available | | | 2006 | Not Available | Not Available |
| 4. Meghalaya | | 2003 | Not Available | Not Available | 8. Tripura | | 2003 | 8 | 60 |
| | | 2004 | Not Available | Not Available | | | 2004 | 490 | 4900 |
| | | 2005 | Not Available | Not Available | | | 2005 | 450 | 4500 |
| | | 2006 | Not Available | Not Available | | | 2006 | Not Available | Not Available |

(English)

Market for Agro-Products

1816. SHRI BRAHMANANDA PANDA : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has assessed the need for improving marketing infrastructure for agro-products in the country;

(b) if so, the action taken/proposed to be taken in this regard;

(c) whether the Government has initiated action to provide exclusive markets for various products like onions, fruits, vegetables, flowers etc.; and

(d) if so, the details thereof State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Ministry of Agriculture is implementing a Central Sector scheme for "Development/Strengthening of Agricultural Marketing Infrastructure, Grading and Standardization" in the country with effect from 20.10.2004. The aim of the Scheme is to encourage rapid development of marketing infrastructure in agriculture and allied sectors, to cater to the post harvest requirements of production and marketable surplus of various farm products.

Under this Scheme, credit linked back ended subsidy is provided on the capital cost of general or commodity specific infrastructure for marketing of agricultural commodities including for grading, standardization and certification of agricultural produce and for strengthening and modernization of existing agricultural markets. The rate of subsidy is 25% of the capital cost of the project. In case of North Eastern States, hilly and tribal areas and to entrepreneurs belonging to Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribes, the rate of subsidy is, however, 33.33%. The scheme is reform linked, to be implemented in those States that amend the Agricultural Produce Marketing (Regulation) Act (APMC Act), wherever required, to allow direct marketing and contract farming and to permit setting up of markets in private and cooperative sectors. Individuals, group of farmers, growers and consumers etc. are eligible to receive assistance under the scheme.

(c) and (d) Subsidy under this scheme is available for setting up of commodity specific markets for various products like onions, fruits, vegetables, flowers etc. anywhere in the country.

Transgenic Research

1817. SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government is considering transgenic research as an important area for future Indian agriculture development;

(b) if so, the crops in which research is being conducted;

(c) the amount earmarked for the proposed research;

(d) the time by which the transgenic seeds are likely to be developed;

(e) whether Indian Council for Agricultural Research is in a position to compete with Multi-National Companies and developed nations research programme;

(f) if so, whether the Government has any proposal to undertake joint research with private sector; and

(g) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Research is being conducted on cotton, brinjal, cabbage, castor, cauliflower, corn, groundnut, okra, potato, rice tomato, sorghum, chickpea, pigeonpea, soybean, brassica, banana, papaya and cassava.

(c) Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) and State Agricultural Universities are conducting research on their mandate crops including transgenics. The

Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Government of India is the nodal department of biotechnology including transgenic research. Beside above, the other organizations viz. Central Universities and other public sector organizations are also conducting transgenic research. No separate budget has been earmarked in above mentioned organizations for transgenic research.

It is further stated that following ICAR Institutes are working on agricultural biotechnology including transgenic research:-

- (i) National Research Centre on Plant Biotechnology, New Delhi
- (ii) National Research Centre on DNA Fingerprinting, New Delhi

The details of budget of above mentioned two centers along with new initiatives in Indian Council of Agricultural Research are given below:-

| | (in crores) |
|---|-------------|
| (i) National Research Centre on Plant Biotechnology, New Delhi | Rs. 16.435 |
| (ii) National Research Centre on DNA Fingerprinting, New Delhi | Rs. 8.577 |
| (iii) Network Project on Transgenic, New Delhi (2 years) | Rs. 32.85 |
| (iv) Network Project on Molecular Breeding, New Delhi (3 years) | Rs. 2.41 |
| (v) Network Project on Gene Pyramiding for Resistance to Multiple Biotic Stress in Crops, New Delhi (3 years) | Rs. 1.85 |

(d) Development of transgenic research on 19 crops are in experimental stage. These will be released after biosafety testing etc. by Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC), Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India.

(e) Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) is developing capabilities to compete with Multi National companies and developed nations programme.

(f) Indian Council of Agricultural Research encourages Public-Private Partnership to undertake joint research with private sector.

(g) National Research Centre on Plant Biotechnology, New Delhi has entered into Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with M/s Bejo Sheetal for field testing and commercialization of Bt brinjal. In addition, ICAR is contemplating a proposal in collaboration with Agricultural Biotechnology Support Program (ABSP) of Cornell University, USA, to develop Bt-brinjal, drought tolerant rice, late blight resistant potato etc.

Contamination of Imported Wheat

1818. SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR :
SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY :
SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO :

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether large scale contamination of imported wheat due to the use of substandard packing has been reported recently;

(b) if so, whether the jute bags used for packing of imported wheat did not conform to Bureau of Indian Standard norms;

(c) if so, whether the issue has been taken up with the Ministry of Textiles;

(d) if so, the reaction of Ministry of Textiles thereto; and

(e) the steps being taken for the protection and proper packaging of imported wheat?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE

MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Some jute bags not confirming to BIS specification were found by the FCI.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Accordingly the Ministry of Textiles have constituted a Joint Inspection Team consisting of Food Corporation of India (FCI), Indian Jute Mills Association (IJMA), Directorate General of Supply and Disposal (DGS&D), Directorate of Quality Assurance and Office of Jute Commissioner, Kolkata to conduct an inspection regarding conformity of jute bags to BIS standards. Jute Commissioner has also initiated action against the alleged defaulting units.

(e) To ensure quality, FCI has been purchasing jute bags through DGS&D. The jute bags are checked for quality by DGS&D before they accepted by FCI for packing foodgrains.

Data Exclusivity

1819. ADV. SURESH KURUP : Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILISERS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government is considering to grant of Data Exclusivity for the test data submitted for the marketing approval of Drugs and Pharmaceuticals;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government is aware of the public health implications of Data Exclusivity;

(d) if so, the details of the major three implications of Data Exclusivity on public health and access to medicines; and

(e) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to protect public health in the event of the introduction of Data Exclusivity?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILISERS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE) : (a) to (d) An Inter-Ministerial Committee under the Chairmanship of Secretary, Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals is looking into the steps to be taken by the Government in the context of the provisions of Article 39.3 of the TRIPS Agreement for the protection of undisclosed information in respect of agrochemicals and pharmaceuticals. The Committee has heard the views of most of the stakeholders.

(e) The Committee while giving its report would ensure that enough safe guards are provided in the event Government decides to give Data Protection.

[Translation]

MSP for Sugarcane

1820. SHRI HARIKEWAL PRASAD :

SHRI GIRIDHARI YADAV :

SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA :

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) the criteria adopted in determining Minimum Support Price (MSP) of sugarcane;

(b) whether any irregularities have been observed in compliance of this criteria; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH) : (a) The Central Government does not procure sugarcane, as such, the question of fixing Minimum Support Price (MSP) of sugarcane does not arise. However, Statutory Minimum Price (SMP) of sugarcane, payable by the sugar factories

to the sugarcane farmers, is fixed by the Government on the basis of the recommendations of the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP) and after consultations with the State Governments and such other organizations/authorities, like the Associations of sugar factories and farmers, as are considered appropriate, having regard to:

- (i) the cost of production of sugarcane;
 - (ii) the return to the grower from alternative crops and the general trend of prices of agricultural commodities;
 - (iii) the availability of sugar to the consumer at a fair price;
 - (iv) the price at which sugar produced from sugarcane is sold by producers of sugar; and
 - (v) recovery of sugar from sugarcane.
- (b) No, Sir.
- (c) Does not arise.

Import of Oilseeds

1821. SHRI AVTAR SINGH BHADANA :
SHRI J.M. AARON RASHID :
DR. RAJESH MISHRA :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

- (a) whether the oilseeds industry is the verge of closure due to the policy of import of oilseeds Nepal and Sri Lanka;
- (b) if so, the quantum of oilseeds imported during the last three years and the reasons for shortfall in oilseeds production in the country; and
- (c) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF

AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) No Sir. It is evident from the table below that import of oilseed from Nepal and Sri Lanka during the last three years has been negligible:

(quantity in Metric Tonnes)

| Oilseeds | Import | | |
|----------|---------|---------|---------|
| | 2003-04 | 2004-05 | 2005-06 |
| Linseed | 918.96 | 550.85 | 973.1 |

(b) The quantity of oilseeds imported during the year 2003-04, 2004-05, 2005-06 was 4.7 thousand tonnes, 4.7 thousand tonnes and 9.9 thousand tones respectively. The production of major oilseeds increased from 25.18 million tones in 2003-04 to 27.43 million tones in 2005-06

(c) Government has introduced a number of initiatives and interventions for the enhancement of production and productivity of oilseeds under the Integrated scheme of Oilseeds, Pulses, Oilpalm and Maize (ISOPOM). In order to provide remunerative prices to the farmers, Government of India announces Minimum Support Prices (MSPs) for oilseeds every year, with appropriate enhancement to encourage the oilseed growers.

Failure of Consumer Law

1822. SHRI SUNIL KUMAR MAHATO :
SHRI M. ANJAN KUMAR YADAV :

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

- (a) whether the consumer laws in the country have proved to be ineffective;
- (b) if so, the reasons therefor and the reaction of the Government thereto;

(c) the percentage of population still unaware of the consumer laws;

(d) the steps taken by the Government for making people aware of the consumer rights and laws; and

(e) the success achieved therein?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) to (e) A sustained multi-media campaign and other consumer protection programmes undertaken by the Government have been generating mass consumer awareness in the country. The number of calls and queries received by the National Consumer helpline and the web-based Consumer Online Resource and Empowerment Centre, supported by the Department of Consumer Affairs, are an indicator of the level of growing consumer awareness in the country. However, given the country's complex socio-economic conditions, the vastness of the size of the country and the burgeoning population belonging to different strata of the society as also the fact that every citizen is a consumer in one way or the other, it would not be possible to quantify the percentage of population still unaware of consumer laws.

[English]

Price Rise due to Future Trading

1823. SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the permission to undertake forward/future trading in wheat, pulses and other foodgrains has led to the spiralling of prices in the retail market;

(b) if so, whether the Parliamentary Committee on Food, Consumer Affairs and Public Distribution has recommended a ban on forward/future trading in wheat

and other essential items of mass consumption so as to contain the price in open market;

(c) if so, the action taken on the above recommendation of the Committee; and

(d) the details of prevailing rate of wheat, pulses and other foodgrains during the year 2005-06 and 2006-07?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR) : (a) No, Sir. The rise in prices of wheat, pulses and other foodgrains has been mainly because of shortfall in domestic supplies relative to demand and hardening of international prices.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. Futures trading enables the various stakeholders such as producers, processors, exporters etc. to shift the risk involved in their activities arising out of adverse price fluctuations through hedging to those who are willing to assume it in the hope of making some profit. Futures trading also render services to the farmers/cultivators. Hedging facilities would enable those farmers who grow commodities in very large quantities to hold on to their crops or stocks, spread out the sales of such stocks over a period of time and thereby realize a better average price for their produce. A futures market provides to the farmer, at the time of sowing, an advance indication to the expected levels of prices of different commodities during the marketing period, thereby enabling him to undertake proper crop planning. Although smaller farmers generally do not participate directly in the futures trading, they may benefit from futures trading due to efficient and transparent price discovery. In view of this, the Government has submitted to the Standing Committee on Food, Consumer Affairs and Public Distribution that futures trading in wheat and other essential items need not be banned.

(d) The details of the prevailing retail prices of important foodgrains in the four metropolitan cities during 2006-2007 and 2005-2006 is given below:

| Commodity/Centre | Unit : (Rs./Kg.) | |
|------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| | 2006-07 As on 28.11.2006 | 2005-06 As on 8.11.2005 |
| Rice | | |
| Chennai | 12.00 | 12.00 |
| Delhi | 14.50 | 13.50 |
| Kolkata | 12.00 | 10.00 |
| Mumbai | 13.00 | 11.50 |
| Wheat | | |
| Chennai | 17.00 | 11.00 |
| Delhi | 12.00 | 10.00 |
| Kolkata | NT | NT |
| Mumbai | 15.00 | 11.50 |
| Gram | | |
| Chennai | 41.00 | 30.00 |
| Delhi | 41.00 | 27.00 |
| Kolkata | 40.00 | 25.00 |
| Mumbai | 45.00 | 25.00 |
| Tur | | |
| Chennai | 35.00 | 36.00 |
| Delhi | 34.00 | 33.00 |
| Kolkata | 30.00 | 31.00 |
| Mumbai | 34.00 | 30.00 |

NT - Not traded

Source : State Food and Civil Supplies Departments.

**Supply of Wheat and Rice at
Subsidized Rates**

1824. SHRI G.V. HARSHA KUMAR :
SHRI KIREN RIJU :
PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA :

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether foodgrains including wheat and rice are being supplied to orphanages, blind schools and Non-Governmental Organisations run charitable institutions at subsidised rates in various States including Delhi;

(b) if so, whether the supply of subsidised foodgrains has been stopped to these organisations in Delhi and some other States forcing the inmates to purchase them from open market;

(c) if so, reasons therefor and reaction of the Government thereto; and

(d) the steps being taken to ensure supply of subsidised foodgrains to the said organisations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH) : (a) Department of Food and Public Distribution allocates foodgrains under Welfare Institutions at below poverty line (BPL) rates to State Governments/Union Territories including Delhi, who in turn allocates the same to different Non-Governmental Organisations like orphanages, blind schools and charitable Institutions etc.

(b) to (d) The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Food Consumer Affairs and Public Distribution reviewed the allocation made under various food based welfare schemes, and suggested that the same be revised on basis of last 3 years offtake figures, as the offtake under these schemes was very low. Accordingly the allocation under this scheme (5% of BPL allocation) was revised.

Reconciliation of offtake figures for Delhi took some time and on reconciliation an allocation of 27.36 MTs of wheat and 17.45 MTs of rice per month was made vide letter dated 21.9.2006 and 16.10.2006 respectively.

Schemes for Agriculture Sector

1825. SHRI A. SAI PRATHAP : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is mandatory for the State Governments to submit utilization reports/certificates to avail benefits of the centrally sponsored schemes for agricultur sector;

(b) if so, the names of sectors which have not submitted their reports during the last 3 years, year-wise; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Threat of Food Insecurity

1826. SHRI BALASHOWRY VALLABHANENI :
SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV :

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the threat of food insecurity is looming over the country;

(b) if so, the reasons for such a situation; and

(c) the steps being taken to tackle the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE

MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH) : (a) No, Sir. There is not threat of food insecurity in the country. There is a stock of 186.49 lakh tonnes of foodgrains as on 01/11/2006 against the buffer norms of 162.00 lakh tonnes of foodgrains as on 01/10/2006.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Funds for Co-operative Societies

1827. SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) the details regarding financial assistance granted in favour of Co-operative Societies in Andhra Pradesh during the last three years; year-wise; and

(b) the details requires the terms and conditions laid therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) and (b) Financial assistance released by National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) to the cooperative societies in Andhra Pradesh under central sector/centrally sponsored schemes and corporation sponsored schemes during the last three years are as follows:

| Year | Rs. in lakhs Andhra Pradesh |
|---------|--------------------------------|
| 2003-04 | 699.74 |
| 2004-05 | 18472.84 |
| 2005-06 | 26075.29 |

The assistance by NCDC is released in the form of loan and subsidy, if applicable. The loan is released on terms and conditions inclusive of rate of interest on term loan, working capital and margin money, period of repayment of term loan, working capital and margin money.

Harnessing of Rain Water for Cultivation

1828. SHRI E.G. SUGAVANAM : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has initiated any steps to educate the farmers regarding harnessing of rain water for cultivation;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government is providing any financial assistance/subsidy/incentive to the farmers for the purpose; and

(d) if so, the details thereof;

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) to (d) The need and importance of harnessing rain water has been stressed in the National Water Policy and National Agricultural Policy. The Government of India is implementing large number of schemes of watershed development in the country. Harnessing of Rain water and soil moisture conservation are main objectives of these schemes. The main schemes of Government of India are:

L Ministry of Agriculture

- (1) National Watershed Development Project for Rainfed Areas (NWDPA)
- (2) Soil Conservation for Enhancing Productivity of Degraded lands in the Catchments of River Valley Projects and Flood Prone Rivers (RVP and FPR)
- (3) Watershed Development Project for Shifting Cultivation Areas (WDPSA)
- (4) Reclamation of Alkaline Soils (RAS)
- (5) Watershed Development Fund (WDF)

II. Ministry of Rural Development

- (1) Drought Prone Area Programme (DPAP)
- (2) Desert Development Programme (DPP)
- (3) Integrated Wastelands Development Programme (IWDP)

In all these schemes, a component of training to the farmers exists, under which the farmers are trained in watershed technologies including harnessing of rain water. Entire training expenses are borne under respective scheme.

Further provision of financial and technical assistance has been made for harnessing rain water under the Natural Resource Management/Development component of the schemes. The major watershed programmes provide for as much as 95% assistance for the community oriented activities and for SC/ST farmers and 90% assistance for individual oriented activities other than SC/ST.

Theft of Imported Wheat

1829. SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL :
SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO :

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether thousands of imported wheat bags transported from the Tuticorin Harbour to Food Corporation of India warehouses in Kerala and Karnataka have been reported missing;

(b) if so, whether the Government has conducted any inquiry in this regard;

(c) if so, the outcome thereof and the action taken by the Union Government against the officials held guilty therefor; and

(d) the steps taken by the Union Government to recover the missing bags?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) FCI has deputed special squads for investigations. Meanwhile, the unpaid bills, security deposit and Bank guarantees of the stevedoring contractor have been withheld.

(c) and (d) Investigation is under process, after completion of which, the Government would take appropriate action against those found guilty.

[Translation]

Package for Sugarcane Dues

1830. SHRI RAGHURAJ SINGH SHAKYA : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether a high level meeting was called in the year 2003 in Delhi for resolving the issue of relief package for the outstanding amount of the sugarcane farmers;

(b) if so, the outcome thereof;

(c) the progress made in regard to settlement of outstanding amount of the sugarcane farmers;

(d) whether the Government has constituted or proposes to constitute a committee to deal with the problems of sugarcane producers including payment of dues; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) With a view to mitigate the hardship of the sugarcane farmers in respect of the cane price arrears for the 2002-03 sugar season, it was decided that the Central Government would provide a one-time assistance to the State Governments, subject to fulfillment of certain laid down conditions, by permitting them to raise additional market borrowings to be used only for liquidating the cane price arrears of the 2002-03 sugar season and not for any other purpose.

(c) As on 15.09.2003, cane price payable for 2002-03 sugar season was Rs.13907 crores. This position has been reduced to Rs.2005 crores, as on 15.09.2006.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

[English]

Payment for Sugarcane

1831. SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether sugar mills are required to make payment of sugarcane within 14 days of supply of cane;

(b) if so, the action taken against the defaulting sugar mills to recover the cane price arrears alongwith the interest as per the provisions of Sugarcane (Control) Order, 1966; and

(c) the measures taken to protect and promote the interest of farmers and ensure remunerative price immediately on the delivery of their agriculture produce?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH) : (a) to (c) Under Clause 3(1) of the Sugarcane (Control) Order, 1966 the sugarcane growers are entitled to receive the Statutory Minimum Price (SMP) of sugarcane as fixed by

the Central Government. It is the minimum price below which no sugar factory can purchase sugarcane from the sugarcane growers. Besides the SMP, the sugarcane growers are also entitled to receive the additional cane price if the sugar factory has made profits as provided in Clause 5A of the Sugarcane (Control) Order, 1966.

Clause 3 (3) of the Sugarcane (Control) Order, 1966 provides that where a producer of sugar, purchases any sugarcane from a grower of sugarcane or from a sugarcane growers' cooperative society, the producer shall unless there is an agreement in writing to the contrary between the parties, pay within 14 days from the date of delivery of the sugarcane to the seller. Clause 3 (3-A) of the said Order provides that where a producer of sugar or his agent fails to make payment for the sugarcane purchased within 14 days of the date of delivery, he shall pay interest on the amount due at the rate of 15% per annum for the period of such delay beyond 14 days. Further, under the provisions of the Sugarcane (Control) Order, 1966, the cane price arrears are recoverable as arrears of land revenue and the State Governments have been authorized in this regard.

The above provisions of the Sugarcane (Control) Order, 1966 ensure timely and remunerative price to the sugarcane farmers.

[Translation]

Production of Mustard

1832. SHRI KAILASH NATH SINGH YADAV : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there has been large scale production of mustard in the country during the previous and current year;

(b) if so, the quantum and value of mustard available in the godowns;

(c) whether the Government is contemplating to make the use of mustard mandatory in the production of vegetable oil;

(d) if so, whether the Government proposes to reduce the price of mustard in open market to utilize the prevailing stocks; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) Yes, Sir. The production of Rapeseed and Mustard was 75.93m lakh tonnes in 2004-05. It was estimated at 78.87 lakh tonnes for 2005-06 (4th advance estimates).

(b) As per National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Limited (NAFED), the details of procurement of mustard seed under Price Support Scheme (PSS) during Rabi 2005 and Rabi 2006, quantity sold, balance available as on 27.11.2006 and its value are given in the table below:

(Lakh Tonnes)

| | Quantity Procured | Quantity Sold | Balance | Value (Rs. Crore) |
|-----------|----------------------|------------------|---------|----------------------|
| Rabi 2005 | 20.93 | 20.16 | 0.77 | 141.29 |
| Rabi 2006 | 22.05 | 6.21 | 15.84 | 3033.36 |

(c) The Government has issued a notification for compulsory use of 20% mustard oil in the manufacture of Vanaspati.

(d) and (e) The disposal of mustard seed procured by NAFED is under review on a regular basis by the Government. NAFED has been advised to arrange disposal of 4 to 5 lakh tonnes of mustard seed every month on market rate for minimizing the inventory. As on 28th November 2006 NAFED is holding mustard seeds of 0.77 lakh tonnes of Rabi 2005 and 15.84 lakh tonnes of Rabi 2006 stocks.

MSP of Mustard

1833. SHRI VIJOY KRISHNA : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the different Minimum Support Price (MSP) of Mustard has been announced for different regions;

(b) if so, whether the farmers of several States are forced to sell Mustard on a price lower than MSP; and

(c) if so, the steps taken by the Government to provide relief to farmers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) No, Sir. The Government of India fixes MSP which is uniform throughout the country. Government of India fixed MSP for Mustard seed at Rs.1700 per quintal in 2004-05 and at Rs.1715 per quintal in 2005-06 and 2006-07.

(b) and (c) To see that the farmers get remunerative prices for their produce and do not resort to distress sale, National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Limited (NAFED), as the designated Government agency has undertaken mustard seeds procurement operation at the MSP on a massive scale. NAFED procured 20.93 lakh MTs of Rabi 2005 mustard in 2005-06 and 22.05 lakh MTs of Rabi 2006 mustard in 2006-07. More procurement is going on.

[English]

Development of Park/Sanctuary

1834. SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has any proposal to develop Mudumalai Wild Life Sanctuary and National Park in Nilgiris;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the amount earmarked for the same;

(c) whether there is also a proposal to develop Annamalai, Mudumalai and Parambikulam as Tiger Reserve;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the time by which it would be developed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA) : (a) and (b) Conservation and development of Wildlife Sanctuaries and National Parks are primarily the responsibility of the concerned State Government. Government of India provides necessary technical and financial assistance to the State under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme - "Development of National Parks and Sanctuaries", based on the Annual Plan of Operation received from the State Governments. During the financial year 2006-07, Government of India has sanctioned Rs.13.05 lakhs and Rs.13.72 lakhs for the development and conservation of Mudumalai Wildlife Sanctuary and National Park, respectively.

(c) to (e) "In principle approval" has been accorded for declaring Anamalai-Parambikulam Wildlife Sanctuaries and Mudumalai Wildlife Sanctuary as new Tiger Reserve spread over two States, Kerala and Tamil Nadu, based on proposals received from States and as recommended by the Steering committee of the project Tiger in its 37th meeting held on 23rd January, 2006.

Protection of Peacock

1835. SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the National Bird 'Peacock' is vanishing due to commercial/religious use of its feathers;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken/being taken to check their killing and to increase their population?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA) : (a) to (c) No such report of peacocks vanishing due to commercial/religious use of its feathers has been received by this Ministry. Peacocks are found both in the Protected Areas as well as outside Protected Areas near human habitations. In order to protect peacocks, they have been included in the Schedule-I of the wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 thereby giving them highest degree of protection. Certain Wildlife Sanctuaries like Adichunchunagarai Sanctuary in Karnataka and Naigaon Sanctuary in Maharashtra have been specially declared for conservation of peacocks.

[Translation]

Agriculture Scientists Workshop

1836. SHRI RAGHURAJ SINGH SHAKYA : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether any National workshop of agriculture scientists has been conducted to promote modern farming and profit making crops;

(b) if so, the details of work done and financial assistance provided by the Union and State Governments to promote the production of sunflower, soybean and mushroom etc. in the country particularly in Uttar Pradesh during the last three years and the current year, and

(c) the details of the scientists engaged in promoting modern farming in the country, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) Indian Council of Agricultural (ICAR), in pursuance of its mandate,

is engaged in generation of farm-worthy research and human resources development through a network of research institutions to achieve science-based growth and development of agriculture. National workshops of agricultural scientists are organized on crops/commodities/themes involving the concerned scientists for working out research strategies for promotion of modern farming for increased income for the farmers.

(b) in order to promote the production of sunflower, soybean and mushroom in the country, the Council has established Directorate of Oilseeds Research at Hyderabad to work on a number of oilseeds crops including sunflower, National Research Centre for Soybean at Indore, and National Research Centre for Mushroom, Solan.

All these institutes have national mandate and accordingly the research works are taken up. During the last three years (2003-04 to 2005-06), eight varieties of sunflower have been released at the national level including their production practices. During the same period, an amount of Rs.3.67 crore was provided to All India Coordinated Project on Sunflower under Plan fund implemented by the Directorate of Oilseeds Research, with a provision of Rs.1.12 crore during the current financial year.

As far as soybean is concerned, during the same period, six varieties have been released including their production practices. An amount of Rs.15.27 crore was provided to NRC on Soybean, with a provision of Rs.3.61 crore during the current financial year.

Insofar as mushroom is concerned, a number of improved strains of button, oyster and paddy straw mushroom have been developed, besides improved substrate preparation, casing material, and cultural practices. An amount of Rs.12.50 crore was provided during the last three years with a provision of Rs.2.26 crore during the current financial year.

(c) The main extension system is operated by State Development Departments for promoting modern farming in the country. The ICAR has sanctioned a network of 540 Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVK) aiming at technology assessment, refinement and demonstration of technology/product to facilitate the promotion of modern farming. Each KVK has been provided with a multi-disciplinary team of six Subject Matter Specialists headed by a Programme Coordinator. The State-wise details of number of KVKs are given in the statement enclosed.

Statement

*Distribution of KVKs In different States/
Union Territories*

| Sl. No. | States/UTs | Total |
|---------|-----------------------------|-------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1. | Andaman and Nicobar Islands | 1 |
| 2. | Andhra Pradesh | 22 |
| 3. | Arunachal Pradesh | 10 |
| 4. | Assam | 20 |
| 5. | Bihar | 36 |
| 6. | Chhattisgarh | 11 |
| 7. | Delhi | 1 |
| 8. | Goa | 2 |
| 9. | Gujarat | 23 |
| 10. | Haryana | 18 |
| 11. | Himachal Pradesh | 12 |
| 12. | Jammu and Kashmir | 13 |
| 13. | Jharkhand | 18 |

| 1 | 2 | 3 |
|-------|----------------|-----|
| 14. | Karnataka | 26 |
| 15. | Kerala | 14 |
| 16. | Lakshadweep | 1 |
| 17. | Madhya Pradesh | 44 |
| 18. | Maharashtra | 33 |
| 19. | Manipur | 8 |
| 20. | Meghalaya | 5 |
| 21. | Mizoram | 8 |
| 22. | Nagaland | 8 |
| 23. | Orissa | 29 |
| 24. | Pondicherry | 2 |
| 25. | Punjab | 17 |
| 26. | Rajasthan | 32 |
| 27. | Sikkim | 4 |
| 28. | Tamil Nadu | 28 |
| 29. | Tripura | 4 |
| 30. | Uttar Pradesh | 61 |
| 31. | Uttanchal | 12 |
| 32. | West Bengal | 17 |
| Total | | 540 |

[English]

Funds for Food Security Programme

1837. SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether any Indo-United Nation Development Programme (UNDP) agreement has been signed regarding funding of food security programme;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the States in which the said programme is being undertaken;

(c) the details of assistance so far provided to each of States; and

(d) the number of persons benefited by such programmes in various States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. India-United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Agreement on Food Security Programme was signed on 13th February, 1998 with focus on women farmers and household food security. The Food Security Programme was an umbrella programme under which there were six sub-programmes, which have all since been concluded. Details of assistance released under each of the sub-programmes and beneficiaries are provided at enclosed statement.

Statement

Details of Sub-Programmes

| Name of the Sub-Programme | State/Districts | Date of Completion | Total Funds released | Persons Benefited |
|---|---|--------------------|----------------------|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (1) Development of Hybrid Rice Technology for Large Scale Adoption in India | Implemented as a national network comprising of research seed production and technology transfer components. The national research network involves 12 research centres across the country. | 31.12.2002 | Rs.6.32 Crores | 11,630 Farmers |
| (2) Maize Based Cropping System for Food Security in India | Bihar, U.P and Rajasthan | 31.13.2005 | Rs.6.44 Crores | Farmers Group Associations formed in all the project areas |
| (3) Sustainable Dryland Agriculture by Mahilla Sanghams: A.P. | Andhra Pradesh | 31.12.2004 | Rs.9.23 Crores | 700 Farm Women Groups |
| (4) Empowerment of Women Farmers for Food Security: U.P. | U.P. | 31.12.2004 | Rs.11.84 Crores | 582 Farm Women Groups |

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|--|--------|------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| (5) (i) Strengthening Natural Resource Management and Sustainable Livelihoods for Women in tribal Orissa | Orissa | 31.12.2004 | Rs.11.01 Crores | 700 Farm Women Groups |
| (ii) Additional Support to Cyclone affected districts in Orissa | Orissa | 31.12.2004 | Rs.1.49 Crores | 224 Farm Women Groups |
| (6) Management Support to Food Security Programme | — | 31.12.2005 | Rs.0.22 Crores | |

12.00 hrs.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Now, Papers to be laid on the Table.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER : I will listen to you.

(Interruptions)

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA (South Delhi) : If anyone is wrong should he not be opposed... (Interruptions)
If any State Government is doing anything wrong, it is no one other than the State Government of West Bengal... (Interruptions)

[English]

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI) : I beg to lay on the Table a copy of the Cable Television Networks (Amendment) Rules, 2006 (Hindi and English versions) published in Notification No.G.S.R. 469 (E) in Gazette of India dated the

10th August, 2006 under sub-section (3) of Section 22 of the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 5122/2006]

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) I beg to lay on the Table—

- (1) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Limited, New Delhi, for the year 2005-2006, alongwith Audited Accounts.
- (2) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Limited, New Delhi, for the year 2005-2006.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 5123/2006]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE

MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA) : (a) On behalf of Shri Taslimuddin I beg to lay on the table:-

- (1) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the National Dairy Development Board, Anand, for the year 2005-2006, alongwith Audited Accounts.
- (ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the National Dairy Development Board, Anand, for the year 2005-2006.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 5124/2006]

- (2) A copy each of the following Notifications (Hindi and English versions) under section 50 of the National Dairy Development Board Act, 1987:—

- (i) The National Dairy Development Board Workmen (Appointment, Pay and Allowances) (Workmen) Regulations, 2006 published in Notification No.DEL:NDDB in Gazette of India dated the 4th May, 2006, together a Corrigendum thereto published in the Notification No.101 dated the 24th June, 2006.
- (ii) The National Dairy Development Board Officers (Appointment, Pay and Allowances) (Amendment) Regulations, 2006 published in Notification No.DEL:NDDB in Gazette of India dated the 4th May, 2006.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 5125/2006]

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA) : I beg to lay on the Table—

- (1) A copy of the Environment (Protection) Second

Amendment Rules, 2006 published in Notification No.G.S.R. 640 (E) in Gazette of India dated the 16th October, 2006 under section 26 of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 5126/2006]

- (2) A copy of the Breeding of and Experiments on Animals (Control and Supervision) Amendment Rules, 2006 (Hindi and English versions) published in Notification No.S.O. 1818(E) in Gazette of India dated the 25th October, 2006 under section 38 of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 5127/2006]

- (3) A copy each of the following papers (Hindi and English versions) under sub-section (1) of section 619 A of the Companies Act, 1956:—

- (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands Forest and Plantation Development Corporation Limited, Port Blair, for the year 2004-2005.
- (ii) Annual Report of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands Forest and Plantation Development Corporation Limited, Port Blair, for the year 2004-2005, alongwith Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

- (4) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (3) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 5128/2006]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH) : I beg to lay on the Table—

(1) A copy each of the following Notifications (Hindi and English versions) under sub-section (6) of section 3 of the Essential Commodities Act, 1955:—

(i) The Sugarcane (Control) Amendment Order, 2006 published in Notification No.S.O. 1940 (E) in Gazette of India dated the 10th November, 2006.

(ii) The Sugarcane Press-mud (Control) (Repeal) Order, 2006 published in Notification No.S.O. 1457 (E) in Gazette of India dated the 7th September, 2006.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 5129/2006]

(2) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Central Warehousing Corporation, New Delhi, for the year 2005-2006, alongwith Audited Accounts, under sub-section (11) of section 31 of the Warehousing Corporation Act, 1962.

(ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Central Warehousing Corporation, New Delhi, for the year 2005-2006.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 5130/2006]

12.01 hrs.

RESIGNATION BY MEMBER

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : I have to inform the House that I had received a letter dated 2nd December, 2006 from Shri Navjot Singh Sidhu, an elected Member from Amritsar

Parliamentary Constituency of Punjab resigning from the membership of Lok Sabha with immediate effect.

I accepted his resignation with effect from 4th December, 2006.

12.02 hrs.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

[English]

(i) Accident due to trapping of passengers of 3017 Up Howrah-Jamalpur Express under the debris of 'Uta Pul' being dismantled near Bhagsipur on 2.12.2006.

MR. SPEAKER : Now, Shri Lalu Prasad.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Nothing else is being recorded.

(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : It is an accident matter. I will hear you but at the proper time.

Shri Lalu Prasad.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : No cross-talks please.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : What is going on? A tragedy has taken place in this country. He is making a statement.

[Translation]

**THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD) : Sir, I am very sorry to inform the House that on 2.12.2006 at around 7.45 a.m. when 3071 up Howara-

*Not recorded.

** Placed in Library, See No. LT 5132/2006.

[Shri Lalu Prasad]

Jamalpur Express was about to reach Bhagalpur Railway station, suddenly debris of "Ultapul" which was being dismantled at that time, fell on the train and 5-8 coach of the train got crushed under the debris. As per the information received till now, 35 passengers have died in the accident. 12 passengers have been injured seriously and 4 passengers have received minor injuries. The injured passengers were immediately admitted to the Jawahar Lal Nehru Hospital of Bhagalpur.

The relief and rescue task force rushed to the spot as soon as the information regarding accident was received. General Manager, eastern Railway and DRM of Malda division along with officers concerned reached on the spot. Members of Railway Board (Engineering) also reached the accident site from Delhi. Rail Manager and his officials also rushed to the accident site.

Sir, I also visited the site of the accident and inspected the relief works, met the injured and the relatives of the deceased and gave instructions for making all the necessary arrangements for medical treatment free of cost. In view of the seriousness of the human tragedy, I have taken a decision that a sum of Rs.5 lakh, one lakh and Rs.25,000/- will be given as compensation to next of the kin of the deceased, to the seriously injured and to those who suffered minor injuries, respectively. In addition to the said compensation, a sum of upto Rs.4/- lakh fixed by the Railway Claims Tribunal will be separately given to the dependents of the deceased and injured persons. Besides, one member of the family of each deceased passenger will be given a job in the Railways. A job in the railways will be provided to either such seriously injured persons or to next of his kin who remain handicapped even after sufficient medical treatment.

The construction work of new ROB in place of this more than hundred-year-old bridge was already complete. That is why the demolition work of this old bridge had begun as per its scheduled time only a week back. Two days prior to this accident, after one span was demolished,

the incident of a span suddenly falling on the track had taken place. Fortunately no train was crossing the bridge at that time. Even then, the concerned contractors and officers did not take it seriously and as a result of this inaction this accident took place which caused a loss to the life and property of the train passengers. The officers, prima facie, responsible for this incident viz. the Deputy Chief Engineer and Junior Engineer (Construction), Assistant Engineer (Constructions) have been suspended and orders have been issued to blacklist the contractors of this work, M/s Bijoy Kumar Enterprises. An F.I.R. has been lodged in a criminal case in the local GRP police station against the above-mentioned Engineers and Contractors by the Station Manager, Bhagalpur in regard to this incident. The Commissioner of Railway Safety is conducting a legal inquiry into this accident. All the General Managers have been directed to take sufficient precautionary measures by ensuring the compliance of specified system and procedure to check the recurrence of such incidents. In addition to this, the State Chief Minister has also announced a compensation of Rs.1/- lakh to the family of the deceased. I express my gratitude to the State Government for the same.

(II) Statement Correcting Reply to Starred Question No.294 Dated 14.8.2006 (Hindi version) regarding Procurement of Poor Quality of Foodgrains

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH) : (a) Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has not conducted any search during last three years i.e. 2003, 2004 and 2005 against officers/officials of Food Corporation of India (FCI) on the allegation of procurement of poor quality of wheat and rice. However, during the current year, CBI conducted searches in 3 cases in which 3 First Information Reports were registered on 07.01.2006 against 83 officers/

officials including the then Senior Regional Manger. FCI, Punjab region, besides 330 private rice millers, on the allegation that during the Kharif Marketing Season (KMS 2004-05) the FCI staff in Punjab region in criminal conspiracy with private rice millers, had accepted sub-standard rice consignments and released payments as prescribed for Grade-A rice and thereby caused huge financial loss to FCI.

(b) Investigation in all the above three cases are in progress and is being expedited by the CBI but a definite time frame cannot be given at this stage for completion of the same.

The revised answer could not be laid on the Table of the House within a definite time frame because of the delay on the part of the Department in finding out the error.

12.08 hrs.

UTTARANCHAL (ALTERATION OF NAME)
BILL, *2006

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MANIKRAO HODLYA GAVIT) : Sir, I may be granted leave to introduce the Uttaranchal (Alteration of Name) Bill, 2006 on behalf of Shri Shivraj V. Patil.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to alter the name of the State of Uttaranchal."

The motion was adopted.

*Placed in Library See No.LT 5131/2006.

[Translation]

SHRI MANIKRAO HODLYA GAVIT : Sir, I introduce** the Bill.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Now, we take matters of urgent public importance. Shri Syed Shahnawaz Hussain will speak.

[Translation]

SHRI SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN (Bhagalpur) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon'ble Minister of Railways has made a statement with regard to the Howrah-Jamalpur Express train accident. It is an unfortunate incident. Thirty seven people have been killed in this accident and it is unfortunate that more than 30 deceased people belong to my Parliamentary constituency. I do not want to level any allegation against any one. I hold the hon'ble Minister in high esteem. He himself claims to be the No.1 Minister. That day he was in Katihar during the election campaign and I was also there. I was expecting from the Minister of Railways to reach the site of the accident since that is my Parliamentary constituency and being the Minister of Railways it was his duty to reach the accident site, however, he behaved more like a politician than the Minister of Railways. Had he reached the site of the incident on time, more lives could have been saved.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : If you want, we can have a discussion on this.

(Interruptions)

*Published in the Gazettee of India, Extraordinary, Part-II, Section-2, dated 4.12.2006.

** Introduced with the Recommendation of the President.

[Translation]

SHRI SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN : I have high regards for the hon. Minister of Railways...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : I am allowing him to speak. You need not come in his support.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I am allowing him. Why are you trying to intervene?

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN : Sir, through you, I am expressing the plight of the people of Bhagalpur before the House. I reached that place around 11.30. No railway officer was present there. Even the train for relief work reached the site after 3 O'clock. When the entire bridge was being demolished the workers asked the Engineer to stop the train from crossing under that bridge. However, the Engineer allowed the train to cross under the bridge there and a huge piece of span fell on the train. This is no accident, it is a murder. The people have been killed there. They were poor people from my constituency, N.C.C. cadets and other people board the train from that area. Today, the Minister of Railways has announced compensation for them but the railway officers are searching for their tickets. They boarded the train with general tickets and their names are being searched in the reservation list.

Mr. Speaker Sir, the condition of hospitals has improved in Bihar. There was a State Government hospital in Bhagalpur so the CAT scan was done on time and many lives were saved; however, the gas cutter was not available on time. Sir, I am not making any false statement. We arranged for a gas cutter from a private man which he had brought for petrol pump. The boggie was cut with that. If the hon'ble Minister of Railways could arrange for a gas

cutter on time many more lives could have been saved. Through you, I would like to state that when the Minister of Railways reached there, it being my Parliamentary constituency, I too, would have gone along with him had I received any information. There is no intention of politicizing the issue. I was in hospital for four hours...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : Please take your seat.

(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Nothing will be recorded except what Shri Shahnawaz Hussain speaks.

*(Interruptions)**

[Translation]

SHRI SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN : Mr. Speaker, Sir, with due respect I am stating...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : Please sit down.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Please sit down.

(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Please sit down.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I am asking him to sit down. Why are you getting up?

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : No, I will not tolerate this. Shri Ram Kripal Yadav, You must take your seat.

(Interruptions)

*Not recorded.

MR. SPEAKER : Take you seat. Will you take your seat or not?

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Will you take your seat?

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I am prepared to

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I will adjourn this House. I do not think...

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Let the people of this country see what is happening inside!

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Most condemnable behaviour!

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have great regard for the hon'ble Minister of Railways. Two low ranking officers were suspended after this incident. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : If you want a full discussion, I am prepared to give it. On a matter like this, you cannot go on raising the entire matter.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN : I want that the Hon'ble Minister of Railways should resign taking the

responsibility of the incident on himself and action should not be taken against low ranking officers...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : You are occupying a seat not belonging to you. Do not stand there.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN : Hon. Minister reached the spot after twelve hours of the incident. There is not even a single bridge but there are 15 bridges 150 years old in Bhagalpur. The trains for Bengal pass through it and so many people from Bengal travel by train ...*(Interruptions)* An announcement should be made to construct these bridges immediately and Hon'ble Minister of Railways should take the responsibility of the incident...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : What are you doing? Please sit down.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Only the matter being raised by Shri Shailendra Kumar should be recorded. Nothing else will be recorded.

*(Interruptions)**

12.16 hrs.

(At this stage, Shri Ashok Pradhan and some Other hon. Members came and stood on the floor near the Table.)

[Translation]

SHRI SHAILENDRA KUMAR (Chail) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, yesterday only we have celebrated world disabled day...*(Interruptions)*

*Not recorded.

[English]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura) : Sir, they will not allow us to raise our issue...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Mr. Acharia, please take your seat. Nothing is being recorded.

(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI SHAILENDRA KUMAR : Like every year it is always being said that the disabled should be brought in the mainstream of the society. As per the census of 2001 there are approximately 2.25 crore disabled people in the country who are blind, deaf and dumb. Seventy five percent of such people live in villages. For their upliftment, various programmes are announced to provide assistance to them. Today, these programmes are needed to reviewed ... (Interruptions) The Government announces to provide them assistance but even today they are being exploited. They are not able to get any assistance without producing certificate of disability... (Interruptions) Instructions are issued by Union Government in this regard but they cannot get their certificate of disability without giving bribe. The Union Government always stress upon the fact that the State Governments should take effective steps and an appeal is also made in this regard but no assistance reached to them... (Interruptions) The Government also stress upon that the society should fulfill its responsibility and come forward for their assistance. A resolution was passed in 1982 in UN General Assembly... (Interruptions) It was mentioned in the resolution that the programmes for their rehabilitation should be chalked out. That is why every year on 3rd of December world disabled day is celebrated... (Interruptions) Till now it has not been implemented. National Education Policy, 1986, National Trust Act 1995, Action Plan 1992, Indian Rehabilitation Council Act 1992, Disabled's Act 1995, National Policy for Disabled's 2005 have been prepared from time to time but

*Not recorded.

these were not implemented properly... (Interruptions) I would like to request the Government that the employment oriented education must be imparted to the disabled in the country, they must get the benefit of rehabilitation plan and employment should be provided by ensuring reservation... (Interruptions) Whatever welfare scheme are there, they must get their proper benefit. Further, they must be inspected by AMA from time to time so that they may get the benefit.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Prof. Mahadeorao Shiwankar - not present.

Shri B. Mahtab.

(Interruptions)

SHRI B. MAHTAB (Cuttack) : Sir, it has been planned to develop the basins multi-sectorally taking into account flood, drainage congestion, irrigation and agriculture along with allied activities for sustainable use of water resources. In this context, Mahanadi Basin Development Plan has been submitted to the Ministry of Water Resources for necessary clearance. The Detailed Project Report of components under Mahanadi Basin Development Project has been submitted to the Central Water Commission, and the technical scrutiny has been processed. ... (Interruptions)

The State-level Project Monitoring Committee has already cleared this project. This is a project costing around Rs.3,555 crore, but I am dismayed to find that the project is being delayed citing one reason or the other ... (Interruptions)

This project, if implemented, will change the life of the people of Orissa. As Orissa is an agrarian State and as irrigation facility is essential for providing food security, there is an urgency not only to expand irrigation coverage, mitigate flood, etc., but also to provide assured irrigation for raising agricultural productivity and to improve the quality of life in rural areas. ... (Interruptions) There is a need to raise and strengthen the embankments; extend, renovate and modernize the management of water of

Mahanadi; and develop drainage system in eight doabs in the Mahanadi basin of coastal Orissa.

I urge upon the Government to expedite the matter and clear the project at the earliest, so that it can be posed to the World Bank, and the ADB for funding. Thank you, Sir...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Shishupal N. Patle

Prof. Rasa Singh Rawat

Shri Santosh Gangwar

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI MOHAN SINGH (Deoria) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is a serious matter and I would like to raise the issue in this House calling the attention of the Government. There is a news agency named U.N.I. which makes the news available to the far-flung rural areas of the country. It was taken over by a corporate house at throw away price. As a result of that there would be interruption in making the news available to the rural and far-flung areas of the country. The employees of U.N.I. have been agitating against this injustice and the deal and disciplinary action is being initiated against them. It seems that it's a blow on the freedom of news and its circulation. The Hon'ble Minister of Information and Broadcasting should give a statement in this House in this regard and should take initiative so that U.N.I. does not go to a corporate house at any cost. IT is an old institution, which has property worth billions of rupees in many cities of the country. Freedom of press would be affected by selling it to a corporate house at throw away price. So the Government should interfere in this deal. I would like to submit that the Government should cancel the purchase deal of UNI and arrange for the functioning of UNI press agency at its own...
(Interruptions)

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN (Firozabad) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, there have been riots in Gujarat in 2002 and it was

Government sponsored. Two thousand five hundred people of minority community were killed in these riots and as per the Government the number of missing persons is 250 whereas as per the NGO's this number is 500. More than 10,000 people are living a pitiable life. About 61,000 riot victims are displaced and the Muslims have migrated from 18,000 small villages...*(Interruptions)* The riot victims of Gujarat have not been rehabilitated...*(Interruptions)* Some MPs visited Ahmedabad and during the visit on the spot we observed that the condition of the people is pathetic.

I thank voluntary organizations for their efforts to arrangements for the rehabilitation of riot victims. The State Government has shirked from fulfilling its responsibility. This is a matter of grave concern that the State Government has returned Rs. 19 crore out of Rs. 150 crore provided by the Government of India for the rehabilitation of these people. The State Government is insensitive...*(Interruptions)* and no arrangements have been made for the safety of people's life and property, their rehabilitation, food shelter, schools and hospitals in the State of Gujarat. The State Government has discouraged and humiliated official, who discharged their duties honestly and promoted the officials involved in riots.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the situation is very grim in Gujarat and the biggest concern in that the State Government has created an atmosphere of fear and despair in the State. To add fuel to the fire, a statue of a person involved in the massacre of Muslims was unveiled in Vadodara on 10.4.2005 and the local Member of Parliament and MLA were also present there. It was inscribed on the plaque of the statue that he acquired martyrdom while trying to save Hindutva. Minorities' life and property is not safe in Gujarat. The State Government has failed to make arrangements for the rehabilitation of riot victims. Therefore, I demand that the Government of India should intervene in the matter so that the people get relief. Thank you.

SHRI ALOK KUMAR MEHTA (Samastipur) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, a nine member delegation of secular parties visited the camps of riot victims situated at Ahmedabad and

[Shri Alok Kumar Mehta]

adjoining area in the Gujarat on the 30th of the month. I was also a Member of the delegation and Shri Lalu Prasadji had deputed me there. We visited around eight refugee camps, which were set up and operated by various voluntary organizations and trusts and they were busy in making the arrangements with the help of their limited resources. The State Government has shrugged off its responsibility by giving a grant of Rs. 500 to Rs. 700 to a few people and the next of kin of those killed were given Rs. 500 to 6-7 thousand. The photocopies of these cheques were shown to us. Only 15 percent people have received some kind of assistance there. Such lands have been given to trusts, for setting up camps which are the dumping ground for people who are falling ill after drinking contaminated water. Mothers there can not breast feed their children and as a result the children are becoming physically challenged. No health center is functioning there. The biggest concern is that an atmosphere of fear is still prevailing there. All the victims are still feeling insecure there and they are not ready to go back to their homes. I think it is a matter of national shame in the history of India that no measures have been taken for their rehabilitation even after two and a half years. Under such circumstances, Rs. 150 crore were sent by the Union Government for the assistance of riot victims, out of which the State Government has returned Rs. 19 crore to the Union Government. Our team visited Satya Nagar, Kifayat Nagar, Muhajir Nagar, Citizen Nagar, Siddiqabad and the worst riot affected area, Sardarpur. We were almost in tears after listening to the gory details of riot from the riot victims. Five hundred people are still missing there and nothing is being done to trace them. So, we demand that the Union Government take initiative in this direction and make arrangements for the rehabilitation of riot victims as early as possible and provide them full security. This is our only demand....(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : You cannot discuss the matter concerning the State Government.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : You are deliberately obstructing the business of the House. I cannot allow this.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : You have not even given a notice.

(Interruptions)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura) : Sir, a delegation of nine Members of Parliament have visited Gujarat on Thursday, the 30th November, 2006 to see the condition and the rehabilitation of the carnage-affected people of Gujarat...(Interruptions) Even after a lapse of about four years, the affected people have not yet been properly rehabilitated...(Interruptions)

...(Interruptions) Houses of two lakh people were gutted. What we have seen is that the State Government of Gujarat has not spent a single pie for the rehabilitation of those people. Only voluntary organizations, NGOs, etc. constructed some houses. No civic amenities were being provided to these people. There are no roads, there are no schools, there are no medical facilities and there are no provisions for drinking water. They are living in very miserable and inhuman conditions.*... today is returning whatever money was sent by the Central Government for rehabilitation. They have returned Rs. 19 crore to the Central Government. They could have spent this amount of Rs. 19 crore for providing drinking water facilities, sanitation facilities, for construction of schools and for providing medical facilities. I demand that the Central Government should immediately intervene.

Justice Nanawati Commission had recommended compensation for the victims of 1984 riots. I demand that a similar compensation should be paid to the victims of minority communities who were killed in this carnage. People, whose houses were damaged, received only Rs.2,000-Rs.3,000. They should be properly compensated and the Gujarat Government should be told to provide

*Not recorded.

basic civic amenities to those people. I demand that the Central Government should immediately intervene so that basic civic amenities are provided...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI MADHUSUDAN MISTRY (Sabarkantha) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the House towards the riot victims of Gujarat. The Union Government has provided Rs. 150 crores for the people died and rendered homeless in the riots. But it is very sad to say that in the parliamentary constituency of their leader, Shri L.K. Advani, the Government of Gujarat returned Rs. 19 crore out of Rs. 150 crore. Not only this, the Government of Gujarat has not given a penny from their funds to the people rendered homeless and injured. Money was only spent from the funds of Centre. Not only this, only 1150 people were given this compensation...*(Interruptions)* I feel ashamed to say that their Muslim MPs should resign from here because they could not provide proper rehabilitation in Gujarat...*(Interruptions)* Government...* in Gujarat is biased. I know that Mr. L.K. Advani will not say anything to them because he can not win election from there without their help...*(Interruptions)* They do not give anything from the State funds. I demand this rehabilitation should be done at the level of Centre and more and more people should be given compensation...*(Interruption)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : That will be deleted. The other hon. Members who have given notices to raise this issue – Shri Hannan Mollah, Shri Devendra Prasad Yadav and Shri C.K. Chandrappan – can associate themselves.

(Interruptions)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : We want a response from the Government...*(Interruptions)*

12.33 hrs.

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Matters under Rule 377 may be treated as laid on the Table of the House.

(I) Need to appoint a Statutory Regulator for pricing of domestically produced natural gas

SHRI D. VITTAL RAO (Mahabubnagar) : I would like to draw the attention of the house that recently GAIL has informed that ONGC will charge market prices at US\$ 4.6 per MMBTU. Recently, there has also been a hike in natural gas price from US\$ 4.5 MMBTU from Ravva fields. Due to the price increase, GAIL has stopped supply of gas from Ravva fields. This has resulted in substantial implication on price of power in Andhra Pradesh and an unjustifiable increase in power section tariffs. Such increase adversely impacted upon the overall economy of the country and benefited only producer and distributor having monopoly.

I, therefore, request the Government to appoint a Statutory Regulator for pricing of domestically produced natural gas and not to effect any increase in the current gas price of US\$ 3.3 per MMTBU.

(II) Need to include 'Oad Rajput' community in the list of Scheduled castes

[Translation]

SHRI K.C. SINGH BABA (Nainital) : Sir, people belonging to Oad Rajput community displaced from the Multan area of Pakistan have still not been included in the list of Scheduled Castes in Uttaranchal and Uttar Pradesh. In other States like Haryana, Rajasthan, Punjab and Delhi, this caste is included in the list of Scheduled Castes. Right to equality is enshrined in our Constitution, but it is an irony that even today the people of Oad caste living in

*Not recorded.

*Treated as laid on the Table.

[Shri K.C. Singh Baba]

Uttaranchal and Uttar Pradesh are still not accorded the status of Scheduled Castes, whereas people belonging to this caste are included in the Scheduled Castes list in other States. This discrepancy needs to be addressed immediately.

Sir, oad Rajputs are living in around 40 villages in various districts of Uttaranchal and Uttar Pradesh. These people reside with the surnames of Kudavali, Virpali, Kahliya, Sarvana, Maangal, Mundai Galgat Bhagat, Majoka etc. Today, their economic, social and educational condition is deplorable. The demand for inclusion of oad caste in the list of scheduled castes has been pending for years and for the past many years, Oad Rajput Utthan Samiti is pleading at various forums for inclusion of oad caste in the Scheduled Caste List.

Through you, I request to the Union Government to pass a Constitution (Scheduled Caste) order amendment Bill in the Parliament at the earliest for the inclusion of this caste in the list of Scheduled Castes for the overall development of the people belonging to Oad caste living in Uttaranchal, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh and to end discrimination against them.

(III) Need to provide remunerative price to Kesar Mango growers in Gujarat and also set up Agro based industries there

SHRI JASHUBHAI DHANABHAI BARAD (Junagarh) :
 Sir, Kesar Mango is produced in abundance in the State of Gujarat. As per the figures of the last three years, approximate production in the whole of Gujarat is as follows:

| Year | Production (Metric tones in Lakhs) |
|---------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 | 2 |
| 2003-04 | 5.95 |

| 1 | 2 |
|---------|------|
| 2004-05 | 7.29 |
| 2005-06 | 7.72 |

Approximately, 70 percent to 75 percent of Kesar Mango is produced in the Saurashtra region alone. Despite such a huge production, the farmers there do not get remunerative prices and they are exploited by the private agencies with regard to prices of Mango.

The farmers are destroying their mango farms owing to non availability of remunerative prices for their crops.

I would like to request the Government of India to make arrangements for the export of Kesar Mango keeping in view of its production in Gujarat and provide for setting up of Agro Industries as also take appropriate action to increase the production of Kesar Mango and provide remunerative prices to the farmers for their crop. This is very important in the interest of the Government and the farmers.

(iv) Need to run a super-fast train between Jamnagar and New Delhi

SHRI VIKRAMBHAI ARJANBHAI MADAM (Jamnagar) :
 Sir, I would like to request the Union Government to run a Super Fast Express train on the pattern of Ashram Express having 12 or more coaches daily between Jamnagar and New Delhi for facilitating commuting from our area. This train should reach New Delhi via Jamnagar, Rajkot, Surendranagar, Viramgam, Mehasana, Palanpur, Aburoad and not via Ahmedabad which will save both time of the people and the country's diesel. I would like to demand that the Railways run the train at the earliest. I would also like to demand the establishment of a factory for manufacturing Passenger coaches as Railways do not have the coaches in adequate number.

(v) Need to Include 'Kudukh' language to the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution

DR. RAMESHWAR ORAON (Lohardaga) : Sir, several tribes live in India which speak their own language. These languages are unable to progress and prosper because these are devoid of Government patronage in comparison to other languages.

Oraon is one of the main Scheduled Tribe of India. Its language is "Kudukh". It belongs to the Dravidian family of languages. It is the language of approximately one crore people of Oraon Tribe living in the States like Jharkhand, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, West Bengal, Bihar, Tripura, Assam, Maharashtra etc. It does not have its own script but the people speaking this language make use of Devanagari script for writing this language. It is essential to patronize and promote this language, otherwise it would become extinct.

Therefore, I would like to request the Government of India to include this language in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution.

(vi) Need to convert metre gauge line into broad gauge between Jetalsar to Dhasa in Gujarat

SHRI V.K. THUMMAR (Amreli) : Sir, the metre gauge rail line between Jetalsar to Dhasa linking my parliamentary constituency, Amreli needs to be converted into Broad Gauge line as a lot of business activities are taking place there and Pipavav Ports is also situated nearby. With the construction of broad gauge line, new railway service can be started for other far flung areas of the country from several parts of Saurashtra. Until this metre gauge line is converted into broad gauge, the people of Saurashtra cannot get the facility of modern railway services.

I have requested the Railway Minister many a time in this regard. The Hon'ble Minister has informed through this House that its survey is being conducted but the task is unnecessarily getting delayed.

I would like to request, through the House, to get the

survey work of the conversion of this metre gauge line into broad gauge completed at the earliest and provide for its conversion in the upcoming budget.

(vii) Need to provide employment and other benefits to youths of Uttaranchal who had been given training in Guerilla Warfare after the 1962 Chinese Aggression

SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT "BACHDA" (Almora) : Sir, after the Chinese aggression in the year 1962, the youth living in the country's border areas were given the guerilla warfare training by the Department of Civil Defence under the Ministry of Home Affairs. The youth of the border and hilly areas in Uttaranchal were also given a 45 days guerilla warfare training in Shimla. They were also given the guerilla training from time to time. These guerillas were given the assurance that they would be inducted in the department in future during a recruitment drive.

In the meantime, these guerillas in the States like Assam and Meghalaya have been recruited in the SSB. However, the guerillas of Uttaranchal have not found any place in any recruitment drive and have not been given honorarium or other benefit of any kind. These guerillas living in the border areas of Uttaranchal have been agitating for a long time demanding recruitment and provision of special concessions and benefits.

Hence, I would like to demand the Union Government to take action with regard to providing recruitment, other concessions or benefits to the Uttaranchal's guerillas.

(viii) Need to Establish Super Speciality Hospital in Nagpur on the pattern of AIIMS

SHRI HANSRAJ G. AHIR (Chandrapur) : Sir, I represent the constituency which is adjacent to Andhra Pradesh and Chhattisgarh and the percentage of poor, tribal people is quite high in these areas. A decision has been taken to upgrade J.J. Hospital in Mumbai, Maharashtra. But my constituency is about 1000-1200 kms. away from Mumbai and about 1300-1450 kms. away from Delhi. To

[Shri Hansraj G. Ahir]

travel such a long distance for the treatment of certain specific diseases is both time consuming and a costly affair. In the districts of Gadchiroli, Amravati, Chandrapur and Gendia in Vidarbha region, people belonging to Scheduled Tribes live in a sizeable number. In the absence of health facilities quite a large number of people die due to malnutrition. Likewise people either die or become handicapped due to the Fluorosis because of excess Fluorine in water. Not only this, the number of people suffering from malaria is the highest in this region. The number of people dying of hereditary disease of sickle cell is also high in Central India.

If Nagpur is identified for the setting up of AIIMS, the people of Vidarbha, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and bordering districts of Andhra Pradesh would be benefited to a great extent. Two institutes of Jammu and Kashmir have been selected for upgradation keeping in view the terrorist activities. Likewise Chandrapur, Gadchiroli and Gandia districts of Vidarbha are naxal affected districts. Due to the frequent terrorist attacks many people and security personnel get killed there. But due to unavailability of Super Speciality Hospital, the life of the injured can not be saved. AIIMS must be established at Nagpur. In order to provide such facility to the people of Central India. Nagpur is the heart of India and the border districts of all States have an easy access to Nagpur. There is smooth access of rail and road as well.

Therefore, I request you to announce the setting up of AIIMS at Nagpur to provide Speciality facilities to the people of Central India.

(ix) Need to take special measures to provide employment to unemployed youths and make provisions of unemployment allowances to eligible persons

DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA (Ujjain) : Sir, in the wake of globalization, the employment opportunities for indigenous skills are diminishing continuously. Due to lack of

employment opportunities while there is poverty and helplessness, there are also social and economic disparities.

Therefore, the Government should make special efforts to provide employment to educated and uneducated people round the year and should give unemployment allowances till they get full time employment.

(x) Need to make available BSNL pre-paid SIM cards in Maharajganj, Uttar Pradesh

SHRI PANKAJ CHOWDHARY (Maharajganj, U.P.) : In district Maharajganj (U.P.) of my constituency, sim cards for pre paid mobile service of BSNL are not available. As a result of it the people are facing a lot of difficulties. In this district, mobile towers at many places were constructed only after registration was done. As a result, people of Navtanva, Siswa, Nichlaul did not register themselves. Later on, after the construction of towers, there is huge demand for pre paid sim cards.

Therefore, I request the Union Government to issue instruction to BSNL for issuing the pre paid sim cards to the people of Maharajganj district so as to mitigate the difficulties faced by them.

(xi) Need to provide adequate fertilizers to farmers of Madhya Pradesh

SHRIMATI NEETA PATERIYA (Seoni) : Sir, through you, I would like to draw the attention of the Union Government towards the problems of farmers of different States especially the farmers of Madhya Pradesh. Due to the lack of fertilizers, farmers of Madhya Pradesh are facing a great difficulty. The farmers of Madhya Pradesh are agitating. Due to the lack of availability of fertilizers in time, the farmers are in rage. Farmers are unable to sow the seeds in time and its result will be felt on the production of crop. Due to the lack of fertilizers in the country the problems of farmers are further compounded.

I urge upon the Union Minister to pay attention to this grave problem of farmers and issue instructions for the distribution of fertilizers to the farmers.

[English]

(xii) Need to reduce the fee being charged by the Indian Mission abroad particularly in Gulf countries for issuance of death certificates

SHRI T.K. HAMZA (Manjeri) : It is matter of grave concern that the Indian mission abroad are charging abnormally heavy and unjustified amount for death related certificates of deceased Indian nationals, particularly in Gulf countries. The matter merits for urgent attention for removal of the anomaly, with immediate effect. It is noted that such charges are being made by Indian authorities only.

(xiii) Need to revive the tea and coffee estate in Kerala and to pay pending wages to the workers

SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN (Kasargod) : I would like to raise the serious situation arisen due to the clouse of plantations in Kerala.

Nearly, 22 tea and coffee estates have been closed in Kerala especially in Iddukki (District). About 25,000 workers are unemployed and are in very a pathetic condition, which led the workes to commit suicide. Crores of rupees of workers as wages and incentives are pending with the management.

Therefore, I urge upon the Central Government to take urgent steps for replanation and setting of workers issue and also give immediate relief to the poor workers.

(xiv) Need to make Jaunpur railway station functional and make provisions for stoppage of trains

[Translation]

SHRI PARAS NATH YADAV (Jaunpur) : Sir, prior to independence, during the British rule, Jaunpur Kachehri railway station was established in Jaunpur in 1925 which was demolished a few years back. On 21st of July, 2006, the stoppage of the only passenger train there was also withdrawn. Collectorate office, court, civil court and banks

etc. are situated near the Jaunpur Kachehri railway station. Being a district lacs of people from other districts and far-lung areas come here daily for employment and daily routine work. Due to the demolition of the said station, the people are facing great hardships. As a result thereof lawyers, students, teachers and the employees are on the path of agitation. Keeping in view the deep resentment among the people and the utility of Jaunpur Kachehri railway station, it is necessary to restore the stoppage of passenger trains, ticketing and basic facilities here.

Therefore, through the House, I urge upon the Central Government that keeping in view the demands of so many people Jaunpur Kachehri station should be restored in public interest and stoppage of passenger trains should be provided there.

(xv) Need to look into the working of C.G.H.S. dispensaries in the country

SHRI REWATI RAMAN SINGH (Allahabad) : Sir, there is a need to improve the availability of medicines in dispensaries of the Central Government. On the one hand, in Government dispensaries no medicines are provided except paracetamol and a few other antibiotic medicines. On the other hand, concerned officials seem all set to even purchase the substitute of medicines like Dianil, a primary medicine for the patients of Diabetes.

The state of Unani dispensaries is more shocking. First of all, medicines are not made available in time. Secondly, there is no transparency in the working of the purchase committee.

I request the Government to issue orders for proper enquiry so that medicines may be provided in time.

(xvi) Need to construct a railway bridge on the track between Jamaluddin Mazar and Jamaluddin Chak in Danapur, Bihar

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV (Patna) : In 1990, lands of the farmers of Jamaluddin Chak (Bari Khagol), Gorgama, Sarari, Kodhiya, Babuchak, Nauratnapur vil-lages were acquired by the Railways for the extension of

[Shri Ram Kripal Yadav]

Danapur yard. At that time itself it was announced that a railway bridge would be constructed there and drainage and other problems over there would be solved by the Railways. But, the farmers are facing a lot of problems for the last 15 years. There is great resentment among the local people. The Railways are not supplementing the announcement it had made.

Therefore, I want to draw the kind attention of the Hon. Minister of Railways and urge upon him to grant permission to start the work immediately to construct a railway bridge from Jamaluddin Chak Mazar to Jamaluddin Chak at Danapur and make permanent arrangement of drainage over there.

(xvii) Need for effective Implementation of Centrally Sponsored Development and Poverty Alleviation Programmes being undertaken in Uttar Pradesh

SHRI MITRASEN YADAV (Faizabad) : Sir, eligible persons are not getting the benefits of Centrally Sponsored Schemes in Uttar Pradesh, rather on a large scale they are being deprived of the benefits and these schemes are misutilised. Since the Government is unable to provide the respective cards to the people categorized as living below poverty line, B.P.L. card holder and very poor Antyodaya card holder, and the poorest Annapoorna card holder as a result of which influential persons are getting undue advantage causing not only deep dissatisfaction among the rural poor but also occurrence of untoward incidents as a result thereof.

Therefore, it is my humble request that the Union Government should check the prevailing gross irregularity in the Centrally Sponsored schemes pertaining to Development and Poverty Alleviation in Uttar Pradesh by reviewing them and should ensure that the eligible persons for the schemes get its benefits and that time bound action is taken against the persons found guilty of irregularity and cards are made available to the eligible person.

(xviii) Need to establish cotton-based industries in Marathwada region of Maharashtra

SHRI TUKARAM GANPAT RAO RENGE PATIL (Parbhani) : Sir, the entire Marathwada region of Maharashtra is extremely backward. The main crop of this region is cotton and the farmers' families of this region completely depend on cotton cultivation. Though cotton growers work hard and face natural calamities as well, they do not get remunerative prices for their crops forcing them to commit suicide and a number of farmers have committed suicide too. The farmers would be able to get remunerative prices and they would not be forced to commit suicide, if a campaign is launched to provide assistance for setting up of cotton based industries in Marathwada and Central aid or package is given to them. Also, the setting up of the industries in this backward area will facilitate the unemployed people to get jobs.

Through this house, I request the Union Government to make efforts and provide assistance to set up cotton-based industries in the Marathwada region.

(xlix) Need to withdraw the proposal to establish Field Firing Range in Rachakonda in Andhra Pradesh

[English]

SHRI SURAVARAM SUDHAKAR REDDY (Nalgonda) : At present there is a Defence Field Firing Range in the Medchal village, nearer to Hyderabad. Because the city has grown, so that, village is almost merged into city. In this scenario, it is quite likely to shift Field Firing Range. It is reported that they have chosen Rachakonda area of Narayanpur Mandal, Bhongir Revenue division. Also some area of Ibrahimpatnam constituency of Ranga Reddy District is also included. This whole area is a part of my parliamentary constituency. It is learnt that some Government land and some PVT land is going to be acquired for this purpose. All local people, local panchayath, local public representatives, MP, MLA, all party joint action committees are opposing this proposal.

Under JNURM Government is proposing to develop basic infrastructure upto 100 kms around the city. As Rachakonda is below 35-40 kms, this whole area is likely to get developed within another 15-20 years. Then again Government has to search for new Firing Range. And also there are past experience, in Medchal Firing Range, that being a place of high mobility, many people and domestic animals were killed by the bullets came outside the Firing Range. So, this is not safe for the people here in Rachakonda due to increasing density of mobility. By keeping all this facts in view, the proposal of establishing Field Firing Range in Rahakonda should be withdrawn.

(xx) Need to look into the health related problems being faced by people living in rural areas of Srikakulam district, Andhra Pradesh

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU (Srikakulam) : The Government of India is conducting many Health and Family Welfare programmes through State Governments and other Non-Government Organisations. All these Organisations are working in the urban areas. They are not looking into the problems being faced by the common people in the rural areas. Every day we saw advertisements in the newspapers and electronic media, high lighting HIV, RCH and Polio etc. But no preventive measures are being taken to save the lives of the people in remote areas.

Sir, as you are aware, the Srikakulam district of Andhra Pradesh is very backward in the country. Though the Government has provided necessary infrastructure like Primary Health Centres, Dispensaries, M.M. Units, GLC units and sub-centres etc. all these are meant for curative and preventive aspects, but the fact is that the people in the rural areas of Srikakulam District are suffering from many deadly diseases. No suitable preventative measures are being taken by the State or the Central Government. The Prime Health Centres in Rural areas are lacking sufficient number of Doctors, medicines, administrative control and proper funds. As a result, the people are facing acute problems. They are dying without proper care and

medicines. I request the Government to look into the problems of the poor people in the rural areas and save their lives.

12.34 hrs.

DISCUSSION UNDER RULE 193

(I) Rise in prices of essential commodities...Contd.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Now, we shall resume discussion under rule 193 regarding price rise.

Shri Rajiv Ranjan Singh 'Lalan' - Not present.

Prof. Ramadass - Not present.

Now, Chaudhary Lal Singh.

[Translation]

CHAUDHARY LAL SINGH (Udhampur) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am happy that Dr. Chinta Mohan has initiated discussion on price rise of essential commodities under the Rule 193. It has been stated that prices of essential commodities have risen. In this regard, Government of India have made several efforts. I would also like to submit that it is high time that the price rise be checked.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to draw your attention towards some shortcomings. The main reason of this price rise is that the farmers were not given the remunerative prices for their wheat last time. The Government had fixed the rate of wheat at Rs.650 per quintal. This was nothing but injustice done to the farmers. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Price rise is being discussed. The Minister has to reply. If Members are not prepared to listen to that, let the whole country see what is happening. I cannot do anything.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

CHAUDHARY LAL SINGH : Farmers should have been given the proper price for their 'Gandam' yield as per the policy formulated by the Government regarding wheat procurement. I hoped that the farmers would get assistance during the sowing season of their paddy and 'Gandam' but the Government failed to do so. Sowing season for the farmers starts in October and November...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : I appeal to all the Members, including the Leaders of various Parties let the House go on. We are discussing the price rise situation. The Minister will reply. From 3 o' clock other important matters will be taken up. There is no question of adjournment.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

CHAUDHARY LAL SINGH : Had the Government helped during the season, it would not have happen. I request the Government to increase the rate of wheat. Due to this reason other companies continued procurement. Today the common man is in trouble. Therefore, the rates of wheat and pulses should be reduced. Common man needs wheat and pulses, they have nothing to do with the increase in prices of petrol and diesel. Today inflation has risen so much that people do not have purchasing power. My submission is that the prices of flour should at least be reduced by Rs.4 kg. How the rate of flour could be Rs.9 to 10 per kg when the rate of what has been fixed at Rs.650? I think that traders are earning profit by selling flour whereas farmers are not given adequate price. I want to submit that farmers should be given higher rate and prices of flour and pulses should be reduced for common man. This is necessary.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Government ensures food security but ration rorts in the stores. Schemes like antyodaya, BPL, APL, Anganwadi and mid day meal are also responsible for inflation. Meals prepared are not worth

eating and so they are thrown. Wastage of food is not proper. These schemes are not successful as they are being run by the Government. This has led to increase in prices of flour and rice. The Government should at least take steps to reduce their prices. Quantity Limitation should be fixed as hoarders and black marketeers are stocking unlimited foodgrains. Raids should be conducted to take out unlimited stock of foodgrains. BJP abolished Inspector Raj. They misused the liberty. Inflation is due to this reason. I want special attention of the Government towards this.

MR. SPEAKER : Prof. Mahadeorao Shiwankar

Shrimati Neeta Pateriya

(Interruptions)

12.41 hrs.

DEMANDS FOR SUPPLEMENTARY GRANTS (RAILWAYS) 2006-07

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Now, the House will take up Item Nos.8 and 9. The Minister of Railways.

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD) : Sir, I beg to present a statement (Hindi and English versions) showing the Supplementary Demand for Grant in respect of the Budget (Railways) for 2006-07.

[Placed in Library. See No.LT 5132A/2006]

12.42 hrs.

DEMAND FOR EXCESS GRANTS (RAILWAYS) 2004-05

[English]

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD) : Sir, I beg to present a statement (Hindi and

English versions) showing the Demands for Excess Grants in respect of the Budget (Railways) for 2004-05.

[Placed in Library. See No.LT 5132B/2006]

12.43 hrs.

DISCUSSION UNDER RULE 193

(i) Rise in prices of essential commodities...contd.

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR) : (a) Mr. Speaker, Sir, the House is discussing the problems faced by the common man. The people living below poverty line, the middle class and the poor labourers are facing problems...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Please allow the Minister to reply. He is giving reply on a very important matter.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR : This has created a huge problem...(Interruptions). You have to accept that country's economic progress is rapid after UPA came to power and growth rate is around 8%. But rate of inflation has also been at 6.29% in 2006-07. There is no need for license for essential commodities...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : This is the tradition of India. We have been following this tradition.

(Interruptions)

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR : All the fellow countrymen know that the prices of petroleum products, wheat, pulses sugar etc. were not under control for some time.

Developing countries like India are affected by increase in prices of petroleum products by petroleum producing countries...(Interruptions) The price of petrol was 25 dollar per barrel in 2003-04. it increased upto 48.97 dollar per barrel in 2004-05, 55.77 dollar per barrel in 2005-06 and by 17 of Nov. 2006, it reached upto 65.24 dollarn per barrel. As on 17.11.06, the price of petrol increased upto 187%, diesel upto 234%, Kerosene upto 240% and LPG utp 154%...(Interruptions) But I have to say that the Government paid maximum attention to reduce the burden of common man despite this huge increase...(Interruptions) Utmost attention has been paid towards this. You would be surprised to know that oil companies shared the burden of Rs.2723 crore in 2005-06 due to increase in prices of Petrol. Oil companies took the burden of Rs.2808 crore due to increase in prices from April to September 2005. As far as diesel is concerned, oil companies took the burden of Rs.12636 crore due to increase in prices during the year 2005-06. They shared the burden of Rs.15502 crore due to increase in prices between April to September 2000. Prices of kerosene under PDS were not changed. Whatever little increase is there, that is in regard to payment of commission and Government has shared that burden.

12.46 hrs.

[SHRI MOHAN SINGH in the Chair]

As far as kerosene is concerned, Government of India shared the burden of Rs.976 crore and oil industry took the burden of Rs.14314 crore in 2005-06. Attention has been paid towards it so that the burden of Rs.15360 crore does not come to common man. Government of India have shared the burden of Rs.483 crore and oil industry Rs.9845 crore for increase in prices of kerosene in international market from April to September 2006. It means that burden of Rs.10,328 crore has been shared by them. As far as LPG is concerned, Union Government shared the burden of Rs.1520 crore and oil companies shared the burden of Rs.10,246 crore last year. This way the total burden of Rs.11766 crore did not came to

[Shri Sharad Pawar]

common man. From April to September 2000, Government of India shared the burden of Rs.738 crore and oil companies shared the burden of Rs.5030 crore for increase in prices of domestic LPG in international market. It means that both of them shared the burden of Rs.5768 crore in total which could have come on common people. If we add, we would come to know that common man did not face the burden of around Rs.34 thousand crore. Union Government took a good step to relieve the common man. We can not ignore the fact that increase in price of petrol and diesel may affect many things in society. I am ready to accept that this increase affects inflation as transport costs increase and cost of cultivation also increases. The prices of pulses also went up.

As far as gram pulse is concerned, its price in Delhi was 41 rupees per kilogram on 24 November, 2004. It was 30 rupees per kg on 24 May last year and on 30.11.2006 it went down to 41 rupees per kg from 42 rupees per kg. We can see this little declining trend in its price. The price of 'Tuar Dal' also came down on 25 May which was 34 rupees per kilogram on 24 November in Delhi ...*(Interruptions)* earlier it was 35 rupees per kg but it has also come down now...*(Interruptions)* its price was 54 rupees per kg in Delhi market which came down to 50 rupees per kg on 30 November, 2006...*(Interruptions)* As far as lentil pulse is concerned, its price is 29 rupees per kg. Earlier it was 30 rupees per kg...*(Interruptions)* This situation is not satisfactory and we will have to accept it. If we go through the details of last 23 years, the increase in production was 13 percent in 2001-02, 13.5 percent in 2002-03 and 14.91 percent in 2003-04...*(Interruptions)* As we all know that it depends on demand and supply. We import it from other countries. We do maximum import from Myanmar, Pakistan and Bangladesh. Due to bad weather their production was low and we could not import these things. We could import only 20.4 lakh tonne this year which affected our domestic market...*(Interruptions)* So far as edible oil seeds are concerned, we will have to emphasize on increasing its production. Their inadequate supply led to increase in prices.

[English]

The overall production of pulses during 2005-06 is 13.11 million tonnes, which is lower than the production of 13.13 million tonnes in 2004-05 and 14.91 million tonnes in 2003-04. ...*(Interruptions)*

Among pulses, there is a substitutability excepting for urad, and as a result, increase in price of one variety of the pulses leads to shift in the demand to other varieties and consequently results in an increase in the prices of different varieties of pulses. ...*(Interruptions)*

Pulses are grown mainly on marginal and sub-marginal land under rainfed conditions with low input usage. The percentage of area under irrigated conditions is only 15 per cent, exposing these crops to weather related yield risks. Consequently, pulses production in India is characterized by fluctuating production and low yield. ...*(Interruptions)*

Despite concerted efforts, no major breakthrough in pulses production technology and improvement of high-yielding germ plasm has been possible because of inherent genetic problems and narrow adaptability in the evolved varieties of pulses. ...*(Interruptions)*

There is also inadequate seed availability with a seed replacement rate of only 2 per cent - 5 per cent.

Consumption of pulses *per capita* has been increasing in the country. The gap between demand and supply is met through import of 1.5-2.0 million tonnes per annum. This year the crop in Pakistan and Bangladesh has also been adversely affected leading to significant rise in international prices of *urad* and *chana* which is mainly imported from Myanmar (Import of pulses during 2005-06 was 16.08 lakh tonnes. In 2006-07 up to August, 2006 it is only 5.89 lakh tonnes).

The pulses are genetically low yielding and less input responsive as compared to cereals and oilseeds. ...*(Interruptions)*

The area under cultivation of pulses has fluctuated between 20 and 24 million hectares in the last ten years. This clearly demonstrates that the cultivation of pulses is not a preferred choice of farmers, if other alternatives are available. ...*(Interruptions)*

Inadequate attention is given to enhancement of irrigation (even life saving irrigation) for land under cultivation of pulses. Since there is no significant improvement in irrigation, there is unlikely to be a significant increase in productivity. This needs to be compared with States like Gujarat where productivity of groundnut (oilseed) and cotton (commercial crop) has gone up significantly with an increase in irrigation. ...*(Interruptions)*

The productivity of pulses has remained stagnant between 550 and 600 kgs per hectare for more than a decade. There are yield gaps within the States and between the States. ...*(Interruptions)*

Pulses are more prone to pest and disease. The Integrated Pest Management Practices for pulses have not been given the required attention as the farmers growing pulses as main crops, are resource poor.

Now, I come to steps taken to check rise in prices of Pulses. The Government is aware of the increase in prices of essential commodities such as pulses and has responded by taking a series of measures. The important measures taken are given below:—

1. Customs duty on import of pulses was reduced to zero on June 8, 2006 and a ban was imposed on export of pulses with effect from June 27, 2006.
2. At the initiative of the Government, National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Limited (NAFED) executed a contract for import of 49,300 MTs of pulses, of which 48,061 MT, comprising 35,168 MT of Urad and 12,893 MT of Moong have been shipped as on

21.11.2006. Steps were taken by other agencies. ...*(Interruptions)*

3. Reintroduction of enabling provisions to prescribe stock limits and licensing requirements (in August 2006) under the EC Act for the State Governments.
4. Importing of 5.89 lakh tonnes of pulses till August 2006 in 2006-07. ...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

The condition of sugar was such that sugar ...*(Interruptions)* That is why we saw improvement in it. So far as wheat is concerned, its production has decreased this year. We faced some problem in its procurement. We could not procure a million tonne due to non cooperation of some State Governments and we procured 5.5 million tonne only...*(Interruptions)* This situation is very serious. Efforts have been made to take some steps on the basis of Essential Commodities Act...*(Interruptions)* We have last year's experience regarding wheat...*(Interruptions)* This year sowing was more than 15 percent, land has adequate moisture and I hope that the production of paddy and wheat will increase this year which would give some relief from food problem...*(Interruptions)*

This situation has arisen at such time when the production in our country is very low but this Government has always tried to solve this problem and will always continue to make efforts in this direction...*(Interruptions)* I want to assure you that we can solve the problem of food grains by strengthening our public distribution system, we will have to pay attention to it and Government would accord priority to it...*(Interruptions)* The Government would try to eradicate the problems being faced by the common man due to this...*(Interruptions)*

With these words, I conclude...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now I feel that honourable Members are feeling hungry so the House is adjourned till 2 O' clock.

12.55 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned for lunch till Fourteen of the clock.

14.03 hrs.

The Lok Sabha re-assembled at three minutes past Fourteen of the clock

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

(Interruptions)

[Translations]

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA (South Delhi) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, whatever happened in the House in the morning today we...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I have allowed him. Please listen.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA : Sir, I want to raise the matter of atrocities committed on the farmers in Singur and the arrest of our national leader. Sir, we did not want to come into the well but today we have not been allowed to speak. The UPA Government, the Congress Party...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura) : Sir, You have to allow us....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR : Sir, how can he question the Chair?....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Sir, nothing has happened...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA : This Government wants to choke the voice of opposition and wants to bulldoze it. Today, when the House was not in order...*(Interruptions)*. Though, House was not in order they still...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Sir, under what rule are you allowing him to speak...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I have allowed him. Please take your seat.

(Interruptions)

SHRI MADHUSUDAN MISTRY (Sabarkantha) : Sir, they cannot raise the issue like this...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : First of all, you go back to your seats.

(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Except Shri Malhotra's submission, nothing else will go on record.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, firing and fierce lathicharge took place there and atrocities were committed on farmers...*(Interruptions)* We were not allowed to raise this matter here. If tomorrow Shrimati Sonia Gandhi is arrested then what would be their reaction?...*(Interruptions)* As happened in Haryana...*(Interruptions)* House was adjourned there...*(Interruptions)* We want to protest against what they have done today. If the Government want that opposition should not participate in the proceedings of the House, then we will not participate in it today. We give them full liberty to bulldoze and to thrash the opposition and they can conduct

whatever debate they want. We boycott the House for the whole day today.

14.06 hrs.

(Then Shri Vijay Kumar Malhotra and some other Hon'ble Members left the House)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I have allowed him to speak. Please take your seats.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Achariaji, your item follows this Bill.

(Interruptions)

14.07 hrs.

CONSTITUTION (SCHEDULED TRIBES) ORDER
AMENDMENT BILL, 2006

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : The House shall now take up Item No. 12. Shri P.R. Kyndiah...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Nothing else will go on record, except the hon. Minister's speech.

*(Interruptions)**

THE MINISTER OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (SHRI P.R. KYNDIAH) : Sir, I beg move:

"That the Bill further to amend the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order, 1950 to modify the list of Scheduled Tribes in the State of Bihar, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration."

Mr. Deputy Speaker Sir, the issue under consideration is essentially to rectify the incorrect spelling of Lohara community as Lohar in the Hindi version of Scheduled Tribes List in Bihar by substituting it with Lohara.

This error came about with the passing of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Orders (Amendment) Act 1976.

Sir, the list of Scheduled Tribes in Bihar was first notified vide Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order 1950. Thereafter, the list was amended with the SC and ST Order (Amendment) Act 1956.

In both counts, the item under consideration stood as Lohara or Lohra at Item No. 20 of the List of Scheduled Tribes in Bihar. The change occurred only in the Act of 1976 in the case of Hindi version only and not in English. There was no insertion on conscious decision to make any change at all.

The then Ministry of Welfare on 6.1.1995 issued a corrigendum to notify clarification to substitute the word Lohar by the word Lohara in the Hindi version. The matter came up in the Supreme Court. During arguments, the Ministry of Tribal Affairs intimated that it would bring an appropriate Amendment in the Hindi version of SC and ST Order (Amendment Act 1976 regarding Lohar community.

Sir, Lohar is a distinct group falling under UBC and there has been consistent attempt by Lohars to be treated as Scheduled Tribes and obtain constitutional benefit meant for genuine Scheduled Tribes.

Thus, it became necessary to amend the Order as existing in Hindi notification No.108 of 1976 dated 18.9.1976 (published on 1.10.1979) to read as Lohara.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Motion moved:

"That the Bill further to amend the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order, 1950 to modify the list of Scheduled Tribes in the State of Bihar, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration."

(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Dr. Thokchom Meinya.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I know whether I should allow him or not.

(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Why are you speaking, this will not be recorded.

*(Interruptions)**

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura) : Sir, it should be recorded...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I will give you two minutes time after this Bill, you can raise your points then.

(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I have allowed him. It is the privilege of the Chair to allow or not to allow. Please sit down.

(Interruptions)

DR. THOKCHOM MEINYA (Inner Manipur) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the Bill moved by the hon. Minister Shri P.R. Kyndiah further to amend the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order, 1950, to modify the list of Scheduled Tribes in the State of Bihar, as passed by Rajya Sabha.

The Bill is very simple and explanation is very clear. It only means to substitute the word 'Lohar' by the correct one, that is, 'Lohara'. There is some mistake in spelling in two Tribes, namely, 'Lohara' and 'Lohar'. The Minister has proposed this Bill to remove this ambiguity and to rectify

*Not recorded.

the mistake in spelling and thereby taking out the Tribe 'Lohar' which is in the OBC List.

Due to this misspelt word, there has been some attempt to misunderstand the difference between these two Tribes. Our country is very vast. There are many Tribes. In different parts of the country, different dialects are spoken. Once we write these dialects in English or in Hindi – while translating this into English or Hindi – certain mistakes are always there in spelling and these stand to be corrected so that there is no confusion while referring to items listed in Scheduled Tribes as well as in Scheduled Castes. This has to be rectified and this Bill proposes to do this simple thing. By passing this Bill, we will do a very good service to our brothers in Bihar who are otherwise misunderstood amongst themselves.

With these few words I conclude by saying that I support the Bill; the hon. Minister has done a right thing.

[Translation]

SHRI SHAILENDRA KUMAR (Chail) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am grateful to you for giving me an opportunity to speak on Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order Amendment Bill, 2006.

The Bill proposes to modify the list of scheduled tribes in the State of Bihar under Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order, 1950 as the hon'ble Minister has moved the Bill for amendment. The Bill has been moved to amend the word 'Lohar' as 'Lohara'. As far as I know about the caste, 'Lohar', those who indulge in the business of iron, the people belonging to Vishwakarma sect are called Lohar in Uttar Pradesh and may be 'Lohara' are a different tribe. May be the 'Lohar' caste has got this facility by fault but if it is amended to 'Lohara' then their feelings will be hurt. It is a fact that the financial condition of Lohar workers is very bad in all the Parliamentary constituencies. They do not have any employment option other than making iron tools. These people as also the Lohara tribes must be provided the benefits of reservation so that the feelings of these two communities may not be hurt and their financial status may

improve. The Hon'ble Minister should ensure that both these communities get the benefits.

[English]

SHRI P.R. KYNDIAH : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, it is a clear case of an error which had been crept while passing the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Order (Amendment) Act, 1976. This Bill is essentially to correct that mistake. We are all one with the hon. Member, and we have a regard for Lohar community. As of now, they fall under the category of 'Other Backward Classes'. If today, Lohar community would like to become the Scheduled Tribe or perhaps that is what they feel, then they could apply to us. The issue is open to us. But, as of now, we are just correcting the typographical mistake which had occurred.

Even the Supreme Court itself, while arguing, have given us some time to make the amendment because they said that we had done it generally in 1996, and that was not sufficient. As a result of which, the Supreme Court itself asked us to go to the House. That is why, we have come here today with this Bill.

I request the hon. Members to pass this Bill.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : The question is:

"That the Bill further to amend the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order, 1950 to modify the list of Scheduled Tribes in the State of Bihar, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : The House shall now take up clause-by-clause consideration of the Bill.

The question is:

"That clause 2 stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 2 was added to the Bill

Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Long Title were added to the Bill.

SHRI P.R. KYNDIAH : I beg to move:

"That the Bill be passed."

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : The question is:

"That the Bill be passed."

The motion was adopted.

(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI TARIT BARAN TOPDAR (Barrackpore) : Sir, you kindly allow me now. you have said that you would allow me...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura) : Sir, whatever Prof. Malhotra has stated here is untrue. Neither Shri Rajnath Singh has been arrested nor there has been any police firing on the farmers....*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : You first decide who will speak.

SHRI SAMIK LAHIRI (Diamond Harbour) : Both of us shall speak.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Only one Member will be allowed to speak. Acharia ji, you decide who will speak.

(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Sir, the House should condemn what happened in the West Bengal Assembly

[Shri Basu Deb Acharia]

on 30th of November, 2006. One Member of this House went inside the Assembly. *... They destroyed the furniture. They attacked the MLAs, and six MLAs were injured and admitted into the hospital...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Please do not level allegation.

[English]

No allegation should go on record.

(Interruptions)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Sir, they destroyed the furniture. It is nothing but an attack on a democratic institution of our country...(Interruptions)

DR. SUJAN CHAKRABORTY (Jadavpur) : Sir, it is a fact. What is the allegation in it?...(Interruptions)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Sir, it is not an allegation. We have seen it over the television. In her presence, this destruction was carried out and this vandalism was carried out. The House should condemn what happened on the 30th of November in the State Assembly. It was a black day for the democracy of our country. Sir, we should condemn what happened there. *... So, we should condemn this incident...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Please sit down.

(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Mr. Basu Deb Acharia, your point has come on record. Now, please sit down.

(Interruptions)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Sir, vandalism has been done. It is nothing but an attack on the democratic institution of our country. This House should condemn it.

(Interruptions)

*Not recorded.

SHRI SUDHANGSHU SEAL (Calcutta-North West) :
Sir, our names should also be associated.

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Those who want to associate may kindly give their name slips.

(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : The names of Shri Sudhangshu Seal, Shri Sunil Khan, Shri Prabodh Panda and Shri Hiten Barman may also be associated with what Mr. Acharia has submitted on this issue.

14.21 hrs.

DISCUSSION UNDER RULE 193 – Contd.

(II) Report on the State of Panchayats – A Mid-Term Review and Appraisal-2006

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : The House shall now take up Item No.14 : Discussion Under Rule 193 – Shri Basu Deb Acharia.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura) : Sir, after the 72nd and 73rd Amendments were enacted and passed in this House in 1992, I think, it is for the first time that this House is discussing the roles and responsibilities being discharged by the Panchayati Raj Institutions.

I would like to congratulate the hon. Minister of Panchayati Raj because after his taking over the charge of the Panchayati Raj, it is for the first time that a separate Ministry has been created for Panchayati Raj. Before that, there was no separate Ministry for Panchayati Raj Institutions.

It was committed in the National Common Minimum Programme of the United Progressive Alliance Government

that more and more power would be devolved in the Panchayati Raj Institutions; and the Panchayati Raj Institutions would be a real centre for development of our rural areas where more than 70 per cent population live.

Sir, till today there is wide variation and gap between the rural and urban India. According to the 2001 Census, the percentage of households with pucca houses in the urban India is 70.70 whereas in the rural India, this percentage is only 29.20. Similarly, 63.85 per cent of the households in the urban India have access to toilet facilities whereas 9.48 per cent of the households in the rural India have access to toilet facilities. Then, 81.38 per cent of the urban households have access to safe drinking water whereas 55.40 per cent of the rural households have access to safe drinking water. Similarly, 75.78 per cent of the urban households have electricity connections whereas 30.54 per cent of the rural households have got electricity connections. These are the figures as per the 2001 Census. There may be a slight increase in these figures during these five-six years.

Urban literacy rate is 80.06 per cent but rural literacy rate is 59.21 per cent. The life expectancy at birth is 66.3 years for urban India and 59.4 years for rural India. The infant mortality rate is 51 per thousand in urban area and 84 per thousand in rural area. Sir, 73.3 per cent of urban births was attended by health professionals, whereas the figure is 33.5 per cent for rural India.

Barring sex ratio, there is not a single socio-economic indicator that is better for rural India than urban India. That is hardly surprising. We should finally recognize this when we talk about providing urban amenities in rural India. There is lack of infrastructure. Implicit subsidies that pour into urban India provide trigger for rural-urban migration. Here, the importance lies with our Panchayati Raj system, Panchayati Raj institutions.

The gap between rural and urban India should be bridged. There is a talk of shining India. India is shining not for the rural people but for only 10 per cent of the people of our country.

The Panchayati Raj institution has a long history in our country. Even before Independence, attempts had been made to set up Panchayati Raj institutions. The dream of Mahatma Gandhi has not yet been fulfilled. What Mahatmaji had said was that there cannot be complete *Swaraj*, unless we have *gram swaraj*. Without *gram swaraj*, we cannot have complete *swaraj*. Twenty people sitting at one place cannot work for lakhs and lakhs of people of our country. Although it has a long history, what we have seen in the past is that before 1992, when the Constitutional amendment was enacted in this House in Parliament, there was no Constitutional provision.

I can tell you about my State. The Panchayati election was not held for 14 long years earlier. It was held in 1963. When the Left Front Government came to power in 1977, in the programmes of the Left Front Government, the number one programme was that within one year the Left Front Government would hold election to the Panchayats and devolve power to the Panchayats, the representatives of the people of our country. Exactly within one year, the Panchayati election was held. For the first time, the poor people, the *Adivasis*, the Scheduled Caste people and agricultural labourers were elected to the Gram Panchayat. The agricultural labourers became Gram Pradhans. We call them Gram Pradhans. They became Presidents of the Panchayat Samitis, the intermediary bodies.

The Tribal people and *Adivasis* became Presidents although at that time, there was no reservation. Reservation came only 73rd and 74th Amendments.

That was his idea. He was behind that Bill, although he was not a Minister at that time. But he actively participated, laboured to bring such a Bill, to make the Panchayat Raj institution a real institution. The credit goes to Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar. I have already congratulated him for preparing a voluminous report. I have had a cursory glance of the same. I have seen how laboriously he has compiled it. You can get everything within these three volumes of the report.

In spite of the fact that there was no provision of

[Shri Basu Deb Acharia]

reservation for Panchayat Raj system, the agricultural labourers, the *Adivasis* came to power. You will be surprised to know that within six months of Panchayat Raj elections, there was a flood in our State. Seven to eight districts were flooded in 1978. We have seen how the representatives of the people helped the flood-affected people. Even some of the people's representatives lost their lives while helping the flood-affected people.

This Mid-Term Review – an Appraisal has been placed before the House, just after two-and-a-half years of this United Progressive Alliance Government came to power. These reports contain the experience of the people who are involved to make the Panchayat Raj institution a real institution. Seven Roundtable meetings were held. He identified seven subjects. All the Ministers of Panchayat Raj of the States attended the meetings and they deliberated on it. The experts were invited to know the experience, the problems etc. and not only knowing the problems but how these problems can be tackled. All this experience has been compiled and incorporated in this voluminous report.

What are the real problems? One problem is devolution of power. No one wants to share the power with others. After the Central Government, the State Government then comes the Panchayat Raj institution. What will happen if you give them power, what is called activity mapping? Some of the States have very efficiently done it and some of the States are now doing and some of the States will do it in future. What are the real problems that today our Panchayat Raj system or institution is facing?

With devolution of power, if there is no devolution of finance, how can the development work be implemented by the Panchayats? In West Bengal, in 1978, the election was held on the basis of the 1974 Act. That Act was passed when the Congress was in power.

At that time, the Left Front Government did not think that without amending this Congress-enacted Act, they

would not hold the election because the commitment was given to the people of West Bengal that within one year, panchayat elections would be held. On the basis of the Act which was enacted in 1974 when the Congress was in power, the election was held.

Now, we have got the experience. I was also elected to Zila Parishad at that time. I contested election for the first time in my life and got elected. I became a member of the Zila Parishad. I became *Karmadhyaksh, Sthai Samitsi* of Zila Parishad. It is a District Panchayat. What was our experience? At that time, people found their representatives in their villages. At that time, there was no Gram Sabha and there was no Gram Sansad, like social auditing which we are emphasising. Today, we are having *Gram Unnayan Samiti*. We have District Council where the Leader of the Opposition in the Zila Parishad is the Chairman. Here, it has been suggested that something like Public Accounts Committee should be there, but the District Council can be treated as a Public Accounts Committee, whose chairman is the Leader of the Opposition in Zila Parishad. Today, we have *Gram Unnayan Samiti*, after we have got the experience and known the difficulties. Initially we did not have any fund to implement all these projects. People had aspirations because there was no road, no water, no drinking water, no irrigation system etc.

Sir, this is a very important subject and three voluminous reports are there. So, I will take some time.

Sir, there was no drinking water, no irrigation system, no primary school in villages. So, we faced the problem of funds in fulfilling all these things; I am talking of civic amenities required for human life. Gradually, the State Finance Commission was constituted and Panchayati Raj Institutions started receiving funds.

Sir, you will be surprised to know that we found the panchayats headed by the poorest among the poor, the tribals, the *adivasis*, the Scheduled Castes, the agricultural labourers performing and discharging their responsibilities efficiently, without any corruption. That is our experience.

Today, after 24 years, we are still discussing about devolution, devolution of power, devolution of various Departments and various subjects. What is our experience of the last 24 years? Why have we not yet been able within these 24 years to fulfill the task, which was set out in 73rd and 74th amendments to the Constitution?

Hence, our Minister had to go around the country. He has visited almost all the States. He has also attended the Gram Sabha meetings. He went to the villages to get the experience of how the Panchayati system is running. But even after 24 years, we are still discussing the devolution of powers. According to me, more and more powers are to be devolved. Otherwise, the dream of Mahatma Gandhi would not be fulfilled that real power should be given to the people of our country.

Today, we have agrarian crisis as the farmers are committing suicide. Can our Panchayati Raj system not help these farmers? The Prime Minister while addressing a meeting of the Chief Ministers gave this innovative idea or good concept that in order to bridge the gap we have to empower the people financially. He stated that : "The rural business hub, which is a Chinese model". If the people are not empowered financially, then industrialization will take place in the urban areas.

A Committee was constituted for disbursal of industries in 1976, and that Committee's recommendations have not yet been implemented. The Committee also recommended that industries should be setup in rural areas for disbursal of industries in our country, but this has not been done. He has stated about Public-Private Partnership in the Report. What has China done? China has not only setup big industries and model industries, but China has revived its traditional rural industrial also where more and more employment can be given. We also have traditional industries, and rural industries. The Panchayati Raj system can help to revive these rural industries. This is possible with a change of policy outlook, and attitude of the Government. Our rural industries can be modernized and can be revived, and more and more

people given employment with technological and scientific help.

Today, unemployment is growing, but the growth of employment opportunities is much less in rural areas as compared to urban areas. The growth in employment opportunities in the rural areas is only 0.95 per cent whereas the population growth is 1.87 per cent. Therefore, unemployment is growing. The real issue is to empower the people financially, and politically. Politically means, by electing them to the Panchayati Raj system, and to financially empower them to give employment; create a centre or hub in one Panchayat Samiti or in one block development area where our traditional industries are there. I can give you examples for the same. Purulia is famous for lac, which they sell in my district. There are very good cottage industries and there are lac growers there. There are more than one lakh families engaged in lac growing. Can the Panchayati Raj institution not help these people who are engaged in traditional farming and traditional industries?

I come from Bankura constituency in West Bengal. Bankura is a District where the largest number of rural artisans are there engaged in potteries, bell metal, brass, terracotta, etc. Our terracotta horses are world famous. The Minister of Railways has seen those handicrafts. *[Translation]* We have presented you a terracotta horse and a tumbler. That is very good...*(Interruptions)* Lajuji will go there. He is an old friend of mine. Mani Shankar Aiyar ji will also go there.

MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD) :
Please gift a terracotta horse to him also.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Shri Acharia, please address the Chair.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Sir, Bankura is the District in where there is the largest number of rural artisans.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : You have taken more than half an hour. Please conclude now.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Sir, these rural artisans need help. These rural artisans hope is the concept paper which is in the conceptual stage even after one year. The Prime Minister spoke in the month of June and then he reiterated in the month of December but till date nothing has been done in this regard to materialize it. Our Minister might be busy, he was busy for preparation of this report and going around the country but this is also important. Why is it important? Financially we will have to empower the rural people thereby we can help the self-help groups. Lakhs of self-help groups have been created today in the State of West Bengal. There are more than four lakh self-groups. They are producing various commodities... I have requested Lalaji when he was in West Bengal that products of self-help groups [Translation] we have asked the Railways to purchase the products from self-help groups of women...(Interruptions)

[English]

So, this rural business will definitely help our self-help groups. Lakhs of self-help groups have been formed. They are producing various commodities. There is a problem of marketing. This will definitely help in marketing of the production of self-help groups.

In Panchayats there is a sub-plan for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes but there is no sub-plan for minorities. Sarkaria Commission had submitted its report. It was suggested that a sub-plan should be there for minorities also. The Minister has gone through the report, the conditions of Muslims, the minorities in the rural areas is worse. It is not any better than that of Dalits.

THE MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ, MINISTER OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS AND MINISTER OF DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH EASTERN REGION (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR) : You mean, Sanchar Committee?

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Yes, Sanchar Committee.

I am sorry I said Sarkaria Commission. So, when there is a sub-plan, certain percentage of funds are earmarked for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Therefore, my suggestion is that there should be a sub-plan for minorities and a percentage of the funds should be earmarked for the development of minorities also.

I have seen the statement of Dr. Raghuvansh Prasad Singh. While referring to the Employment Guarantee Scheme, he has in his mind that some funds should be earmarked for the minorities also, particularly, Muslims, for their development.

[Translation]

SHRI LALU PRASAD : They have forgotten.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : You do that.

[English]

Transparency is required in *Gram Sabhas* and *Gram Sansad*. Corruption is really a problem but it is not a major problem. Even if there is a percent corruption, then, we should give serious thought to it. Once while inaugurating the meeting of the *Panchayats* in Kolkata, Shri Raji Gandhi, the then Prime Minister, said that when we send one rupee from Delhi, it becomes only 25 paise when it reaches the people. [Translation] There is a large scale misappropriation of fund is midway [English] So, in order to reduce corruption or root out corruption, what is required is transparency in the functioning of the Panchayats.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Some other Members of your Party also want to take part in the discussion. Hence, please conclude. Otherwise, we will not be able to conclude the discussion.

(Interruptions)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : I am not speaking on behalf of my Party. My party's time will be given to other speakers. I am conscious about this.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : No. The time allotted is four hours. We have to conclude this debate within four hours.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : It has been decided that the debate on this will continue till 10 o'clock. In the meeting, you were also present. At the end of the discussion, hon. Minister would reply. We will be here to hear his reply.

Transparency is required. How can we bring this transparency? A system can be introduced where people would know as to how much is the work, as to how much funds have been allocated, how many people are working, and how many man-days would be created? Frequency of the meeting of *Gram Sansad* should also be increased now. As per the rules, the meeting of *Gram Sansad* should be held twice a year. One meeting will be held in the month of June and another in the month of November, Holding a meeting in November is a problem because of harvesting. So, I hope the hon. Minister would definitely think over it. During harvest period, people do not find time to attend the meeting. Now when *Gram Sabha* meeting is held, a system of social audit is carried out and institutionalized because in *Gram Sabha* meeting, *Pradhan* has to submit the details of the expenditure - as to how much funds has been received by him, as to how much expenditure has been made, as to which are the projects which are undertaken. Even vouchers have to be submitted.

So, these meetings should be held frequently. Likewise, the Panchayat *sansad*, zila parishad *sansad* and the *gramin* committee where people elect their representatives to oversee the functioning of the Panchayats, should also be institutionalized.

Today, panchayat is not just engaged in the development of the rural areas. The Rural Health Mission has already been launched; it has the responsibility, but with lack of infrastructure and with lack of staff, how can this responsibility be discharged? We have to think over it. Unless there is participation of people - through panchayats, people's participation can be made - how can we have total sanitation? I have already told that only 6.89 per cent of the rural population has access to toilets.

Education is also the responsibility of the PRIs today.

There has to be a real participation of the people. How the local assets can be utilized today? Without giving more power both financial and otherwise, the PRIs will not be able to discharge its responsibility.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Please conclude now. You have taken more than sufficient time.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Now, there is a need to re-look - with the experience that we have got during the last 24 years - at the difficulties and problems, and we have to make the PRIs as the real institutions.

14.58 hrs.

[SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV *in the Chair*]

It will transform the lives of the people who are living in the rural areas. There is a big gap between urban and rural and that has to be bridged. How can we and how will we be able to bridge this gap? The basic amenities, the basic infrastructure, irrigation facilities, agricultural production, health, sanitation, education - all these activities are to be properly done by the PRIs. For that, there is a need for political will. Unless there is political will, we will not be able to make these PRIs, real institutions. What we have seen in the past? The panchayats were under the control of certain sections of the people of our country, whose interest was to protect the interests of a few people of the rural areas.

15.00 hrs.

After 73rd and 74th amendments reservations were made and there was a change in the balance of power in rural areas. That has to be made real, otherwise the Panchayati Raj Institution will not be able to discharge its responsibilities. There is a need to strengthen it; strengthen with an aim to serve the people of rural area.

I was talking about the empowerment of the people for which land reform is required. Today barring two or three States, land reforms have not been implemented. The number of agricultural labourers is increasing because there is crisis in the agricultural production. Agricultural production

[Shri Basu Deb Acharia]

is reducing. We have seen in a number of districts in West Bengal, during these 30 years of Panchayati Raj Institution, there is a growth in the agricultural production. There is a complete change in the rural economy. Unless there is a change in the rural economy we cannot say that we, or our country, are progressing. There lies the role of Panchayati Raj Institution. I hope, that after seven round table meetings, after so many deliberations, preparation of voluminous report and the suggestions that have come, the Government will seriously think over them to make the Panchayati Raj system a real institution of the rural people of our country.

[Translation]

KUNWAR MANVENDRA SINGH (Mathura) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, today a very important subject is being discussed and I rise to speak on the condition of Panchayats. We all know that rural India comprised of about 80% area of the country. I would like to talk about the rural population. When freedom movement was launched under the leadership of the father of the nation, Mahatma Gandhi, he gave the slogan of 'Gram Swarajya'. Before jumping into the freedom struggle, he visited the length and breadth of the country, particularly rural India to find out the actual position of rural areas where people were not able to earn their daily bread.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, since then the deliberations and study for the development of rural areas and development of 'Gram Sabha's have been set into motion. For the first time since independence former Prime Minister, Late Shri Rajiv Gandhi had made efforts in this direction. I am fortunate that at that time also I was elected to this House from the same Mathura Parliamentary constituency. He was the first person who got the first Panchayati Raj Act passed in the House and after the enactment of the Act funds were given directly to Gram Sabhas through the district headquarters from the Union Government. Gram Pradhan or Sarpanch of the Gram Panchayat discussed the proposals with elected body of Gram Panchayat and work

was done as per the proposal. This arrangement holds good even today. Through Gram Panchayat funds are being utilized for the development work of the village. Since then, the system has been improving with the improvement in the study of the scheme and as it was discussed in this August House.

I would like to congratulate the Hon'ble Prime Minister, the UPA Government and Chairperson of UPA and President of the Congress Party, Mrs. Sonia Gandhi for launching the Rashtriya Grameen Rozgar Yojana in order to provide employment to the rural folk. Another scheme was drafted alongside and Rs.5 crore sanctioned under the Backward Region Development Fund created under the scheme. The scheme will be implemented through the Ministry of Panchayati Raj. With the implementation of the said scheme, the hon'ble Minister of Panchayati Raj, Shri Mani Shankar Aiyer will have to share an added responsibility although he is a competent, efficient and intellectual person. I think that under his leadership, Gram Panchayats will be strengthened and the concerns of this August House regarding the rural development will be addressed. I believe that under his leadership sincere efforts will be made by his Ministry for the development of each Gram Sabha in every State of the country.

Sir, we often visit the rural areas and we are well aware of the factual position of those areas. All the hon'ble Members of the House are well aware of the rural development as there are rural areas in each parliamentary constituency. The need of the hour is to provide power and basic facilities for the development of Gram Panchayats. It is found that a number of schemes are being implemented by the Government of India all over the country and Union Government provides funds to the districts headquarter for the same. The funds have been provided to the Gram Panchayats for the development works under Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana and the same work has been carried out through Gram Panchayats. I would like to bring to the notice of the hon'ble Minister through the Chair that Gram Panchayat has been provided

the funds on the basis of population. Large population areas receive huge funds and areas having less population receive lesser fund but a larger area with low population also requires development. Those areas require roads and other facilities. Hence, I would like to request the hon'ble Minister to consider the area of the village alongwith the population while allocating the funds. The State Finance Corporations have fixed some norms for construction of Kharanjas drains, culverts and buildings only but apart from this there are various requirements of the Gram Sabha for which the Gram Sabha itself should propose and pass the proposal and I would like to request the hon'ble Minister that State Finance Corporation should allocate sufficient funds as per those proposals so that development works may not be initiated under the stress of limited resources and range of development works may be increased. There is a scheme of the Government namely Sampurna Swachhata-Ek Abhiyan for the villages. Under the said scheme Rs.1500 have been earmarked for the construction of toilets so that toilets may be constructed in each household of the village. I would like to give my suggestion to the hon'ble Minister through the Chair that many poor people could not be covered under the scheme and they were deprived of the benefits of the scheme. Many rural people including women and children go to toilet in open fields which is a shame in the context of modern society. Hence it is necessary to construct separate community toilets for men and women. Moreover, rural people may be provided employment on daily wages basis at the rate of Rs.58 per day so that they may take care of their cleanliness and the community toilets must be establish at the land of Gram Sabha in rural regions as per the proposal of Gram Sabhas. This amount of Rs.1500 should be increased as we generally experience in meetings held in various districts that people demand the amount should be increased so that good toilets may be constructed in their houses.

Alongwith this, I would like to request the hon'ble Minister through the Chair that the amount of Rs.25,000 has been fixed for Indira Awas Yojana. As Minister of Rural Development has stated that a relief of Rs.20,000 is given

to the owners of houses dismantled in arson, floods and natural disasters. I would like to submit that earlier there was a provision for one room, toilet, kitchen alongwith a varandah but later on the Government discontinued this scheme and a lump sum amount of Rs.20,000 is being given. I would request to hon'ble Minister to enhance the amount at least upto Rs.35,000/- as the rates of bricks, labour and cement have been raised manyfold and we are demanding the hon'ble Minister that this amount should be raised by Rs.50,000/-.

Apart from this provision for a unit, a room, a toilet, kitchen and varandah must be made therein. We are planning to push India into Green Revolution. Earlier there was provision for forestry in the land of Gram Sabhas. Proposal for plantation in the land of Gram Sabha may be made. I would like to request the hon'ble Minister that earlier there was a provision to spend 15% of the amount allotted for development of Gram Sabha on plantation but now it has been stopped. I would request the hon'ble Minister to resume above provision as deforestation is going on. Plantation is necessary for the safety of environment. Gram Sabhas will pay attention towards plantation only if they get some amount for it. Moreover, the condition of primary and junior schools is very pathetic. Funds are being allotted but on a visit to our constituencies we find that funds are not sufficient. The schools have been converted into ruins and buildings have collapsed. Students are forced to study under trees. There are many such places in every district and I think you should pay special attention towards it as the children are the future of the country. Primary education is a important, therefore, education must be provided to them with all the facilities. Apart from this, there is lack of health care as well. I would request you and I have raised this point before this august House many a time because there is general complaint that the doctors do not visit primary health centres or thirty bed hospitals set up at tehsil as well as block level. They avoid to visit villages. As a result, the people of the villages are deprived of the medical facilities. Lady doctors do not reach at the time of delivery. Therefore, I request that Rural Medical Health Services may be established so as the

[Kunwar Manvendra Singh]

enrollment of the doctors as well as their services may be regulated under Rural Health Services and it would be a binding for doctors to serve in rural regions.

I would like to advise that there are about 200 districts included under the first half of the Rastriya Grameen Rozgar Guarantee Yojana being run by the Union Government. I belong to Uttar Pradesh Mathura is the birth place of Bhagwan Srikrishna. I would request that Mathura may also be included in the Second phase of the said scheme alongwith other districts. I thank the Government of India, the UPA Government for providing mid day meal to school children. But many a complaint regarding mid day meal have been received wherein complaints about underutilization of meals have been made. I would like to bring it to your kind notice that there is an institution namely "Akshay Patra" in Mathura, I have been there many times. I would like to appreciate the said institute through this house. This institute is providing lunch to more than 60,000 students in Mathura district and probably in other districts as well. They are giving daal, subji and roti in the meals, They have big hot cases and containers and distributed lunch through mobile vans. Apart from this they are distributing halwa or kheer once in a week. As a result of this tendency the number of students has increased as the poor students who are unable to get one time food are getting here pure and good food. I have also enjoyed that food. The institute has started this work in Akshay Park, Vrindavan...(Interruptions). They assured me to provide lunch to more than one lakh students by New Year. I would request that such type of institute may be involved therein so that the utilization of funds allotted may be ensured.

Alongwith this, I would like to request that computers, internet and telephone facilities may be provided at Gram Sabha or block and tehsil level in today's world of computers and electronics. Telephone facilities are being provided in villages but are insufficient; they must be increased.

Hon'ble Minister, Sir, I another submission that we take up urban development. There are development authorities that construct houses. They get loan from banks...(Interruptions). Are not rural citizens the citizens of India...(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now, please conclude.

KUNWAR MANVENDRA SINGH : Please allow me for two minutes more.

Are we unable to establish rural development authority in order to provide good houses by making available bank loans to rural people...(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now none of your points will go on record. Sh. Shailendra Kumar, you may speak now.

KUNWAR MANVENDRA SINGH : I am going to conclude in a minute.

MR. CHAIRMAN : There are ten more hon'ble MPs from your party who will speak. Sh. Shailendra Kumar, you please start. Nothing but only your points will go on record.

KUNWAR MANVENDRA SINGH : Mr. Chairman, Sir, accomodation facilities may be provided them there.

There is shortage of time; therefore, I condude.

SHRI SHAILENDRA KUMAR (Chayal) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am highly grateful to you that you have provided me an opportunity to speak on the "condition of panchayat-Madhyavadi Sameeksha Evam Ankalan-2006" laid on the table of Lok Sabha by Smt. C.S. Sujatha on 23.11.2006. Panchayti Raj is the foundation stone of our Democracy. It is a fact that more then 75% people of the country live in villages. As hon'ble members have stated that it is also a fact that the credit of giving shape to the dream of Mahatama Gandhi regarding economic empowerment of Panchayti Raj in our democracy goes to Ex. Prime Minister; late Shri Rajeev Gandhi; who had thought that our democracy could be strengthen by decentralization of power. It was his presumption. I feel pride to state that when

panchayati raj system was implemented in Uttar Pradesh; hon'ble Mulayam Singh Yadav started reservation therein. Because of it all the women belonging to Scheduled Castes, Backward classes, or Muslim women earned respect everywhere whether elected as a Chairman of the district Panchayat, Block Prāmukh, member of district Panchayat or B.D.C. Pradhan. They have got equal participation and status. Panchayati Raj Mantralaya was constituted on 27 May 2004. Previously, this Ministry was under the Ministry of Rural Development. A conference was held on 27-28 January, 2003 of the State Ministers of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj and rural development to empower the Gram Sabhas. The main aim of it was to give thrust to the poverty alleviation, rural prosperity and development of villages. If the villages cannot prosper how can poverty be eradicated and how can villages develop. 150 points had been raised in this conference. It had been decided to implement it in the States and two Union Territories. Its main objective was to transfer works, funds and workers of Panchayati Raj Institutions. At the same time panchayats had the power to make appointments of around thirty thousand teachers at panchayat level. Along with it, all points i.e. work effectiveness, delivery, finance, workers arrangements, gram sabha women, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and reservation, special problems of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, election audit, parallel body, capacity building and investigation, Panchayat Report and judicial process etc. had been included with priority.

Hon'ble Minister is sitting here. He is thinking to introduce a Bill on Nyaya Panchayat level in the Parliament. In my view, it would be a revolutionary step. It is necessary to constitute a nyaya panchayat with a view to deal with the mutual disputes. There are a number of petty cases which come in Kachehri, Tehsil and police stations and it creates problems there. Therefore, it would have special importance in implementing Panchayati Raj. The Bill which the Minister is likely to introduce is welcome.

As you have expressed concern that naxalism or terrorism is an impediment in implementing Panchayati Raj

throughout the country. It would be possible only when all the naxalites or tribals living in the forest, who are opposing, should have been given facilities in society in the name of Panchayati Raj but they have not got. This was the reason that they got separated from the mainstream. The solution to this problem can be sought through mutual dialogue. Nyaya Panchayats will be there to find out solutions of the rural disputes and I think this will be done. There are now a number of criminal cases. In my view the crimes may be checked if panchayats are given powers and rights. Hon'ble Minister has also called upon the youth to strengthen panchayati raj system. A number of youth have been elected under this panchayati raj system. They have also been called upon to make aware the rural masses and ensure their participation in the rural development.

So far as the rights of the panchayats are concerned, it is correct that due to financial constraints in our panchayati system, the officials do not want to pay attention to problems whether he is a panchayat secretary. They have been given powers under panchayati system. They act on their own will.

It is a fact that some poor candidates have also been elected on village level and some downtrodden candidates have also been elected. Powerful people have anyhow elected them with their money power but their position is just like a bonded labourer, they can not take decision on their own and they are unable to fight exploitation and atrocity they have gone through. I would like to suggest regarding this that we should pay special attention to it and it should be monitored from time to time. At last 32 lakh representatives have been elected in panchayats and zila parishads throughout the country. Out of them about 12 lakh women candidates have been elected. It is also a fact that such a large number is well enough for any revolutionary change and if we empower them in a proper way, I feel that it would facilitate development at village level. So far as the Central Government has a perception to organize zila panchayat as an administrative service in which it has been

[Shri Shailendra Kumar]

envisaged to keep the locals between the age group of 22-55 in that service. It is a good idea, It would bring a revolution, a movement. This way the Union Government would be able to have direct contact with Gramin Panchayat and you may get the information as to how much funds are being given to them and how much development is taking place. Direct link between the Gram Panchayat and the Union Government will in itself be good for development. It would be useful in the sense that all the programmes to be run at village level may be implemented effectively and a proper monitoring may be made and that funds may reach at the village level. Presently funds are sent to the State Government, State Government sends the funds to the district and then it is sent to the panchayat by the district. The fact is that due to corrupt officers and middlemen, as our former Prime Minister late Shri Rajiv Gandhi had said, that a panchayat gets only ten paise out of one rupee sent by the Union Government and 90 paise get embezzled during the process. It would be a fact to a great extent if this is the thinking of the Prime Minister of the country. We will have to take steps to curb this practice. Every year Rs. 55 thousand crores to 60 thousand crores are spent in the budget. It is a fact that the funds amounting to thousands of crores of rupees are misused and are not used properly. We would have to think in this regard.

Secondly, an improvement is very much needed with regard to school education, girl's education, nutrition to children and pregnant women, widow and handicapped pension, construction of toilets and maturity centers. A lot of facilities have been given by the Union Government; pension has also been increased. As an hon'ble Member said that the funds are required to be increased. It is a fact that it not possible for a family to manage their subsistence, clothing and shelter with such a small money in the present time of rising prices. Therefore, the funds are required to be increased. It is also a fact that awareness has come among women. If there is an issue to open a wine shop in the village, the women today are

so empowered and organized that they oppose it strongly. This picture shows a situation that with the women getting elected in a number of panchayats and with their increased participation, a revolution has come and we have proceeded on the path of progress. The other point I would like to make is that financial powers that were to be given to the panchayats under the Constitution have not yet been given. We need to pay attention in this regard. The Panchayats will not be powerful unless financial powers are given to them, they cannot progress and the democracy will not be strengthened. As far as Rs. 72,000 crores budget is concerned, about Rs. 39073.18 crore and Rs. 3825.72 crore have been separately earmarked for the Ministry of Rural Development and Ministry of Panchayat Raj respectively. These funds are required to be increased and it may also be increased. As it has also been mentioned in this report of the Standing Committee of Parliament that a provision may be made to give more than Rs. 40000 crores to the Ministry in comparison to the funds of Rs. 72000 crores earmarked for 39 subjects. Considering this recommendation, if the amount of funds is increased, then it may provide a better facility. About Rs. Six Kharab are spent every year on rural development. This amount of funds is given by the Union Government to the district administration and later it is sent to the panchayats in the end. We are making efforts to make thorough changes in it. Your perception is right that the Union Government should directly release funds to the panchayats. The Union Government should make direct monitoring at the village level. It may lead to development to a great extent. This way the interference of the middlemen would come to an end. Then the country would make progress and the democracy will be strengthened.

With these words I would like to say that the suggestions made during the discussion should be taken into account so that country may progress.

SHRI GANESH PRASAD SINGH (Jahanabad) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I extend my thanks to you for providing me an opportunity to participate in the discussion on a report on the status of Panchayats-Mid-term Appraisal and Assessment-2006.

Sir, my previous speakers have said a lot which reflects that there has really been carelessness for ages in establishing and in the maintenance of Panchayati Raj System. The Father of Nation, Mahatma Gandhi once said that our economic development will get dovetailed with the development of villages and for the prosperous villages he had dreamt of Panchayati Raj System. Later on Dr. Ram Manohar Lohiya ji dreamt of the same. He always used to talk of the decentralization of power. Further, the then Prime Minister Late Chaudhary Charan Singh also said that the real India resides in the villages. Unless and until these villages are developed, we cannot realize the dream of real India. India cannot become prosperous unless the villages are made prosperous.

After independence we resolved to evolve Panchayati Raj System. A number of committees were constituted for that purpose. Even laws were enacted to put the Panchayati Raj System in place in accordance with the reports of those committees. Later on, amendments were also brought to them from time to time. Following those amendments it seems the Panchayati Raj System may be strengthened. A decision was taken by the then Prime Minister Late Rajiv Gandhi's Government to delegate powers direct to the Panchayats. For that purpose, a law was enacted. He also decided that funds allocated by the Government should be released directly to Panchayats. Today's concept is very impractical as our representatives of Panchayats are from the rural background.

Sir, the persons who can better visualize the basic requirements for the development of villages and can understand the difficulties of rural people are the representatives of Panchayats. They are even better than the bureaucrats. They happen to know about any natural calamity or any unforeseen incident sooner than the officers and senior officers of the administration.

I would like to say that the Panchayati Raj System is the cornerstone of the democracy. If this system happens to be the cornerstone of a country, the country will prosper. It is necessary to adopt and put in place the Panchayati Raj System to strengthen the country. Elections to the

Panchayats were also conducted from time to time but they were totally unmanaged. At some places elections for Mukhiya was conducted and not for Sarpanch. At other place the elections for Mukhiya and Sarpanch were conducted but election for Pramukh could not be conducted. If election for Pramukh was conducted, the election for the Chairman was not conducted. This process continued for years. May be, the power that be intended not to decentralize the powers. How can the dreams of our forefathers, thinkers and socialist leaders be realized?

Even today, my previous speaker, Shri Shailendra Ji was telling that more and more funds should be given to the Panchayats. It is said about the Panchayats that Panchayats call for not only good governance but also self governance. Self governance is more important. Through this the Panchayats should get a mechanism for governance. What will the mechanism consist of has been provided in the law. According to this, the elected representatives of the Panchayats will have control over certain Government departments and the Sarpanch will have the power to decide petty cases. But today, neither my such mechanism has been evolved nor any sort of resources have been provide to the Panchayats. So, how is this system going to contribute to the development of the country? The same had been realised earlier also and even Premchand ji has said that the arbitrators (Panch) are next to God but there is no proper arrangement for their sitting. Today, Panchayat Judicial System has not been formed across the country. I think if establishment of Panchayati Raj System is completed, the petty cases, would not go to the police stations or to the courts and ultimately the fees to be paid to lawyers and the time which is trifled away in pursuing the cases by the persons would be saved. The three tier Panchayati Raj System has not been formed fully in accordance with the intention of our Government and forefathers. The Three tier Panchayati Raj System should be provided all required resourced.

Alongwith this, I would also like to say that the election to the Panchayats were conducted in which representation has been provided to the persons of all the communities.

[Shri Ganesh Prasad Singh]

But what is its use? You too are aware that during the Rashtriya Janta Dal regime the erstwhile Chief Minister Shrimati Rabri Devi had decided to hold elections to the Panchayats in Bihar. The election process was successfully completed. At that time, the elected representatives of the Gram Sabha had the power to dismiss officials. If the same power is vested in bureaucracy, the bureaucrats will be involved in getting someone dismissed by way of manipulating the representation for serving their own ends and for getting bribes. Elections were concluded in Bihar. In the regime of the Chief Minister, Shri Nitish Kumar, recently a rule has been framed under which SDO, Collector and Commissioner have been authorized to take action on each and every matter and if they desire they can dismiss them. About their financial powers, I would like to give an example of Bihar. The representative of the Panchayats have not been conferred any financial powers in Bihar. Earlier, Mukhiya and the Chairperson of Zila Parishad used to have some powers, but today they have been stripped of these powers. The powers of Mukhiya and Pramukh have been transferred to the B.D.O. and of Zila Parishad to the DM.

Today, there is acute poverty and shortage of the basic facilities in the rural areas of India. Education, road connectivity and the availability of drinking water are the requisites for the rural development. Our colleague Manavendraji was saying about all these things. Toilets are not available there. I came from a village. No sooner does the evening set in than our heads bow with shame in villages. How can toilets be made available there? The Central Government releases funds to the State Government and it releases the fund to the Collector and Collector to the B.D.O. In spite of undergoing this procedure the funds remain unutilized. My suggestion is that the funds should be released directly to the Panchayats. A separate monitoring mechanism should be established to monitor and to see whether the funds released by the Central Government are properly utilized or not. Only then the concept of Panchayati Raj System will be suitable and acceptable.

[English]

PROF. M. RAMADASS (Pondicherry) : Sir, on behalf of PMK, at the outset, I would like to appreciate and applaud the United Progressive Alliance Government, headed by world-renowned economist, Dr. Manmohan Singh, ably aided and assisted by Madam Sonia Gandhi, for a simple reason that this Government accords a place of primacy to panchayati raj institutions in this country. Believing in the dictum that the development of the people signifies the development of the nation, this Government has undertaken a large number of social measures which are designed to improve the levels of living in the rural and hinter lands of this country. As a testimony of this fact, it is this Government which for the first time in the history of this country has created a separate Ministry of Panchayati Raj. Having understood the problems, the cobwebs and challenges in which these panchayati raj institutions are caught, this Government felt that they should create a separate Ministry and is has done so. Not only that, it has found a committed person, it has identified a devoted person who could man this Ministry and there was no other better person than hon. Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar who was entrusted with this task of moulding, shaping and then developing the grass-root level institutions of panchayati raj. Therefore, I appreciate this Government for creating a Ministry of Panchayati Raj.

Secondly, I also express my deep sense of appreciation for hon. Minister of Panchayati Raj and his dedicated band of officials who have produced three voluminous documents which explain and exemplify the status of panchayats today. One must imagine the amount of hard work; the amount of imagination; and the amount of scholars or scholasticity, which has gone into the work of these three volumes of report.

I had the opportunity of going through these three volumes. The first volume contains nine chapters running into 126 pages, and it gives the preliminaries of Panchayats starting from the overview, and commencing with the comments of our Father of the nation. It gives the

challenges up to the challenges. The second volume running into 438 pages gives the profiles of 24 States, and six Union Territories (UTs). The third volume runs into 993 pages, and it gives the Constitutional provisions relating to Panchayats; their Reports; letters; and speeches of former Prime Ministers and the present Prime Minister on the efficacy of the Panchayati Raj institution. I would rate that this as one of the first research reports that the UPA Government has brought in the last 2½ years. Any researcher – whether he is a Phd. scholar or doing some research in an institute—must heavily bank upon these volumes of data, which contains work on Panchayati Raj. Therefore, I must appreciate the Minister, and his dedicated team of officials, who have provided this document.

With this appreciation, let me take up the issue of my own State. I think the hon. Minister as well as the UPA Government should not take it otherwise. It is my duty to bring it to the notice of the Government at a time when we are discussing the status of Panchayats in India, The UT of Puducherry is a component of this country, and this UT did not have Panchayat elections for 38 years. It was only after 2004 – when the matter was raised in this House by me as a Member of Parliament – that the Minister of Panchayati Raj took it up seriously with the Government of Puducherry, and the elections were conducted there. Now, elections were conducted, and 1,338 local representatives are in place. Today, it is 141 days after the elections, but there is no devolution of functions, functionaries or funds that everybody talks about.

The hon. Prime Minister on 22nd of this month addressed the elected representatives of Panchayats at the Vigyan Bhawan. I was also present there. The speech of the Prime Minister was no scintillating as if honey and milk are going to flow into the streets of India, and I thought that everything will go on. But unfortunately, in Puducherry, even after 141 days, the devolution of powers has not taken place. I am moving from pillar to post. I have gone to meet even the highest persons in this Government, but nothing has happened. If the status of Panchayats has to

come to a certain level, then we should be able to bring all the Panchayats on an even footing.

I know that the hon. Minister is very keen that the devolution of powers takes place in the UT of Puducherry. He, his Secretary, his Joint Secretary, all of them came to the UT of Puducherry immediately after the elections; they met the people; and they witnessed how the people are very much enthused about creating Panchayati Raj Institution in Puducherry. I understand that they have also entered into a MoU with the Government of Puducherry, but nothing has happened in spite of all these measures. Where should we go, if I am not to raise this issue in this august House?

I appeal to the hon. Minister to talk to the Chief Minister of Puducherry today itself without further loss of time. I am saying this because I would like to inform the hon. Minister that on 12th of this month the representatives of Panchayats are going to observe a *bandh*, and they have threatened to raise black flags in their houses. Should this happen to a UT – when we have produced three volumes of report on the status of Panchayati Raj – which did not have the benefit of Panchayati Raj elections for 38 years? This is one important point on which I want the hon. Minister to reply.

As regards other issues in general, I would only make a few suggestions to the hon. Minister, who is very keen to establish a sound system of Panchayati Raj system in the country. A review of these three reports tells me that all the Panchayats today are not on an even footing. We ourselves say that the Panchayats in Kerala are the best. This would mean that there are better Panchayats; there are good Panchayats; there are worse Panchayats; and there are worst Panchayats.

It is true that the Government has today articulated its will to give powers to the people democratically. Before 1992, before the 72nd and 73rd amendments could come, the whole country had only about five thousand representatives. Today we have 2,40,288 representatives throughout the country manning 32 lakh panchayats.

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR : In fact, it is the other way round.

PROF. M. RAMADASS : I am sorry. There are about 2.5 lakh Panchayats and about 32 lakh elected representatives. What is gratifying is that women constitute about 37.5 per cent of these representatives. At a time when we are asking for 33 per cent reservation to women in Indian Parliament, Panchayats have shown us the way by giving 37.5 reservation. At this rate, I hope that in the next ten years at least 50 per cent of the representatives in Panchayats will be women. That will be a creditable achievement for the UPA Government.

A Social revolution is taking place. Although the share of SCs in the country's population is about 16 per cent, 19 per cent of the elected representatives in Panchayats are from SC communities and 12 per cent are from ST communities. What else can be a better testimony to the fact that there is a social revolution taking place. If Mahatma Gandhi has been alive today, if Rajiv Gandhi had been alive today, they would have been jumping with joy and jubilation that their dreams have come into reality in this country. It is due to the UPA Government under Madam Sonia Gandhi, Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh, and hon. Minister Mr. Mani Shankar Aiyar that this greatest silent revolution is going on.

The first suggestion I wish to make is that you bring all the Panchayats on an even keel, to an even tempo. The Indian Constitution says that we should have a three-tier Government with the Central Government, the State Government and the Panchayats. Today the Indian Constitution talks about the Union List and the State List. I do not know – the Minister will correct me if I am wrong – where the local bodies list is. It is simply not there. Therefore, I would request the Government to kindly bring a Constitutional amendment to ensure that there is a local bodies list. The Government should bring Schedule 12 back to the local bodies list and make it a lawful provision for the Government so that everything goes automatically.

The third suggestion that I wish to make is about the

participation of people. We have about 32 lakh representatives but how many of them actually participate with real interest is not known. Therefore I, would say that your programme of capacity-building should be extended to these people. They should be trained properly, they should be told what their functions are, what their role is and how they can actively participate in the deliberations of Panchayats. That also has to be taken up.

With regard to decentralization of planning, our aim is to give more and more powers to Panchayats for planning. Our experience in the last ten five-year plans has been that we have embarked upon the process of Central planning. Even for a village, Central planners thought that they knew the remedies and they knew the solutions and hence they have been planning. That is why we are now left with the legacy of poverty in the country even after so many years of planning.

15.59 hrs.

[SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN *in the Chair*]

We have had ten five-year plans and we have had many annual plans. In spite of that what we find is that there is mounting incidence of poverty, there is unemployment growing at a galloping rate, and ignorance has not come down. Therefore, we find all these maladies because of our centralized planning system. People at the lower level should know what they require. If they want a streetlight, they should plan for it. If there is a water supply requirement, they should plan for it. Therefore, decentralized planning in reality is a must.

I would suggest that the 11th Five Year Plan of the Government of India should be a summation of all the District Plans of the country. If there are 6,400 Districts in the country, the summation of all these 6,400 District Plans must be the Central Plan. There are, I know, inter-sectoral linkages. The Government will have to take an overall view about linkages between agriculture, industry environment and all others. But more than those inter-sectoral linkages, the planners must listen, the planners must know that it

is the grassroots' level planning which is emanating from the roots in the villages that must find a place of primacy in the Central Planning Commission.

16.00 hrs.

Therefore, I would request the hon. Minister to take this issue.

Coming to the financial decentralization, most of the local bodies are haunted by paucity of funds. Although many State Governments are willing to give even 20 per cent of their tax revenue to the *Panchayats*, there are many States which are keeping these *Panchayats* in a condition of deserted finance or low finance. Therefore, we should take care of it.

As far as the Centre is concerned, I think that the Central Government is now sending the money of the Centrally-sponsored schemes to the *Panchayats* and additional Central assistance is also given to the *Panchayats*. The Arvind Committee, which has been constituted by the Government, said that it must be reduced from 207 to 25. I would say that there is also a recommendation of the Twelfth Finance Commission. So, all these things must be coordinated. All the funding from the Planning Commission or from the Finance Commission or from the Finance Department or from the Ministry of Panchayati Raj or from the Ministry of Rural Development must be consolidated and it must be channeled to the various *Panchayats*.

Then, the financial accountability must be insisted. Monitoring vigilance must also be taken care of. Most of the *Panchayats* just as they do not have money, they do not have staff; they do not have functionaries. Their functions are transferred but the functionaries are not transferred. Therefore, if these measures are taken care of, I would feel that the status of *Panchayats* would increase further.

Before, I end, I would only like to quote what Jawaharlal Nehru, the architect of modern India and first

Prime Minister of India had said at the time of Independence. After hoisting the flag at the Red Fort, he came down. Someone asked him: What is the objective of Independence and why many of you sacrificed? He replied that the ambition is to wipe out every tear from every Indian eye. That may be beyond us but as long as there are tears, our work will not be over. I think, *Panchayati Raj* will be the surest solution for wiping out the tears of Indian in this country.

[Translation]

SHRI MITRASEN YADAV (Faizabad) : Mr. Chairman Sir, I thank you that you allowed me to speak on this important issue. I would also like to thank the Minister of Panchayati Raj for his this ability and thinking that he proposed to start a parallel administrative service for Panchayats because this is the demand of time and the Ministry of Panchayati Raj and Planning Commissions have given their consent to this suggestion. This is a very important decision being taken but we all know that necessity is the mother of invention. This means that a solution of the problem was found when its need was felt and everything was worked out accordingly.

Why the need of Panchayats was felt? Mahatma Gandhi felt the need of Panchayats with this view if our country gets independence and is self ruled, then our villages should be governed at village level. Why was there an idea of village level governance? It so happened because in our country the social and economic inequality is so wide that we cannot eliminate it through our high sounding speeches. Some hon'ble Members have given very good suggestions but unless we water the root there is no use in watering the leaves because the crop grows from the root. What is the defect in Panchayati Raj System? Why the villages are getting deprived of happiness and peace and why evils are prevailing there. Until you try to go into the root cause and efforts are not directed to eliminate it, the problems may not be solved because illness is cured only when it is diagnosed properly. Thoughts of Mahatma Gandhi about our Gram Panchayats

[Shri Mitrasen Yadav]

belong to which era? That belonged to the Vedic era and what was the economic and social system prevailing in that era? That was not like our present social and economic system. It was not a social system based on religion, casteism and sub casteism or touchability and untouchability. India is the only country in the world where 80 percent of the people are not happy with the economic, social and administrative system of the country and until we aim to bring changes in our basic structure, the problem cannot be solved,

So, funds should be given for development of village panchayats. Some misappropriation of funds take place in the funds that are provided to the village Panchayats for all round development of the panchayats. Money is the main reason because one who is powerful takes it away from us. I understand the feeling of the hon'ble Minister that he wants to develop an administrative system. I think some reforms can be brought in it. But until the Government will take hold of the funding pattern and keep its own watchful eyes on it, till then the loot of the public property will go on uninterruptedly. High Level officials live in the Government flats but they own dozens of houses in various districts by their unfair earnings. But a poor person of the village who earns his bread after toiling and serves his motherland could not even get a piece of land for his children. The bigwigs have lakhs of bighas of land. That country cannot make any progress that fails to bridge the gap between rich and poor that country cannot be reformed. Dalit Community is such a part of the society that toiled and sweated in villages, but now they have been rendered jobless and have no means of livelihood. There is no limit to the rising problem of unemployment in our country. Whatever reforms are being brought in the Panchayati Raj System, they are not being implemented and it can be seen by the Minister himself. In our country Rs.6 million are given for development of village Panchayats. Out of this how much amount is spent? There are other countries apart from ours which can be cited as an example. What is the condition of villages in those

countries? What are the reasons which hamper progress of our villages whereas villages in other countries are progressing much. Our Government also grant funds and in other countries too it may be granted for development of villages. What is the social and economic system prevailing there? What are the ways applied to eradicate poverty and what is the path of development adopted there? In our country development takes a different path.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Panchayati Raj System does not provide equal opportunity to the people living in the villages, who are poor and victims of economic inequality. Some people take undue advantage of it and some get nothing.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Government launched employment guarantee scheme which is very productive. A person in the village who has nothing to survive can get an employment through it. But the fund for this scheme is being misused blatantly. Whether the Government has reviewed the utilization of this fund? A blatant loot of this fund is going on. The kind of intervention you are planning may not become fruitful in the way the attempts are being made to weaken the Panchayati Raj System in the villages through getting political control over it. So, I request that you make such laws which may free the panchayats from all sorts of evils and strengthen it which is the foundation of democracy and first step towards it then we are ready to support you fully. We need such law.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, there is no drinking water, no electricity, no roads, no work for the people, no schools and no medical facilities available in the villages which are essentially required. There is a strange situation in the villages. People who are feeding other countries of the world, have no water to drink. The people who sell wine in the cities are provided all facilities by the Government.

When a child is born then first of all he is fed on milk. When a person dies then he is fed milk. A person who sells milk is discarded like a dog and a person who sells wine in the cities is looked upon as a millionaires. In the country, where the person selling milk is discarded like an

animal and lakhs of such people are considered dalit and the person who is looting the country is treated like a King then the Panchayati Raj System cannot become successful there. Our Government should also take into account the inequality prevailing in our country. In the way the implementation of Panchayati Raj System is talked and effort is made to establish a Government monitoring mechanism is a welcome step. Alongwith this the funds of the Union Government should reach directly to the Panchayats. In States there are Governments of ruling party in the center as well as opposition parties. They dilute the Panchayati Raj system for their own interest. The funds of the Union Government should reach directly to the Panchayats and a mechanism should be evolved for their proper use through which it should be reviewed. Then only the problem of unemployment could be overcome through the poverty alleviation programme among the rural people by developing Panchayats.

With these words I thank you and conclude my speech.

[English]

SHRI PRABODH PANDA (Midnapore) : At the very outset, I must thank the Chair for having taken up a very important subject for discussion. I think, it is for the first time that the hon. Minister has given a voluminous report as a Mid Term Appraisal or the Review of the Panchayati Raj. We had demanded to the UPA particularly the Mid Term Appraisal of the Common Minimum Programme and in that context the appraisal and review of different Departments. First of all, our Panchayati Raj Minister has come forward and has given us the Mid Term Appraisal of the Panchayati Raj Institution and I must thank him for this. I admire him as he is a very efficient, capable and dynamic Minister.

From Mahatma Gandhi to Shri Rajiv Gandhi, all the stalwarts, the national leaders, of our country said many things about the Panchayati system. It is said that India lives in the villages. So, democracy cannot be fulfilled without giving proper democracy to the villages. If

democracy does not come to the grass root, India cannot fully develop its proper democracy.

Panchayati Raj is already mentioned in the State List but even then the Union Government, both the Houses of Parliament, enacted the Panchayati Raj Act and a new Ministry was set up on 27th May, 2004. Earlier it was handled by the Rural Development Department. So, it is our expectation that the administrative problems and other problems related to the panchayats would be settled and would be given proper emphasis in the present stage. I would like to speak about some specific areas with regard to the appraisal of the Panchayati System.

Firstly, let me speak about the Centrally sponsored schemes for panchayat development and training. It has been mentioned by earlier speakers here that about 30 lakh representatives of panchayats are there across the country. In many States, specially in my State of West Bengal, most of the representatives are coming from poor families and from families belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. They are not trained at all. Most of them do not know how to run the panchayats and they are not equipped for that. More than that, I think, about 8 lakh key officials are engaged in panchayats. They are poorly trained. The point now is, how to train them. The Panchayati Raj Ministry is willing to do it and they are in a position to extend their help to train them and so far, as per the Report of the Standing Committee, only 6 lakh people could be provided training. So, a large number of them are left out. Training given is not sufficient for them. In our Constitution, a great responsibility is placed on the gram panchayats for different kinds of works like social work and other economic activities. It is not only that. There are several developmental and social sector schemes and programmes on health, education, nutrition and drinking water. Now schemes like NREGP have already come into existence and the panchayats are entrusted to discharge their duties properly in every scheme. So, enormous responsibilities are there. But only a limited number of people are trained to discharge their duties. In this condition, how shall we proceed as it is expected?

[Shri Prabodh Panda]

So, my first point is, training is the basic input and that input should be sufficiently provided with by the Union Government, namely, the Panchayati Raj Ministry. The Ministry for Rural Development is also there. But it is bifurcated now and they have allocated funds for schemes like NRID, SIRD ETC. and so on which cater to the panchayati raj institutions. What about those schemes? Even after bifurcation, proper coordination is needed so far as training is concerned. This sort of an appraisal should be there. We should know from the Ministry as regards coordination.

The second point is about devolution of power. Regular election of panchayats does not mean democratization as we desire. Devolution of power is the main thing. After the 73rd amendment of the Constitution, it has been identified in the Eleventh Schedule of the Constitution that 29 subjects should be transferred to the panchayati raj system. But the progress in this respect is very poor. How many States have so far done this devolution of power properly? Have they transferred these 29 subjects to the panchayat system? So, the progress is very poor and not sufficient. How is the Panchayati Raj Ministry looking into this aspect and helping the States so that devolution of power takes place properly within a time-bound programme? It is not that it will go in an unlimited manner.

There should be a time-frame so that the devolution will be completed within the time bound programme.

Sir, funds have been allocated as Grants-in-Aid to augment the consolidated fund of the States. What about the matching contribution provided by the States in regard to the 10th Finance Commission? Since the enactment of the Panchayati Raj Act, we have got so many amendments from 9th Finance Commission to the 12th Finance Commission. I would like to know whether the State Governments have complied with all these or not. The 73rd amendment of the Constitution was enacted. But how far have they responded to that?...*(Interruptions)* Sir, I am concluding within two minutes...*(Interruptions)*

Now, I come to the DPC. This is a very important area. It is to be constituted in every district to consolidate the plans properly by the panchayats. How many districts have come up? They have not formed the District Planning Committee. What about that? What is the attitude of the Planning Commission? In the meeting with the States, what instructions have been given by the Planning Commission in regard to that?...*(Interruptions)*

About partnership between panchayat and industry, as envisaged in the concept of establishment of rural business hubs, what is the progress about that? ...*(Interruptions)*

Sir, now I am coming to a very important area in regard to the panchayati raj. The local self-Government should be transformed into peoples' governance. Without land reforms that cannot be possible. So, to say anything about the development of the panchayats, without land reforms it means to say 'Hemlet without the Prince of Denmark'. So, without land reforms, panchayati raj cannot be successful. This is being neglected. It is already there in the Common Minimum Programme. But now two and a half years have passed, but nothing has been said to that extend. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Panda, your one minute is over. You have taken 12 minutes.

SHRI PRABODH PANDA : Sir, please give me one more minute. My last point is about awarding panchayats for excellence in various fields. It is a very good thing. But it is not coming in the mass media properly. So, proper emphasis should be there and proper publicity should be there.

Sir, with these few words, I conclude.

SHRI JAI PRAKASH (Hissar) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank you very much for giving me this opportunity. Mr. Chairman, Sir, when you are in the chair, I feel nervous. That's why I do not talk much. But when you speak, you are unmoved and unfazed.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, it is true that a very important issue is being discussed today in the House. It is not proper that all our NDA colleagues should have opposed this debate on such an important issue. It is sad that they have staged a walk out. This has exposed them and their intention also before the people of the country. The NDA has been anti rural people. They have proved to be anti-villages by not taking part in the debate.

I extend my thanks to the hon'ble Minister of Panchayati Raj and hon'ble Smt. Sonia Gandhi and Dr. Manmohan Singh that they have brought forth a very topical issue before the people of the country. Before me many of my colleagues were rightly saying that Gandhiji had acknowledged the fact that India lives in our villages. As long as our villages do not progress, India cannot progress, it cannot be prosperous. After that, Shri Rajiv Gandhi also brought and passed Panchayati Raj Amendment Bill in Lok Sabha. Thereby he proved that only congress Party works for welfare of the rural people and it is only Congress party which always make efforts to implement Panchayati Raj and once again we are also trying to do the same thing.

I heard from many of our colleagues that there will be Panchayats in villages. In this regard I have two-four suggestions to make. The hon'ble Minister is sitting over here in this House. First requirement is that Panchayat Ghar needed to be construed in all of the Panchayats throughout the country. There exist no Panchayat Ghars. The Heads of these Panchayats – the Sarpanchs call meeting sometimes here and sometimes there. To avoid this, there should be a Panchayat Ghat in every villages of India. Secondly, the financial health of these Panchayats is very bad. I have a suggestion to the Minister of Panchayati Raj that whatever money is allcated by the Centre it should include the provision for upkeep and maintenance of various facilities constructed there. For example, I come from Hisar-there is LADT Grant, SJRY Grant, District Plan Grant. LADT is used for construction of drainage. Drainages are constructed but nothing is done for their post-construction maintenance. As is provision in

Local Bodies act, sweepers are kept for sanitation purposes. Likewise, Union Government should also provide money directly either to the State Government or Panchayats to provide for permanent employment to such people on regular basis who may be assigned the job of maintenance and sanitation.

Sweepers should be appointed to do this jobs in every village or else, there cannot be any amount of sanitation even if you give any amount of money. All the drainage system get collapsed after some time in the villages. It gets blocked because there is no sewerage system. The water overflows on to the street. There is water logging on the streets. All the money spent by you on construction of the street goes waste. They get destroyed. So, there should be made arrangements for sanitation work in the villages.

On the one hand, you say that 80 per cen population lives in villages on the other hand you do not have any Rural Development Authority like you have Urban Development Authorities for the cities. But appeal though there is Ministry of Urban Development and Ministry of Rural Development also. People living in villages should get all the benefits and facilities like people get in cities. And for that we need a Rural Development Authority also. You allow new colonies in villages but you give Rs.15000/- only to poor for construction of a house under Indira Awas Yojna. It is not possible to construct a house with the meagre amount as the prices of everything is soaring so high. This amount is not sufficient for him. The scheme, Indira Awas Yojna is a very good scheme. I appeal the Minister of Panchayati Raj to increase this amount; otherwise the poor will not get a home in villages.

More number of houses should be constructed for the larger number of poor people under the Yojna and the amount being given under Indira Awas Yojna should be increased to fifty thousand rupees from fifteen thousand rupees. The poor people for whom you are constructing these homes under Indira Awas Yojna should get not less than fifty thousand of rupees. Scheme formulation by Sitting in Delhi will not do. We call it bureaucracy or red-tapism.

[Shri Jai Prakash]

But there people have no experience or knowledge about villages. You decide here and fix Rs.1500 for Sulabh or private toilets. But today I say if you go to Haryana State you will find the harijans there who have no toilets despite being financially sound. They live in pacca houses but they have no toilets. Today you cannot purchase even a toilet sheet for Rs.1500. Even a well cannot be dug with this meagre amount. How will one arrange the remaining amount? Through you I would request the hon'ble Minister of Panchayati Raj that at least I do not believe in giving Rs.1500/- Better you construct toilets for them howsoever amount it may need. Get Sulabh toilets constructed there. Even the Minister of Rural Development had declared that Sulabh toilets would be constructed in every village of the country. I would like to say that Bani i.e. land of Shaamlat is disappearing day by day in our areas. There are no forest area, no Panchayat land, no facility of toilets there, where to go for toilets? When Sulabh toilets are constructed in every village only then Panchayati Raj will exist in this country. Today there is no arrangement of drinking water. Somewhere there is no drinking water, somewhere there is no sewerage and somewhere there is no system for sanitation work. All these facilities which are as of now, not available should be taken note of by Panchayati Raj Minister. This is my request to the Minister that separate Rural Development Agency should be formed for the development of villages so that facilities given to the urban people is provided with to the villages people also. We are not against our urban people. We do talk about the welfare of rural people because we were born in villages and we hail from rural areas. The Chief Minister of Haryana had chalked out a scheme about six months ago. I would like to say to the Panchayati Raj Minister that this scheme should be implemented throughout the country and all the expenditure involved therein should be borne by the Union Government. Our State Haryana has given to every Sarpanch a pocket money of Rs.1000/-. Before me, a colleague from SP was saying that in case of any controversy in village regarding Panchayat

level, Sarpanch is required to go to the court. But for that no financial arrangement has been made and there is no TADA. For this purpose, a sum of Rs.1000/- has been given by Haryana Government and a sum of Rs.200/- has been given to every Panchayat Member...(Interruptions) Likewise we have been given to Members of district council, to the Numberdars and to the Chowkidars. Chowkidar belongs to Dalit community. Our Government have given them twelve hundred rupees per month. Such a financial arrangement should exist in every village of the country so that people may get to know that UPA Government is concerned about the welfare and interests of all be it a former or employee or a trader or a labourer. It takes care of everyone. In old age pension fifty per cent is contributed by the Centre and fifty per cent is contributed by the State Government. Like this the Union Government should bear the salary of Sarpanch, Member of Panchayat, Member of District Council, fourth class workers in Block Committees etc. and other allowances provided by the Government should be introduced in the entire country. Half of it should be contributed by the Centre and the rest of half should be contributed by the State Governments. This is very suggestion to the Hon'ble Minister.

Gramin Rojgar Guarantee Yojna has been introduced in the country. When Smt. Sonia Gandhiji stood and started her speech, entire country was looking at her. I have a suggestion to make in this regard. It has been introduced in two districts of Haryana. I would like to say that the representatives of Panchayats should also be included in it. The officers holding higher position should not be allowed to arbitrarily. Trolleys, Camal and "Rehras" should also be covered and get benefit. The representatives of village should also be included in it so that when allocation of money is made, they should also get their share. The Union Government give money for mid-day meal. Food is prepared in villages but the amount is inadequate to meet the requirement.

The funds should be increased for that scheme and public representatives of Panchayat and district level

should be included in that. The most important thing is that today the whole country is saying that there should be development in villages. These three - four Ministries are different, Health department is different, nurses provide help in delivery cases in villages and they get allowance for this in cities. So in the same manner, officers in the villages should also get allowance.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Mr. Jaiprakash, there are nine other speakers who want to participate in this debate. So, please conclude now.

[Translation]

SHRI JAI PRAKASH : Panchayats should have full control over the Panchayati Raj System, whether it is education, whether it is medical treatment or people related to the management of revenue. Only then full Panchayati Raj will be implemented, otherwise the Sarpanch of a Panchayat has no identity. Deputy Commissioner, who is an officer can suspend, can terminate a Sarpanch, who is elected by village and is a public representative. I would like to urge to Minister of Panchayati Raj that this law should also be removed. Deputy Commissioner should not have the power to suspend a Sarpanch, until the villagers are against him and only then he should suspend him. Otherwise today's situation is that if there is any sarpanch in opposition to me. Then I will ask Deputy Commissioner to suspend him and he will suspend him. This system is wrong, there is a need to amend this.

I thank you and urge the hon'ble Minister as you also have great interest in Panchayati Raj System. The Committee of Members constituted by you in district to monitor funds comes from other departments and in that also, the people of DRDO act arbitrarily. They say that MPs will take decisions but they disburse all the grants, and do not even ask us if they don't do so. You please have full control over this and if Panchayati Raj has to be implemented completely then do a complete financial

management of village panchayats and Panchayati Raj institutions should get rights to spend it and not bureaucrats.

[English]

SHRIMATI M.S.K. BHAVANI RAJENTHIRAN (Ramanathapuram) : Thank you Mr. Chairman Sir for giving me this opportunity to participate in the discussion regarding Panchayati Raj System.

We all know very well that the father of our nation, Mahatma Gandhi, has rightly mentioned that India lives in villages. The dream of the father of our nation, Mahatma Gandhi, is fulfilled through the Panchayati Raj System. So many leaders of our country struggled hard to develop the lives of the village people. At least, our former Prime Minister, hon. Shri Rajiv Gandhi attained this goal by introducing the Panchayati Raj System. In our Union Government, the able and most experienced hon. Minister, Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar, is in charge of this Ministry. We all know very well that he is working very well and very hard.

Anyway, our UPA Government is very famous for its Common Minimum Programme. So, our Union Government should give more attention to the Panchayati Raj Ministry because it is the most appreciable system as it fulfills all the basic needs of the people, especially, people living in the rural areas.

This is a three-level system, namely, Gram Panchayat, Union Panchayat and District Panchayat. Now, some lakhs of people, including women and people belonging to Scheduled Castes community, are elected through this Panchayati Raj System. I entered into politics through Panchayati Raj System only. Out of my experience, I have to give some suggestions because already so many hon. Members have elaborately dealt with the subject. So, I want to give only a few suggestions.

So many people, especially women, are very innocent and they do not know what to do with this

[Shrimati M.S.K. Bhavani Rajenthiran]

Panchayati Raj System. We should give proper training to the elected representatives and also more financial assistance should be given. They should be given more powers also. When we are giving more financial assistance and more powers, there should a monitoring system also. Then only the Panchayati Raj System will be successful.

Sir, in the State of Tamil Nadu, our hon. Chief Minister, Dr. Kalaingar Karunanidhi, is doing very well. I think, the State of Tamil Nadu stands in the first place in implementing the Panchayati Raj System schemes. He is doing very well. When he became the Chief Minister for the fourth time, he introduced "Namakkunname Thittam" and "Anna Marumalarchi Thittam." These are very famous schemes and through these schemes, he gave more powers and more money to the people elected at the village level. Now, the basic needs of those villages are fulfilled through these schemes. Now, he has ordered the District Collectors to convene a meeting at least once in six months to review the schemes in the Panchayati Raj System.

Now, I want to give a suggestion that MPs and MLAs should be given a chance to participate in the meeting, and their opinion also should be taken into consideration. Then only it will be a very successful scheme.

Now, our PURA Scheme is a famous one. It was introduced by the hon. President. In Tamil Nadu, Dr. Karunanidhi is fulfilling our President's dream because he is giving more power to the Panchayati Raj institutions, and all of them are doing very well. The hon. M.K. Stalin is the Minister in Tamil Nadu State Government, and he is working very hard to implement all the Schemes in the Panchayati Raj system.

I would once again like to say that Tamil Nadu stands in the first place in implementing the Panchayati Raj system through very hard work and proper schemes. I hope this will be introduced in all the States through the Union Government. The Union Government, of course, is giving

more attention to the village people, and it will take more steps to give power and financial assistance to village elected bodies through panchayati raj system.

With these words, I conclude my speech.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Vanakkam Thirumathi.

Now, Shrimati C.S. Sujatha.

SHRIMATI C.S. SUJATHA (Mavelikara) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, at the outset I thank you for giving me a chance to speak on the very important subject, "The Mid-term review and appraisal" on the state of the Panchayats.

Sir, with the adoption of the Constitution Amendments 73rd and 74th, the country has decided to give our democracy a better and meaningful content and taking that democracy to the grass root level by providing one-third reservation to women at all levels. A silent majority has been made active participants in the development process and also in the democratization process.

I had the great opportunity of getting myself seriously involved in this historic process as the first elected District Panchayat President of Alappuzha District in Kerala.

When I participate in this debate of the mid-term review report, my opinions are largely shaped on the basis of my practical experience. I gathered through actively involving in the implementation programmes of Panchayat institutions. It was totally a new experience in putting the spirit of constitutional amendment into practice in the grass-roots.

I have pleasure to note that Kerala is now the acknowledged leader in Panchayati Raj. But it must not be forgotten how Kerala attained this position. The State showed a strong political commitment to transfer powers to its Panchayats and Municipalities. Even during the times of fiscal stress, the State took the bold decision to sacrifice funds at its control and generously transferred resources in the firm belief and hope that people and their grass-root level representatives can take wiser decisions on

development priorities. Kerala's experience also proves that decentralization cannot be achieved just through the bureaucratic process. There is a need for massive mobilization of all sections of society to generate hope and enthusiasm. The People's Plan Campaign was launched with this objective.

It is not enough to applaud Kerala; it has to be supported to institutionalize decentralization. Also there must be earnest effort to learn from its best practices. Kerala which was the laboratory to experiment decentralization can now be the national classroom. The Government of India may utilize this opportunity.

The key feature of Kerala's decentralization are: Kerala followed the big bang approach in transferring functions, powers and resources at one go and developing capacity building through learning by doing. Probably this is the way decentralization can be made real.

Secondly, the State followed the classical principles of decentralization in transferring clear-cut functions. Officials required to discharge the functions were also placed under the control of local Governments on the principle of work and worker going together.

The hallmark of Kerala's decentralization is transfer of a huge amount of funds in a practically united form to enable the local Governments to prepare their plans according to local needs and priorities. During the current year, Rs.2,200 crore have been set apart in three streams - development fund, maintenance fund and general purpose fund.

The most innovative feature of Kerala's decentralization is the participatory planning. It goes to the credit of Kerala that the Planning Commission has more or less adopted this methodology for the Eleventh Five Year Plan.

Another important feature of Kerala's decentralization is the existence of strong independent institutions, the constitutionally mandated institutions like the State

Election Commission, the State Finance Commission and the District Planning Committees; and the special institutions like the Ombudsman, Appellate Tribunal and even the State Development Council on the lines of the National Development Council. These institutions go a long way in ensuring the autonomy of Panchayats and raising them to the level of institutions of Local Self Government.

Gender justice has been given special importance in decentralized planning in Kerala. Ten per cent of the funds devolved to Local Governments have to be mandatorily spent on the Women Component Plan. Now, the Government has decided to enable each Panchayat to prepare a report on the status of women. Also Jagratha Samithies have been set up in the village panchayat to protect the interest of women. *Kudumbashree* now recognized as a national model has gone a long way in strengthening Panchayat Raj even while empowering women and reducing poverty. As of now, 37.25 lakh families have been brought under the *Kudumbashree* programme by networking 1.77 lakh neighbourhood groups of women below poverty line. Unlike other States, *Kudumbashree* has evolved as part of Panchayati Raj. Over two lakh micro enterprises have been set up with support of Panchayats.

The Government of India needs to support Kerala as it is a pioneer, and the whole nation stands to benefit from its initiatives. The important areas of support are as follows.

Capacity building of elected representatives and officials is a costly exercise. The State needs to be given generous assistance. Incidentally, the Kerala Institute of Local Administration is the best such institution in the whole country and is attracting trainees from Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Pakistan, as well as from all the States in the country. The Government of India must invest in this institution and raise it to the level of an international institute for higher studies and research centre on local governance.

Kerala has recently taken a decision to further strengthen district planning committees by transferring the

[Shrimati C.S. Sujatha]

district level offices of the Planning, Statistics and Town Planning Department. The Planning Commission could extend assistance to this critical initiative.

In order to institutionalize decentralization of a lot of actions, research is required in several areas. This could be supported through national level institutions of excellence like IIMs, IITs and other national level institutions.

Recognizing that Kerala has been unwavering in its fiscal decentralization in the last ten years in spite of severe adverse fiscal pressures, the State needs to be rewarded for discharging the constitutional obligation and developing a model for the whole country. This could be through additional Central assistance, preference allocation of externally supported projects, inclusion of more districts under NREGA and BRGF and weightage in allocation of Centrally-sponsored schemes in the domain of Panchayats.

Now that the Government of India has come out with a landmark document giving the detailed status of Panchayati Raj in the country, it is time that certain important policy decisions are taken at the national level to push decentralization.

The suggestions are as follows. BRGF should be utilized to strengthen decentralized planning particularly the District Planning Committees.

Major Centrally-sponsored schemes in the domain of Panchayats like the Rural Health Mission, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Mid-day Meal Programmes, ICDS, Swajaladhara, PMGSY, NWDPRRA etc., should be restructured to facilitate common decentralized planning for all these schemes and their convergence.

The schemes of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj should be given more resources especially for capacity-building and providing incentives for performance. The Government of India should take the lead in identifying

best practices in local governance from other countries and creating a database which can be accessed by all the States.

The 150-point Action Plan prepared by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj is an excellent one. I see in it a 'Mani Shankar Aiyar' touch. It would be ideal if these are discussed in a special meeting of the National Development Council and an implementation plan prepared with milestones and timelines. I shall request the hon. Minister to personally take interest in putting it into practice.

[Translation]

DR. KARAN SINGH YADAV (Alwar) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, today we are discussing on the report submitted on status of Panchayats – Half yearly Review and its Evaluation, 2006. We are recollecting the dream of Mahatma Gandhi in which he took Gram Swaraj as his ultimate goal and started the freedom revolution and our country got the freedom. In the direction to fulfil the dream of Gram Swaraj, the first Prime Minister of country Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru called a public rally in Nagaur in the decade of 60 and initiated Panchayati Raj System. In this dream of Panchayati Raj, initiatives were started in the country to give powers directly to the common man in the villages. Our former Prime Minister Late Shri Rajiv Gandhi started this era of social revolution in the country through the 73rd and 74th constitution amendments in which not only the people of villages but also the backwards, dalits and downtrodden people got the opportunity to associate themselves to power. Besides this, SC, ST, women and people of backward classes also got rights through reservation in the Panchayati Raj.

Slowly these institutions started getting strengthened. Our present Panchayati Raj Minister was with Mr. Rajiv Gandhi at that time also when the 73rd and 74th amendment in constitution was passed. From then onwards he is associated with various institution of Panchayati Raj. It is a matter of proud for any Member of Parliament that he has done so much work regarding this and has achieved three volumes. Today we all know that how his

Panchayati Raj departments is doing, its evaluation, how Panchayati institutions are developing.

I would like to congratulate the hon'ble Minister since he has evaluated Panchayati Raj institutions not only by just sitting in Delhi but also by visiting various places of the country. Last year in December you also visited Churu and Jalpru in Rajasthan. There you saw the ground reality by sitting with Panchayat Committees and also with villagers and panches.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to say something about Rajasthan. Your dream and principle of transferring funds and functionary to panchayats and the subject chosen by you—education, health, sanitation, forestation etc. is closely associated to Gram Swaraj. Today villagers themselves are the owner of these things. In Rajasthan, during previous Government, during the regime of Chief Minister Shri Ashok Gahlot, this work was executed and many rights were given to District councils and Panchayati Committees. Primary Education is the main thing in Panchayati Raj, which has been given completely to them. As well as Elementary Education was also almost given to the Panchayats.

Sir, I am very sorry to say that the Government which is in power today in Rajasthan, it is of feudal mentality and today panchayati raj institutions have become merely a structure there. Panchayati Raj institutions are having no rights of their own. The expectations of yours during the time of Shri Gahlot that a Sarpanch of village, Patwarl of village, Secretary of Village Panchayat, teacher of village, para teacher of village will submit their attendance to the village sarpanch, they will furnish information about their work to sarpanch, all those rights have been snatched away today I have read the papers given by you in which it has been stated that education department and right to do other works has been given to the sarpanch, but the ground reality is that in Rajasthan, primary education, leave alone the secondary, even primary education is also managed by the officers of education department. There may be twenty children in any village and there can be three teachers, but there may be three hundred children

in any village and you may find one teachers there. A Sarpanch has no right about this. There is a ban on transfer of teachers. There is no officer to think something good at the higher level. That is why I would like to request you that you should reevaluate with the State Governments and especially with feudal minded Rajasthan Government that whether the rights given to the Panchayats of the country in 73rd and 74th amendment are being executed or not. I would like to say honestly that Rajasthan is a State where only one-two functions has been implemented out of 29 functions given by you. You have given funds to National Rural Health Mission, where a 'Swasthaya Rath' was hold after placing a big photograph of honourable Chief Minister, Jal Chetna Rath was hold for water. Public is distressed there because the funds meant for Central Government schemes, which would have been invested in villages through sarpanches are being spent by bureaucrats arbitrarily in holding big 'Rath Yatras' to please the honourable Chief Minister.

I would like to make a suggestion to the honourable Minister that there is a need to think deeply over the election of Heads of District Councils and Panchayat Committees. Today you can ask to anyone, you can conduct an independent survey, no Head has been elected honestly and through democrating system and by getting votes. Votes are purchased there. People in power are elected as Member of Panchayat Samiti. The role of Member of Panchayat Samiti, Member of District Council is only to make a particular person 'pradhan' by hook or by crook. Crores of rupees are spent in becoming the head I would like to tell you. I have spent little amount in election from Alwar Parliamentary Constituency but I think the Zila Pramukh of Alwar must have spent about rupees one crore to become Zila Pramukh. So, we will have to think over it we are making mid term appraisal, you will have to contemplate that if direct elections for Pradhan of Panchayat Samiti and Zila Pramukh are held. I think corruption will be checked. People say that the earlier system wherein people of village, panch and sarpanch used to elect village Pramukh was a better system. But

[Dr. Karan Singh Yadav]

today directors, members of Zila Parishad and Panchayat Samiti cast their votes, this election is won by money, by corrupt practices. Corruption starts when Pradhan and Pramukh get themselves elected by offering money to voters and practice of paying commission to get work done starts therefrom. The money you send for development of villages, only 40 or 50 per cent of that amount is spent for development.

17.00 hrs.

Not more than the said money is spent. You should consider this matter seriously...*(Interruptions)* It is learnt that more powers to members of Panchayat Samiti and Zila Parishad are to be given. As you have given more powers to the Members of Parliament by fixing a quota, similarly members of Panchayat Samiti and Zila Parishad should also have powers to spend some money. Today, money directly goes to Sarpanch. Sarpanch has become very important in villages and he is supposed to be so. The role of Members of Panchayat Samiti and Zila Parishad has been limited to elections. After two years, efforts to bring no confidence motion starts. Any one has hardly been able to hold the post of Pradhan or Pramukh for two years. After two years there is a wave for bringing in a new Pradhan and Sarpanch and money starts changing hands for that. I would like to emphasize that you should reconsider this. Can direct elections for Pradhan or Pramukh be held or not? There are so many points that can be raised because this is a vast subject. I would like to congratulate the hon'ble Minister on initiating this discussion in the House.

SHRI REWATI RAMAN SINGH (Allahabad) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, first of all I would like to congratulate hon'ble Mani Shankar Aiyar for presenting appraisal of two of half years in the Lok Sabha. Everybody has said here India lives in villages, Mahatama Gandhi had also dreamt of Swaraj in villages of country after independence. This has been the tradition of the country for centuries and

panchayats in villages are also self reliant. After 57 years of independence, we should take stock of the situation prevailing after 73rd-74th amendments. What are the shortcomings and how to improve them so that swaraj in villages becomes a reality. At the moment. There are 12 lakh elected women Sarpanches or Members. Indeed, it is a large number and it is just a beginning. It is a beginning because dalits, backward classes and women have got this right through reservation. It is our duty to see whether it is being implemented properly or not.

An Hon'ble Member from Rajasthan was speaking just now. I agree to what he has said. There are many shortcomings today even after 72nd-73rd amendment. Mayor is elected directly. As he has told and even I could not understand why you are not ready to hold direct elections for Block Pramukh and Chairman of Zila Panchayat even after 57 years of independence. It is said that it will be a lengthy affair. You will have to bring about changes in it if you want true representation of people. As one hon'ble Member has said that mafia calls the shots in block. Mr. Minister is present here. I do not know whether he is aware of it or not? You need money and muscle power of mafia. Any one can win elections of Block Pramukh or Chairman of Zila Panchayat. Why this system is in place, you have brought about so many changes then why you cannot implement it? Will they be able to implement programmes formulated so? Once a Member of BDC elects Block Pramukh, his rights end there. He does not have his share in developmental works, I fail to understand why Gram Pradhan is clubbed with Members of BDC? That right should be given to the Members of BDC and not to the Gram Pradhan. They get funds separately, they have separate jurisdiction. Have you ever assessed that the role of Member of BDC ends with. Cashing of his vote and he will be needed again after five years if he manages to win elections again. You should reconsider this. Similarly, there has been centralization of powers of Panchayat in the hands of Zila Panchayat and Block Pramukh and jurisdiction and rights of other Members have become negligible. Now, UPA Government is beating the drum that they have implemented employment guarantee

scheme. What this scheme is all about? Under this scheme manual work of hundred days will be provided in villages. Have you ever thought that labourers will ever have some other options or will they continue doing same thing?

Sir, you see, there is migration from villages, towards cities. People are coming to cities in search of employment. Why you are not setting up factories in villages, may be a small one? You should setup one, two or three factories in a tehsil, do something so that people of villages stay back in villages. Mohammad Yunus, President of Grameen Bank, Bangladesh has been awarded noble prize for women empowerment. It is a very good scheme wherein a small group of twenty-twenty five poor rural women are provided loan by banks which is proving to be very helpful today in removing poverty there and therefore he has been awarded noble prize. Why can we not adopt that in our country? Why can we not form groups of poor women and empower them by providing bank loans to them? Why can we not help women by increasing their participation in the field of milk?

Andhra Pradesh has set an example before the nation in the field of fisheries. Today, fish from Andhra Pradesh is sold across the country. There are many fishermen in our country who are very poor, why do you not bring such schemes for them? Why do you not construct cold storages for them so that they can keep their stock there and supply all over the country. They will get employment and money from it.

Similarly, a mini ITI, mini polytechnic should be opened in every tehsil so that youths could get graining in village itself and they can get employment in upcoming big factories. You can implement reservation in that so as to provide rightful place to every poor person. But you will not do that, you said that rural employment scheme has been implemented and one is required to do the manual work there. Hon'ble Aiyar ji, this will not remove poverty. Poverty can be removed when people are given employment. If you want to strengthen villages. You will have to look for and provide avenues of employment in villages. There are artisans in villages who produce their

goods, where should they sell these goods? They do not have any market for selling, they can not sell their goods, this is leading to gradual closure of their trade. I wish you could strengthen that.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please conclude. Your time is already over. You have already taken more than nine minutes.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : But you cannot make any allegations. It is between the parties. It is none of my business.

(Interruptions)

SHRI REWATI RAMAN SINGH : No. I am not making any allegations...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : I am not in any way getting into it.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI REWATI RAMAN SINGH : Many Many Thanks.

[English]

I have not made any allegation.*...

MR. CHAIRMAN : You see, this is the topic I am also interested. Do not find fault with me. I have not done anything wrong. You know, I was elected as Panchayat President 53 years back on adult franchise! Nobody is like me here with such a long record and so much experience in the field. I was elected as President of the Panchayat 54 years back. And I continued as President for a very long time because no election took place within that period. I continued as President of the Panchayat for more than a decade. Later on, Panchayat became Municipality. Do not find fault with me.

*Not recorded.

[Translation]

SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA (Bettiah) : Hon'ble Chairman, Sir, at the outset I would like to congratulate hon'ble Minister, Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar for presenting the appraisal of 2.1/2 years of his department in the House on which hon'ble Members are discussing here. But I am sorry to say that the entire opposition is not present in the House even on such an importance issue on. The Gram Swaraj of Mahatma Gandhi, the Chankhambha Raj of Dr. Lohia and Sampurn Kranti of Lok Nayak Jai Prakash Narain are the concepts that are also related with. Mahatma Gandhi used to say that without the development growth, happiness and prosperity of villages, our country can not be happy and prosperous and can not develop.

17.13 hrs.

[SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV *in the Chair*]

That's way he always used to say that small and cottage industries should be established in the villages, people should be educated and literate, cleanliness and health should be maintained in this way. The Development of village can take place.

Sir, I hail from Bihar. The leader of masses Jan Nayak Shri Kapoor Thakur held the Panchayati Raj election's duty when he first time became the Chief Minister of Bihar. After the Panchayati Raj elections held under his leadership, another Government came into power in 1982, after which the progress made in regard to Panchayati election was almost discontinued. After the amendment in constitution by Late Shri Rajiv Gandhi's Government it was made mandatory for the States to hold the panchayat's elections. When Shrimati Rabri Devi was the Chief Minister of Bihar, the elections for panchayats were held in Bihar and the powers of 33 departments related to the rural assure e.g. primary education, primary health, cooperatives, drinking water etc. were vested to the panchayats. Today, we are well aware that after those elections, the elections have been held at this time. Only by the present Government. In addition to the Panchayat elections this Government has

done a great work of giving 50 percent reservations to the women. For this, we congratulate them. But we want to ask as to what is their real achievement? The Panchayats have lost their rights previously assigned to them. In common parlance we call village headman is Mukhiya pati. However do not look for Mukhiya but husband of Mukhiya, he is called Mukhiya Pati and the work we want to get done through him, but what work we can get done through him if he don't have any right. We want to ask the Minister of Panchayati Raj and the Members of Cabinet that can the Principal Secretary of Hon'ble Prime Minister terminate us. Who are elected Members of Lok Sabha? Can a Principal Secretary of Chief Minister terminate any elected member of Legislative Assembly? Empowering an officer to terminate an elected Mukhiyas, and elected village Headman is totally against the constitution. If a Sarpanch or a Mukhiya or village Headman commits a mistake, there are the provisions of law, and acting can be taken action against him. One can file a case against him and can send him to the jail. But the constitutional rights like construction of houses under the Indira Awaas Yojana are being deluted. Our friend has rightly said that if any sarpanch, mukhiya or village Head is elected against our wish, we will give an application against him. You will conduct investigation against him through BDO and Commissions will dismiss him. If there is only one option then it will not work. First, all the States of the country should follow the model law for Panchayati Raj. It will be appropriate to have a uniform law in the entire country. There is a plethora of laws overlapping each other. Panchayati Raj has not been fully implemented in Chhattisgarh yet, as you have replied in this House.

Now the question is that you are sending money but at every level, whether it is Panchayat Committees or Jila Parishad, only the money is being distributed not the work. I am not saying maliciously. For example if the released money is twenty lakh and there are twenty members of a Jila Parishad and each of the Member if provided with one lakhs rupees with the direction to work in their respective areas. What work can be accomplished in one lakh rupees? What will be the development? I would like

to urge you to constitute Planning Committees on Panchayat., block and district level and chalk out master plan at each level. The representative of an area should spend the money for the developmental work as and when the money is received. At this time this money is being distributed. The truth can be known by conducting investigation at one or two places. I would like to tell you that the funds meant to be released for the Panchayats have not yet been received. Nobody knows about the secondary responsibility of the Panchayats. The training work for the performance of work by the Panchayats has not been completed till today. What is the coordination between the Panchayati Raj statues and laws prevailing in States, what is the meaning of your Panchayati Raj statues and laws prevailing in States, what is the meaning of your Panchayati Raj law, what is the coordination between them. All these things are not taking place and extension of the notified area and implementation of act is not taking place. Responsibilities for all these things should be fixed. But all these things should be fixed. But no responsibility is being fixed. In so many areas Sarpanchs are called Mukhiyas. In Bihar we call him Mukhiya and we have Nyaya Prashashan. After allocation of 'Nyaya Prashashan' they look into the civil cases but in control of the sub law that should be enacted. I would like to tell not just a month ago, when Sarpanchs there filed a P.I.L. in Patna High Court in this regard, the State Government replied that there is no such act enacted. As our other friends told that Panchayats should be given standing orders to have their own buildings and a place for 'Nyayya Prashasan', be it funded by the Government of India or by State Governments.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the question of sanitation was raised. I would like to tell you that last time in Bihar houses of nearly 9 lakhs person collapsed due to floods and no help was provided to them. They are still homeless. Most of the persons are landless, poor and Dalits and nobody is there to take care of them. The money on Sarva Siksha Abhiyan is being wasted blindly. Which is being used in the recruitment of teachers. But even that is not taking

place in Bihar. No legitimate participation is taking place. Pooors should be provided with food grains through Public Distribution System but this is beyond the power of Mukhiya. Unless a concrete programme is chalked out, your dream of Panchayati Raji will be unfulfilled. Therefore, I want that timely elections should be held by framing rules. Many of our friends stated that they have no objection in that happening. Corruption also prevails in such elections. We are an eyewitness to such acts. These elections should be held in the same manner in which the elections for Parliament or Assemblies are being held elections are held for Mukhiyas, Sarpanch is being elected by the people but he will be elected by the main representatives. I want that Chief of Jila Parshad should be elected through direct election. He will be powerful, work for his empowerment should be done. He needs engineers for construction of houses. One of our friends was asking that how a toilet can be constructed with the meagre amount? As far as health facilities are concerned, the womenfolk have to go outs. All these things are possible only if you have an active participation.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Government, should talk to the Chief Minister of the State and the Minister of State. We saw that the work of general body meeting is done on paper only. A Member of Parliament should also be given representation. In the general body meeting of the Panchayat a representative of MLA comes but no representative of the Member of Parliament is called. Money for Sam Vikas Yojana is being provided in our area, C.M. bridge and road is being constructed, while opinion of an MLA is an sought in that regard but not of an M.P.'s. We are also public representative. Do not consider the names given by me but we must also get representation. We are elected from that area. We also represent six assembly constituency but we do not find place there. The person who represents one assembly constituency, he gets the representation. There is a need to give us representation in the construction project of either a bridge or a road.

With these words, I conclude.

[English]

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY (Berhampore, West Bengal) : The Hon. Panchayati Raj Minister, Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar, deserves to be praised lavishly as he has laboured hard to present a most well-researched document to the House and to the people of our country. It is a voluminous document which needs a couple of weeks to read through. It is not only voluminous but also exhaustive and illustrative.

However, I would like to participate in this important debate which is very relevant to our country. I must appreciate the UPA Government as this is the first ever Government which introduced the Ministry for Panchayati Raj to look after the panchayat institutions in our country.

Sir, panchayati raj is an age-old institution of our country. It is related to our culture, civilization and traditions. However, the British colonial power has demolished all the rural institutions which was earlier called as the panchayat. The term 'panchayat' originally implicates an enforcement authority of law and order in the local level community and which acts as a conciliatory and arbitrary approach to sort out the problems of the local community in India. During our national independence struggle, the national leaders were contemplating over the reinstatement and revitalization of panchayat raj mechanism in India. In 1931, during the Karachi Congress, the Congress Party took a slew of measures to offer democratic governance at the grassroot level and they later had come to a fruition after various laws and amendments were introduced. In 1959, the district Nagaur in the State of Rajasthan first celebrated the Panchayati Raj Conference under the leadership of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. But a real radical transformation in panchayati raj institutions took place after the 73rd and 74th amendments of our Constitution.

The real objective of the panchayati raj institutions is to devolve power to the grassroot level. The 73rd amendment was a landmark legislation in that direction which ushered an era of decentralized governance

including its planning and development. It accommodates adequate representation of women and the marginalized section of our society which were excluded from the democratic governance by the dominant power of our society specially the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes who were regarded as untouchables, and were excluded from taking part in any kind of democratic governance in our country. Therefore, the 73rd amendment first enshrined the rights of those marginalized and vulnerable sections of our society and furthermore, ensured participation of womenfolk which constitutes 49 per cent of our population in democratic governance of our country.

It is astonishing to note that more than 36 lakhs are elected representatives and are holding responsibilities in nagar palikas and panchayati raj institutions. The Minister even cited that the number of elected representatives in our country is more than the entire population of Norway.

The salient features of the 73rd amendment were formation of a Gram Sabha at village level. Uniform three-tier system at village, block and district levels, with exemption for intermediate level institutes with a population of less than two million. Direct election to all seats for all members at all levels. Indirect election to the Chairpersons of intermediary and apex levels. The mode of election for the lowest level is left to the State Government and reservation of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes on rotational basis in proportion to the population. Furthermore, the Chairperson of Gram Panchayat and Panchayat Samity are also reserved for women and Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Reservation of women has been enshrined to be no less than one-third of the seats and offices. Five year term for each election has been institutionalized.

Sir, the devolution of powers and responsibilities by the State for preparation and implementation of plans for economic development and social justice as per the 11th Schedule of the Act has been very much incorporated. It has further been stated that 29 subjects are to be included

in the 11th Schedule. But still, I think, that most of the States are either averse or indifferent to devolve the power of 29 subjects to the grass-root level. So, naturally, in paper, we have had our panchayat raj institution, but in letter and spirit we are miles to go before implementing the real essence of panchayati raj institutions.

Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister to one important matter because I am hailing from a State called West Bengal. There, Village Development Committee has been framed under legislation by the State Government.

Sir, already in the 73rd amendment, Gram Sabha has been constituted. Furthermore, a Village Development Committee has been proposed to be legislated in the law. I think it is nothing but a super imposition of existing panchayati raj mechanism. As we know, the Gram Sabha is considered as a deliberative body. But here in this legislation, VDC has been empowered to propose the plans which are binding on the Gram Sabha and Panchayats. That means here there is a contradiction between a deliberative body and the executive body. As we know, the Gram Panchayat is considered as an Executive Organ, but in the name of Village Development Committee, the power of Executive Body has been slashed down deliberately and I think it is contrary to the true sense of panchayati raj institution.

So, I would urge upon the hon. Minister to look after the true spirit of the Central legislation so that it may be binding upon the States because there are so many "may's" involved in the Central legislation. Now, the State Governments are at liberty to misinterpret the Central legislation. The hon. Minister's approach in regard to the panchayati raj institution would not be materialized if these flaws are not corrected. I think, we should have a holistic approach to the panchayati raj mechanism.

*DR. THOKCHOM MEINYA (Inner Manipur) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, today, in this august House, we are having

*English translation of the speech originally delivered in Manipuri.

a very important discussion initiated by Shri Basudeb Acharia and Smt. C.S. Sujatha regarding the 'Mid-term Review and Appraisal Report 2006 on Panchayati Raj'. Sir, I am grateful to you for giving me an opportunity to take part in this discussion. At the outset, I would like to sincerely appreciate the Hon'ble Minister of Panchayati Raj Shri Mani Shankar for presenting a detailed report on the structure and functioning of the Panchayati Raj institutions in the country and also for facilitating this discussion. This report certainly reflects the progress made in the Panchayati Raj system under the UPA Government in the last two and half years. Under the able leadership of Prime Minister Shri Manmohan Singh, UPA Chairperson Madame Sonia Gandhi and Panchayati Raj Minister Shri Mani Shankar, the Panchayati Raj movement in the country is making steady growth and progress.

Hon'ble Minister Shri Mani Shankar is a close friend of our late lamented former Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi who intended to strengthen the Panchayati Raj system in the country by devolution of power at the village level. Accordingly, constitution amendments were made in order to strengthen the Panchayati Raj system.

Sir, India is a land of villages and our Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi believed that India will develop only when its villages are developed. The 73rd and 74th amendments have given more powers to our local bodies and Village Panchayats. Not only that we have made 33% reservation for women in the local bodies and Panchayats but we have also ensured more participation of women in the decision making at the local and village level which indeed strengthen our democracy.

Today, we are a great democracy even though we had experienced too much hardship under Rajas, Maharajas and British Raj. Now, it is more than 50 years to have our own elected representatives and elected Government and, in fact, we are doing extremely well. However, we have a major handicap in the election of local representatives at the village and Panchayat level because of lack of basic education. Educated people are still very less in number.

[Dr. Thokchom Meinya]

We need to broaden and strengthen our education system at the grass-root level so that we get deserving and educated representatives.

At the Village and Gram Panchayat level, Pradhans are directly elected and it is really good. The Adhyaksha at the Zilla Parishad is elected from among the elected representatives. Here, we have a practical difficulty due to frequent no-confidence motion against the Adhyaksha. As a result, Adhyaksha is changed every now and then and hence it has become a major set back to run the affairs of the administration. If we can have direct election for the Adhyaksha like that of Pradhan that would be far better and bring stability in the system.

Women's reservation in our local bodies and Panchayats is no doubt yielding favourable results. But we have a pertinent problem at the ground level. The family members of the elected women representatives normally interfere in the functioning of the local bodies. The husband or the family members of the women representatives wield de-facto power. This is a dangerous trend. We need to check it. Power and functions of the women representatives should not be misused or abused by their family members. We have to do something in this regard.

I would like to bring to the notice of the Hon'ble Minister that our Pradhans and local elected representatives are getting a very meagre honorarium. My earnest request to the Minister is that they must be given a respectable salary as in the case of MPs and MLAs. This will certainly help in strengthening our Panchayati Raj system.

Sir, ours is a vibrant multi-party democracy and, therefore, we should encourage to conduct the elections of Pradhans, Zilla Adhyakshas on party lines. This is my suggestion.

From this detailed report presented by the Hon'ble Minister, we come to know about the structure and

functioning of the Panchayati Raj institutions in the States throughout the country. Sir, in my State Manipur we don't have the three tier system, instead we have the two tier system. According to the 2001 census, we have crossed twenty lakh population and now we are entitled to have the three tier system, instead we have the two tier system. According to the 2001 census, we have crossed twenty lakh population and now we are entitled to have the three tier system. In his recent visit to Manipur, the Hon'ble Minister Shri Mani Shankar made the announcement that the two tier system will be converted into the three tier system. I strongly believe that Hon'ble Minister will certainly fulfil his assurance. On my own behalf and on behalf of my State I express my gratitude to the Hon'ble Minister for his kind visit to our State and for having constructive interactions with our Panchayati and village representatives for improving the Panchayati Raj institutions. I hope in future too Hon'ble Minister would extend such cooperation and encourage us.

Sir, such an elaborate mid-term review and appraisal report on the functioning of Panchayati Raj system in the entire country is indeed praiseworthy. Let me again thank you for giving this opportunity to participate in this discussion.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV (Patna) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am thankful to you for allowing me to put forth my views on such an important discussion.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please keep in view the time limit. You have been allotted five minutes.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV : I will immediately come to my point. But along with it, I thank Basudeb Acharia for providing us an opportunity for discussion. Panchayati Raj, on which many hon'ble Members have expressed their views, reflected their deep interest in the subject. Through you I would like to submit to the hon. Minister for being committed to the course of implementing the vision of

Mahatma Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi. In regard to the system of Panchayati Raj. Undoubtedly. Many steps are also being taken towards this direction.

But despite all these efforts, many things need to be done. Earlier Panchayati Raj used to come under Rural Development Ministry. But when it was strengthened and constitutional amendment was enacted, it was separated so that it could reach to villages and the poor. There is much to be done at lower level so that the fruits of development could reach at the grassroot level.

Many shortcomings have been pointed out in it and I would like to draw the attention of Hon'ble Minister towards them. I also will discuss some shortcomings. So that, after removing the drawbacks, the vision of UPA Government about Panchayati Raj and Hon'ble Minister's vision about Panchayati Raj is implemented at the grass root level by taking effective steps. After earmarking rupees 3835 hundred crores to Panchayati Raj, if one looks at the poor of villages it will be found that people are still depend of the fruits of development. I would like to say that the ongoing system has several lacunos. Under Panchayati Raj, either officials manipulate power or representative of Panchayati Raj are themselves found involved in irregularities. As a result benefits of development do not reach the need. Therefore, proper development is not taking place. If rules and laws are made and not implemented then those remains only on paper. I would exhort you to realise the dreams of Mahatma Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi which necessitated the constitutional amendment. At present elections are being held on large scale. I would like to talk about my State, so many Hon'ble Members from Prihar have discussed about that elections but I do not want to repeat those things. Government should work as policy maker and ensure that the laws enacted are followed by the State Government properly. There is plethora of laws enacted by different State Governments. The village Mukhiya or Sarpanchs do not convene general body meeting. It is the latter which decides about planning. I think general body meeting is not convened, in real terms but it is convened only on

papers. There are so many shortcomings. Several Hon'ble Members have discussed these shortcomings. He should remove these shortcomings. More than seventy five percent people live in rural areas. All claims their commitment about Panchayati Raj. But when it comes to the moment of doing worthwhile in this direction, we drag our feet. Even after fifty eight years of independence, villages are not getting the fruits of developments. There are no roads, hand pumps, toilet and sanitation. By lanes are not properly maintained hence I would like that you must take effective steps and enact stringent legislation and ensure it's compliance. As Mahatma Gandhi said that till the Panchayati Raj is implemented, we cannot implement Swaraj And till villages are developed, we cannot think of developing the country. This is Panchayati Raj System through which justice can be provided to the poor. By doing full justice to roles assigned to us only, we can develop our villages and our country. I think until and unless we develop our villages we can not even think of developing our nation. Teachers have been brought under Panchayati Raj, but when report is made by the Mukhiya about their absence from school, no action is being taken. There is need to further strong then Panchayati Raj more. Approximately 150 subjects including Health Service, potable water, hand pumps etc. have been brought under Panchayati Raj. In recent past, the conference of State Ministers through Rural Development Ministry was held in which he said 150 point were touched upon. If this is implemented in true spirit and further power are delegated to the panchayat raj for resolving Smaller problems, can certainly ushers into the realm of Swaraj as envisaged by Mahatma Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi. I think, the villages will progress further.

With these words, I thank you with the faith that the hon'ble Minister, after discussion, would take concrete steps to solve the problems of sevety five percent of villages.

SHRI BAPU HARI CHAURE (Dhule) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am grateful to you for giving me the opportunity to speak. Shri Rajivji used to be deeply concerned in this

[Shri Bapu Hari Chaure]

house on the issue that for rural development only 15 percent fund out of the total fund allocated by the centre reaches there. In order to overcome this problem and to fulfill his wish of carrying out the dreams of Mahatma Gandhi, the Panchayati Raj system was given more teeth by way of 73rd and 74th amendments in the constitution. The reforms carried out through these amendments are very important. In this way funds for the development of villages were actually provided under the Jawahar Rojgar Yojana from 1992. Earlier, people in the villages were not even provided funds for basic needs, but through this scheme funds began to be provided even for smaller works of development of villages. Later on, the 'Mukhiya' of villages were granted substantial powers through Gram Sabhas. Today, all the plans for village development are implemented through the Gram Sabha which is a significant thing.

Today, I have risen to speak on an important issue. I would like to point out that 33 departments have been involved in this work. The plans are implemented and executed through the Gram Panchayats in consultation with the Gram Sabhas. But I am quite grateful to the Government for working in the area of Tribal sub plan. Panchayat (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 was formulated for implementation of the Tribal sub-plan. The Tribal people were granted special rights under the Act be it at the Zilla Parishad, Taluk Panchayat or Gram Panchayat levels at which the Panchayati Raj Bill is implemented. The Sarpanch of village Panchayats of the villages falling under the area of Tribal sub-plan have been given the special powers to appoint the chairperson from the Scheduled Tribe category. He has been granted the powers to chalk out sub-plans. The women have been granted rights. The Union Government has a Tribal Affairs Ministry to implement the work of tribal development under the tribal sub-plan. It provides a certain amount of funds to the States under article 275(1) under special central assistance Under article 275(1) some fund is provided to the District Planning Development Council (DPDC) under

the Tribal sub-plan. Through it funds are distributed to each Heads of Department in the Tribal Area for implementation of all the plans of the District. The plans are implemented at the village level. In the State of Maharashtra, the Tribal Development Department runs schemes for human development and I would like to point out as an example that for Adivasi agriculturists, hundred percent subsidy is given to purchase electric pumps etc. oil engines and so on. There are some schemes, which are given hundred percent subsidies under the Tribal sub-plan. Funds are allocated under Indira Awas Yojana. There are 37 items including gas cylinder and houses being provided by the Department of Tribal Affairs for uplifting the living standard of an individual. But all the said schemes should be implemented properly. I would like to submit that the National Scheduled Tribes Development Finance Corporation provides fund for buying trucks, tempos and autos. Such individual beneficiares are chosen by the officers which is a matter of concern. How can those officers ascertain the poor persons who are entitled in real sense to get the benefit.

In Maharashtra, beneficiares are selected by Tribal Affairs Department, the Tribal Additional Commissioner, Project officers and Integrated Tribal Development Project etc. Panchayat (Extension to the Scheduled Area) Act, 1996 came into existence in which the Gram Sabha was accorded full rights to select the beneficiares. I would like to request you to issue an order to the effect that the list of persons to be benefited under the schemes implemented by the Tribal Development Department in the State be forwarded to the Tribal Department through the Gram Sabha and Panchayat Samiti and then funds should be allocated from there...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now you please conclude.

SHRI BAPU HARI CHAURE : Mr. Chairman, Sir, there are several issues, but you have asked me to sit down. I would conclude by saying just one thing. Only 50 per cent of the amount allocated for the poor labourers employed under the Employment Guarantee Bill is given

to the Gram Panchayats. Twenty eight crore rupees have been allocated for my district; out of which only fourteen crore rupees have gone directly to the Gram Panchayats. We would have to take into account the fact that the middlemen still operate there. We should try to make sure that there should be no middlemen.

I would like to say that foodgrains are also provided under the schemes implemented by the Zila Parishad for the overall rural development. Foodgrains have not been provided in my district for the last two years till date. Foodgrains is yet to be provided there. In these circumstances, all these problems should be looked into. The Government should also keeping view the blocks that have been allotted funds under the Employment Guarantee Scheme.

Furthermore, I would like to submit that a Committee has been constituted to ensure drinking water in each village. The Chairman and the Secretary of the Committee are involved in formulating scheme for providing drinking water in the villages. However, it has come to my notice that although the funds are actually allocated to the Panchayats, the middlemen still operate there. The Middlemen continue to operate there even today. Shri Rajivji had raised his concern over this fact. A provision has been made in the Panchayati Raj Bill to do away with the middlemen. But the middlemen are still there. Therefore, I would like to demand the Government to make some provision in this regard taking into account all these things.

I would like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak.

[English]

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN (Chirayinkil) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I never expected to speak. Since I am called to speak on the subject, I am thankful to you.

Panchayat formation is more or less the formation of my public life. I was elected as the Panchayat President

in 1953. I assumed charge after I was elected as the President of the Panchayat on adult franchise on 15th August, 1953. At that time, Kerala State was not there. Kerala State was formed afterwards. I continued as the Panchayat President. I had appeared before so many Commissions with regard to the development of the Panchayati Raj institutions in this country. Now, the first Commission before which I appeared was before Shri R.K. Sidwa, who was appointed as the Chairman of a local Finance Committee. I appeared before him as the President and also representing the Panchayat in Travancore Cochin State. Then, subsequently Dr. John Mathai was appointed as the Chairman of the Local Finance Inquiry Commission. There also I had appeared and gave evidence.

18.00 hrs.

The most important thing regarding the development of Panchayati Raj in the country is to give a separate or assign a part of income or interest with each and every Panchayat.

Now, the first suggestion was that the Central Government should uphold the income tax that is collected from the Panchayat. It should be set apart for Panchayat. The sales tax and all those taxes, which you have collected from within the areas of Panchayat should be set apart for the development of Panchayat's functioning. There was an attempt to that effect also.

Lastly, there was another Commission – Justice Verma Commission – which also took evidence and came to certain conclusions. Now, the net result was that the Panchayats continued as such without much power. We all know that in the Directive Principles of State Policy enshrined in the Constitution, there is a provision that the State shall endeavour to form Panchayats in the State. It was not by any statutory provision. It was only in the Directive Principles of State Policy that the State shall endeavour to form Panchayats in the State. This led to much difficulty in the formation of the Panchayats.

[Shri Varkala Radhakrishnan]

Now, I would like to submit that I had to continue as Panchayat President for decades because no elections were conducted in those days. There is no provision for election in Panchayats in the Constitution.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Just a minute. Now, it is already 6 o' clock [Translation] Hon. Members it is 18:00 hrs. now, so with the permission of the house, the time of proceedings may be extended till the reply of the Hon. Minister.

[English]

SHRI PRABODH PANDA : Sir, my submission is that this discussion could be completed today but the Minister may reply to the debate tomorrow.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE) : No...(Interruptions)

SHRI PRABODH PANDA : Please see the attendance in the House. It is very thin. It is such an important subject. So, I would request that the reply may be given tomorrow...(Interruptions)

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS : Yes, the reply could be taken up tomorrow...(Interruptions)

SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE : Tomorrow, we have to take up other important businesses and we are already short of time. So, the reply may be given today itself...(Interruptions)

SHRI PRABODH PANDA : Moreover, there is no quorum also...(Interruptions)

SHRI N.N. KRISHNADAS (Palghat) : Not only that, this is a very serious matter. The hon. Minister should reply to this debate tomorrow, when the House would be in full attendance...(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Hon. Members, please take your seats. Let us hear the hon. Minister.

[Translation]

Panchajati Raj Minister Sir, Are you ready to give your reply tomorrow? If you do, it can be taken tomorrow?

[English]

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR : Sir, I am a servant of the House and I would be happy to reply tomorrow if that be your direction. If I have to reply today, that be your direction, I would reply today...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN : May I know the sense of the House?

[English]

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS : The reply to this debate may be given tomorrow.

SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPAN (Trichur) : It is a very important subject. The reply to the debate could be taken up tomorrow. The whole House is concerned; the Press is concerned; and the whole country is concerned on this very important issue...(Interruptions)

SHRI P.C. THOMAS (Muvattupuzha) : Sir, let the reply of the hon. Minister be tomorrow...(Interruptions)

SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE : Sir, as I have already told you, we are hard-pressed for time. We have to transact so many businesses. Let the reply be today itself...(Interruptions) I think, the hon. Minister would take more than an hour to reply to the debate. So, it would be very difficult to accommodate tomorrow...(Interruptions)

SHRI PRABODH PANDA (Midnapore) : Moreover, there is no quorum also...(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Let us take the sense of the House. [Translation] May I know the sense of the House?

[English]

SHRI PRABODH PANDA (Midnapore) : The sense of

the House is that the hon. Minister should reply to this debate tomorrow...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : All right. We would conclude the discussion today and the reply would be tomorrow.

SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE : Tomorrow, we have to take up Supplementary Demands for Grants (Railway) also ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : You may do it on some other day. I have given you the option.

Yes, Mr. Radhakrishnan, you may continue your speech.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI REWATI RAMAN SINGH : Mr. Chairman Sir, please ask the Hon'ble Parliamentary Affairs Minister to look at the Ruling Benches. NDA has walked out ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : Rewati Raman Singh ji, you are a senior Member and you can understand the importance of this matter?

[English]

Mr. Radhakrishnan, please try to conclude your speech.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : The Panchayats were not give powers to function as a unit of administration. Even the legislation that was made in the States did not give powers to the Panchayats.

Now, I remember when I was the Panchayat President, the powers were not enough even for running the office because the State did not take any interest in the matter of giving powers and financial independence to the Panchayats. No traveling allowance was given to the President. He was not allowed to travel from his Panchayat

to another place. There was no traveling allowance. We had to spend from our own pockets and go to the State's Capital without getting any TA. So, there was such a reckless condition of Panchayats in those days.

I functioned there. The main duty of the Panchayat was to keep the sanitary conditions of the village intact. That was done perfectly well by the Panchayats. In spite of the fact that the Panchayat President was elected after heated contests in the elections, he has only a petitioning authority. I had to give petitions to the concerned Ministry or to the concerned Government official for getting redressal of a particular village's needs. The condition was deplorable.

There was no definiteness about the elections. When the Ruling Party in a particular State was in favour of contesting the elections, then the local elections had taken place. Otherwise, if the political condition was not favourable, the Ruling Party would not conduct the elections. So, to some extent, there were Panchayat Presidents who continued as such for nearly one quarter of a century.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please conclude.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : This was the situation. Now, everybody, all those concerned with local administration, felt the need to give more powers to the Panchayats, and that was agreed to. Fortunately, Shri Rajiv Gandhi took the initiative and we have the present three-tier Panchayat system.

18.07 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER in the Chair]

So, from my experience, I would submit that the Panchayats should be given more powers. Now, it is a fact that some Governments may come in power and they will take away the powers that were vested in the Panchayats by the previous Governments. Take for example, in the case of development of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes, powers were given to the Panchayats. Subsequently, the Government itself took the initiative and took back the

[Shri Varkala Radhakrishnan]

powers that were given to the Panchayats. So, considering all these aspects, political considerations should not weigh in the matter of Panchayat administration. That is our bitter experience.

To prevent such an occurrence, I would suggest that there must be some legislation. Powers to the Panchayats must be given. If the Government indulges in some activities, then what is the position? We had the people's programme but it was not functioning properly. The State Government was not prepared to divest the powers to the Panchayats. The Panchayats could not function as such. So, there must be a clear-cut idea about the way in which the Panchayats will have to function.

I think he has done a very commendable job though it is a voluminous subject...*(Interruptions)* Anyhow, the subject is voluminous. I congratulate Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar for having taken pain to review the whole situation and come with concrete proposals. His work will be a commendable one in the history of development of Panchayats in the nation. Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar will be remembered for a long time to come for his strenuous activities and for his committed approach to the Panchayat administration. Though he was abruptly taken from another Portfolio and brought to this Ministry, he has done a very commendable job.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Please sit down.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : I appreciate him and I give him all encouragement. I will remember him always for having taken a laborious task for developing the Panchayati Raj institutions in the country.

With these words, I conclude. Thank you.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Shri L. Rajagopal to speak now. Please be brief as I have three more Members to speak.

SHRI L. RAJAGOPAL (Vijayawada) : Thank you Mr.

Deputy-Speaker, Sir, for giving me this opportunity. I will be very brief and I will complete in five minutes and not more than that.

I would like to remember here the words of Mahatma Gandhiji – the cause of liberty becomes a mockery if the price to be paid is the wholesale destruction of those who are to enjoy this liberty. Mahatmaji wanted the people's Government. That is why we chose to have democracy wherein we have different forms of political systems and different forms of governance. We have Panchayats – middle level Panchayats and district level Panchayats and then we have the State and then the Centre. All these various forms of governance should have the powers to function so that the administration is taken to the doorsteps of the people. That is why we said democracy is for the people, by the people and of the people. But somewhere down the line, it got changed. 'By the people' has become 'buy the people'; 'for the people' became 'for the people' and 'of the people' became 'off the people'. So, we have been moving away from the people and the real aspirations of Mahatma Gandhiji have not been fulfilled.

That was the time when our former Prime Minister late Rajiv Gandhiji realized that 85 per cent of the resources are getting wasted; in fact, 85 per cent is being taken for the administrative costs and only 15 per cent is reaching the doorsteps of the people in the villages. Then he looked at as to what were the real problems and he said – we need to decentralize so that the powers are devolved and the Panchayat system is empowered and the collection of funds takes place there and the expenditure takes place there so that the real governance which is more efficient and which is not complacent can be had in India. That is why late Rajiv Gandhiji amended the Constitution to bring in the Panchayati Raj system and gave powers, gave teeth to the entire Panchayati Raj system.

Here, I would like to comment that in the last two-and-a-half years of my public life, especially as a Member of Parliament when I have seen how the Panchayati Raj system works. In fact, I am much honoured that our hon.

Minister is here. He came all the way to Vijayawada, to my parliamentary constituency where we held a *Gram Sabha* in a village, Paritala, on the outskirts of Vijayawada where thousands of people came. The Panchayat President was there. The Members came. In fact, the hon. Minister was shocked to find out that the Panchayati system is a one-man system; the Members are not taking part in the discussions, the agenda is not properly discussed etc. He found out that this is the case in most of the places around this country.

In fact, he gave valuable suggestions as to how the Panchayats should function. The hon. Minister can come once in a year or once in five years. But he cannot touch every Panchayat. In fact, we have to empower and we have to give enough teeth in the legislation so that there is proper mechanism where the powers are devolved not to the President alone, but to the Members of the Panchayat and the Panchayat system.

Likewise, at the middle level or at the district level, all of them should have enough powers. In fact, some States have already given and transferred various Departments to the Panchayat system. Still there are many others who have not done it. Recently, the Government of Andhra Pradesh has signed an MoU with the hon. Minister when he visited in April, 2006 to transfer immediately ten Departments to the Panchayat Raj system; and in a phased manner, in the next two to three years to transfer all the 29 Departments to the Panchayat Raj system.

Here, I would like to point out certain glaring defects. I feel that the Panchayat Raj system is only depending on the funds to be allocated by the Eleventh Finance Commission and the resources that they raise locally. We will need a system where every Department's every revenue collection has to be shared by the Panchayat Raj system right from village level to the intermediate level and to the district level and then to the State Government and then to the Central Government. All of them have to have a revenue sharing basis so that the money does not flow from the ground level all the way up to Delhi and then

it is re-allocated from the top down the line. That is not the way we should have it. We should have a proper system where it is possible that all funds are collected and shared by various stages of Panchayat system and they do not have to beg anybody for funds. They should have their own financial power, their own resources to execute their programmes.

Unless we empower them financially there is no point in having the system. In fact, it is only for the sake of power that they are contesting and maintaining their posts. In terms of actual execution, the people still look towards an MP or an MLA. When an MLA or an MP comes, he feels that he will be getting some funds. He wants the Chief Minister to come because he feels that if the Chief Minister comes he might give some funds.

Why should they depend on anybody's mercy, whether it is the Prime Minister, Chief Minister or a Member of Parliament? They should have a clear-cut line of resources so that they can have the resources to fulfil their needs. Not only that, we are seeing in West Bengal and other States how people are agitating whenever there is land acquisition for industries. Yes, we need to have industries also, apart from agriculture because industry is a value-addition to agriculture. Unless industry comes up, we cannot have employment and we cannot have value-addition to the agriculture produce. Once there is revenue sharing by the panchayats, the panchayats will come forward and say 'take our land and put up industries here so that we can have our share of revenue from the sales tax, excise duty and income tax'. This will ensure that they do not have to go anywhere or to anybody to have funds. Now, they think that it is not the industry which is providing them funds; they think it is the Chief Minister and the Prime Minister who is giving the funds. In fact, we should not have that process in our democracy. People should not be at the mercy of any leader or anybody else. They should have their own might and their own resources – financial and otherwise also – so that they can then create their own world so that they can live peacefully.

[Shri L. Rajagopal]

I hope that our hon. Minister will travel widely and cover most of the districts and States of this country and try to see, try to realise the real dream of late Rajiv Gandhi and Mahatma Gandhi that Gram Panchayats are strengthened. *Sampoorna Swaraj* is not possible without *Gram Swaraj*.

[Translation]

CHAUDHARY LAL SINGH (Udhampur) : Sir, with your permission I welcome the important discussion initiated by Shri Basudeb Acharya regarding Panchayati Raj System. I can say that the Panchayati Raj System is the most important in the country as compared to the other Ministries and it is the only institution, which can get Justice delivered to any one. Only Panchayati Raj System is the only yardstick of democracy at grass root level.

India lives in villages and here Panchayats exist. The Panchayati Raj System exists not only today but it has been continuing for the last thousands of years. However, its names have changed from time to time. Thousands of years ago the villagers used to live in clans and tribes. Panchayats also existed at that time. There have been reforms in the Panchayati Raj System but with the change of times some evils have crept in the system along with the good things. Corruption and dishonesty have prevailed in the system which was absent earlier.

Earlier, whatever developmental work used to be carried out, be it constructing a school building, pucca lanes or a room at a public place, it was all used to be done by the Panchayat itself. The maintenance of damaged lanes, management of potable water, water huts and big ponds or public places, all these infrastructure were developed by the Panchayats who neither had Governmental support nor sufficient funds but there was a vision, truthfulness and honesty. It is only a matter of developing the vision. We have to think how villages could be developed and how to create faith in democracy? Today, several schemes are formulated and majority of

them have been completed but a large amount of funds is siphoned off as commission in these schemes and you cannot even imagine about these sums. There are BDOs and BLWs in the villages but no one consults the Sarpanch. BLW is the secretary to Sarpanch but in practice, the Sarpanch is secretary to BLW. Similar is the case with the BDO and he is the secretary to the Block Committee. With faith and expectation, Mahatma Gandhi ji and subsequently Rajiv Gandhi ji have tried to expand it which is a very good thing. Hon. Minister is taking a lot of interest in it and we expect a lot from him. It would be good if you strengthen the Panchayats with planning and honesty. It has been six months since its election in our area. Earlier elections to one thousand Panchayats were not held. If elections are not held and there are no Sarpanch, then how people would get justice? If there is any dispute with regard to the land, it goes to the Panchayat. If there is a dispute between a mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, it goes to the Panchayat. If there is a dispute with regard to the ownership of a tree, it is resolved by the Panchayat. All sorts of disputes go to the Panchayat. I can assure that 90 per cent disputes of villages do not go to the courts. All these disputes are disposed off by the Panchayats. If there are no Sarpanch, then all these disputes will go to the courts. I would like to request that it be strengthened and the schemes meant for that purpose, whether they are centrally sponsored scheme or State sponsored, need to be paid full attention to. It has to be seen as to what is happening at the grass root level. If any one visits Sarpanch he offers tea to him. If any outsider visits, the village he enquires the house of Sarpanch. Nambardar and Sarpanch are the only important persons of village. The Government does not provide any honorarium to Sarpanch. Our State Government does not pay them anything. I am telling the fact that Sarpanch does not get a single penny. There are Municipal Committees and notified areas. There all officials get salaries and honorarium. Sarpanch does not get honorarium because he lives in village and he is simple and he is serving the people of the village. I would like to submit, that the Sarpanch should get at least Rs.5000/- as honorarium and

the Panchs should also get Rs.1000/- so that villages should develop properly. I would like to cite an example. When a file of NGO moves from Delhi, so many officials take bribe. ...*(Interruptions)*

In the end, I would like to say that Sarpanch should be entrusted with full powers. Though it is said that all the schools, dispensaries or animal Husbandry department or Horticulture for that matter come under Panchayats but infact this is not so. I would like to say that they must be entrusted with all powers. I thank you for giving me the opportunity. I would like to thank Mr. Mani Shankar Aiyer. He is working hard so that all the Panchayats could appreciate him.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Next speaker is Shri K. Francis George. Please be brief while speaking on this issue, and try to conclude your speech within three-four minutes.

SHRI K. FRANCIS GEORGE (Idukki) : Yes, Sir, I thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to speak on the issue – the mid-term review of the working of the Panchayati Raj institutions. There have been a lot of speakers to speak on this issue, and all of them have highlighted the problems that are being faced by the Panchayati Raj institutions in our country.

There have been seven Round Table Conferences in which the problems and prospects of working of the Panchayati Raj institutions have been discussed threadbare. I am happy to note that the hon. Minister has taken so much interest in the working of our Panchayati Raj institutions. He had visited our State and various other States also. He had been to Kerala where Panchayati Raj institutions almost work as a role model for the whole country. Kerala has been almost the first in the country to give power down to the District level back in 1991. Later on according to the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments we had established the three-tier Panchayati Raj system and we have implemented the people's plan programme.

The main thing I want to point out is that whichever party or coalition is in power, funds have to be provided to the Panchayati Raj institutions. At times we see that due to political considerations these institutions are starved of funds. It is not enough that we equip them with administrative powers, we have to devolve funds also. We should ensure that every financial year, a certain quantum of funds automatically reach Panchayati Raj institutions. As of now that is not the case. Funds are devolved according to the whims and fancies of the State Government which is in power at a particular point of time. That would not help in the efficient functioning of the Panchayati Raj institutions. To realize the dream of Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhiji and to achieve Gram Swaraj it is essential that we equip our Panchayati Raj institutions with powers and with enough funds.

The Twelfth Finance Commission has recommended to grant Rs.20,000 crore over a period of time to be released to the Panchayati Raj institutions all over the country. I think the Central Government should ensure that each State Government, in every financial year transfers these funds without fail to the three-tier Panchayati Raj system. Then only these institutions can function. Then only the aspirations of people at the grassroots' level can be realized through these Panchayati Raj institutions.

In a country like ours with over 100 crore people, it is only through the Panchayati Raj institutions, the local self Governments, that we can fulfill the basic needs of our people. So, to equip these institutions should be the main criterion, whoever is in power. In our system, parties or coalitions change every five years. These elections are not held simultaneously. So, if the majority of the Panchayati Raj institutions are being ruled by a particular party or a coalition, in many States we find that when the administration changes at the State level these institutions are starved of funds. The Central Government should ensure that this practice should stop forthwith.

I would like to point out that according to the decisions that have been taken in the National Development Council

[Shri K. Francis George]

we should further equip these institutions. We are now having the Mid-Term Review. We should further equip these institutions to realize the goal of Gram Swaraj in our country.

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Hon. Member may lay their speeches on the table of the House, it will be deemed as the part of the proceedings.

SHRI DAHYABHAI VALLABHBHAI PATEL (Daman and Diu) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I come from the UT of Daman and Diu. We were under the rule of the Portuguese for 450 years and got independence on 19 December, 1961, after 14 years of India's independence. After our independence Goa, Daman and Diu were together. We did not get any grant for the Panchayats we used to run. We got separated from Goa in 1987 when Goa got statehood. After that our Panchayat started getting some benefits. Twenty-nine subjects were given to Panchayats in accordance with the amendment of 1973-1974 but the due powers were not given. District Panchayats were constituted after 1994 and after the enforcement of the Panchayati Raj a few powers have been devolved to them. But Panchayati Raj can not be run as per the powers devolved to them as they do not have enough funds. A Commission of Finance Ministry had visited the Union Territory in 1995-1996. From that time, Silvassa and Daman together give Rs. seven thousand crores to the Government, out of which 28 per cent was promised to be paid back for development of the Union Territory. But the said amount is not paid till date. We are carrying on with the grant of Rs. three lakhs paid to each Panchayat per year. Earlier, we used to get cent percent matching grants against the house tax recovery but now this grant has been discontinued. Merely three lakh rupees are given to us now a days which is not enough to undertake even small works and we cannot run the Panchayats. I would like to demand that the powers of the Panchayats must be enhanced. Out of 29 subjects

the primary education has been classed as 104 but in our adjoining State Gujarat and UT of Silvassa this number is 107. I would like to submit that 107 class rooms' needs to be given for primary education. Before the Amendment of 1994 we were able to carryout our responsibility with the grants after getting matching grants. But now it has become difficult. When district Panchayats were constituted they were given a few powers but full powers were not granted to them because the IAS officers posted there do not want to hand over the powers to Panchayati Raj institutions because they do not want to loose these powers. I would like to submit that full powers must be given to Panchayats and district Panchayats.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, we have submitted a written request for creation of 44 posts. But, till date permission for their creation have not been granted. I would like to request that the said posts may be created at the earliest. With these words, I conclude my speech.

[English]

*SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN (Palani) : Sir, the Panchayats and Municipalities have existed for long in this country. But unfortunately these institutions were not able to function satisfactorily for any length of time after they stood superceded. Mahatma Gandhi loved Panchayati Raj Institutions and upon the views of Gandhiji article 40 was included in our Constitution under the non-enforceable part IV on the Directive State Principles of State Policy. It said that the State shall take steps to organize village panchayats and endow them with necessary authority "to function as units of self Government". No attention was paid to article 40 until late Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi took serious interest and initiative to bring forward a constitutional amendment. It was however opposed on the grounds of its being an effort to reach the Panchayats directly, by passing the States. The amendment finally became a reality during Narasimha Rao's time. The seventy-third and seventy-fourth constitutional amendments have made some protection to Panchayats and Municipalities. In every

*The speech was laid on the Table

State a three tier system is envisaged area (i) Panchayats cannot remain superceded for long (ii) All Panchayats seats would be reserved for women, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes (iii) there shall be fixed five year term for all panchayats. They shall have their own budget, power of taxation have their own budget, and list of items in their jurisdiction.

In our country there are 2,33669 Gram Panchayats. Elected representatives for Gram Panchayats are

| | | |
|---------|---|----------------|
| SC | = | 493255 (18.9%) |
| ST | = | 319701 (12.3%) |
| Women | = | 977298 (37.5%) |
| General | = | 1795852 |

Panchayat Samiti :

| | | |
|---------|---|---------------|
| Total | = | 6085 |
| SC | = | 33123 (21.2%) |
| ST | = | 11598 (7.4%) |
| Women | = | 58347 (37.4%) |
| General | = | 111239 |

Zila Parishad :

| | | |
|---------|---|--------------|
| Total | = | 534 |
| SC | = | 2774 (18.3%) |
| ST | = | 1680 (11.1%) |
| Women | = | 5785 (38.2%) |
| General | = | 10684 |

The Constitution of India Article 243G envisages the powers, authority and responsibilities of Panchayats. Eleventh Schedule under Article 2439 explains 29 matters are listed for Panchayats.

1. Agriculture, including agricultural extension
2. Land Empowerment, implementation of land reforms, land consolidation and soil conservation.
3. Minor irrigation, water management and water shed development
4. Animal husbandry, dairying and poultry
5. Fisheries
6. Social forestry and farm forestry
7. Minor Forest Produce
8. Small scale industries, including food processing industries
9. Khadi, village and cottage industries
10. Rural housing
11. Drinking water
12. Fuel and fodder
13. Roads, bridges, ferries and other means of communication
14. Rural Electrification including distribution of electricity
15. Non-conventional energy sources
16. Poverty alleviation programme
17. Education including primary and secondary schools
18. Technical training and vocational education
19. Adult and non formal education
20. Libraries
21. Markets and Firs

[Shri S.K. Kharventhan]

22. Health and sanitation including hospitals, primary health centres and dispensaries
23. Family Welfare
24. Women and child development
25. Cultural activities
26. Social welfare, including welfare of the handicapped and mentally retarded
27. Welfare of the weaker sections and in particular of the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes
28. Public distribution system
29. Maintenance of community assets

Out of above 29 matters, only few were allotted to Panchayats throughout the country. Most of the States are not ready to delegate these powers to Panchayats. According to the Interim Report in Tamil Nadu only rural roads, water supply, sanitation and rural housing schemes are allotted to Panchayats and remaining 25 matters are in paper only. The conditions of Gram Panchayats are very poor. Panchayat Presidents have to spend their own money to go to collectorate even for official work since no traveling allowance is paid to them. The Panchayats are not having power and not having any fund. Throughout the country 977298 women are occupied as elected representatives in village panchayats but none of them are having fund to implement any scheme. They are all begging the MPs and MLAs to get fund for the implementation of schemes. Union of India has to direct the all State Governments to implements all 29 matters. (i) "The Land development, implementation of land reforms, land consolidation and soil conservation.

(2) Minor irrigation, water management and watershed development are in the hands of Agricultural

Engineering Department and Districts Rural Development Agency. My Dindigul District is included as one of the Backward District in this country and implemented (RSYV) Scheme and allotted in crores. A huge amount was allocated for the above two schemes. But total amount is swallowed by Agricultural Engineering Official and other officials. If these schemes were implemented through panchayats certainly the benefits could have reached the poor masses.

Morover in 3 tier system the Chairperson to be elected directly by the public or otherwise it will leads to more corruption in this system. Once again I urge upon the Government of India to allocate sufficient funds for panchayats and the same may be sent to Panchayats Presidents directly.

In the same manner the Town Panchayats and Municipalities are also not able to implement any schemes due to financial crunches. Government of India has to earmark certain fund for town panchayats and municipalities. Their position is worst than the Gram Panchayats. They are not able to maintain even street lights, public toilets, roads and sanitation. Most of the town panchayats and municipalities are not having sufficient staffs. They are not having even scavengers. Unless this situation is changed the representatives of the local bodies cannot walk in the street. We give namesake power but actual power is not given.

Our Hon'ble Panchayat Raj Minister Shri Mani Shanker Ayer had toured throughout the country and he is well aware of all these things. Hence I humbly request him to take suitable steps for the successful implementation of Rajiv's Dream.

Furthermore, I want to thank our Hon'ble Prime Minister and Madam Soniaji to form separate Ministry for Panchayat Raj. The Ministry came into existence on 27.5.04. Within 30 minutes our Hon'ble Minister, Shri Mani Shanker Ayer toured throughout the country and met the elected representatives of Panchayat Raj Institutions and submitted this Interim Report. It is a

highly appreciable task undertaken by our Hon'ble Minister Shri Mani Shankar Aiyer and his team. I am thanking them.

Once again I am reiterating the vision of Mahamaji.

"Poorna Swaraj through Gram Swaraj"

[Translation]

*DR. ARVIND SHARMA (Karnal) : Sir, the UPA Government, Shrimati Sonia Gandhi and all the allied parties under the leadership of the Hon. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh are all fully committed towards realizing the dream of strengthening the democratic system as envisaged by Mahatma Gandhi ji, Indira Gandhi ji and Late Shri Rajiv Gandhi ji. Today, our Government is making full efforts to fulfill the dream of the 3 tier system of Panchayati Raj as envisaged by late Rajiv Gandhi. Panchayats are being empowered more and more at the village level. All the block committees at block level and all the Zila Parishads at the district level and other cooperatives committees are being more and more empowered to facilitate development in each corner of the country. The spirit of India lies in villages, 80 per cent of its population lives in villages. The Government should take following effective measures to strengthen the system of Panchayati Raj.

DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION : The State and the Union Government should allocate maximum funds to Panchayats in all the villages and open Government schools in all the villages so that the poor youth could acquire education and priority should be given to the youths in jobs who have taken education in Government schools on the lines of Haryana Government.

HEALTH AND HYGIENE : The Union and State Governments should organize medical camps in villages so that the poor could get first aid medical treatment in

*The speech was laid on the Table

these first aid centers and by promoting health programmes the educated youths there should be imparted training on health and hygiene programmes like pulse polio should be promoted and trained A.N.M and staff nurses should be appointed in villages.

ARRANGEMENT FOR DRINKING WATER : These days there is shortage of pure drinking water in the country and first of all the Government through various schemes should make arrangements for the availability of drinking water in all the villages and towns.

INDIRA AWAS YOJANA : Under this scheme the funds allocated to the poor should be increased from Rs.15,000 to 20,000 so that the benefits of the scheme could accrue to the poor women and people living below poverty line.

SULABH TOILETS : The Government should make arrangements for more and more Sulabh toilets in all the villages and clusters of the city so that the women do not have to go to jungles to relieve themselves. Approximately 14 villages have been declared clean under this programme in Panipat city of my Parliamentary constituency.

MEETINGS UNDER PANCHAYATI RAJ : The district administration should convene monthly meetings of all elected Panch, Sarpanch and Members of all the villages at block and district level and should implement welfare programmes after preparing a list. Public Grievances Redressal Committees and District Monitoring and Vigilance Committees should be empowered more so that the achievements of the Government could be propagated to the masses.

SETTING UP OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES : The Government should allocate more funds for setting up small scale and cottage industries for educated youths and women in all the villages and they should be imparted training from time to time so that they can become self reliant. The Pradhan Mantri Swarojgar Yojana should be promoted more effectively.

ENCOURAGEMENT TO SPORTS : The Government should construct sports stadium at block and district level and organize tournaments for encouraging sports persons from time to time and the Government should allocate maximum funds for the development of sports so that the sports persons do not have to face financial burden. Arrangement for trained coaches should be made for imparting training of sports of all kinds.

Therefore, through you, Sir, I request the Hon'ble Minister, Government India that Panchayati Raj should be implemented fully so that the Democratic System could be more strengthened.

[English]

SHRI A.V. BELLARMIN (Nagercoil) : First of all, I thank the hon. Minister of Panchayati Raj for submitting the report on Mid-Term Review and Appraisal and initiating a healthy discussion on this.

The objective is to strengthen the Panchayati Raj Institutions to enable them to emerge as institutions of self-governance for planning and implementation of programmes for economic development and social justice, as envisioned in the Constitution.

Several rounds of Round Table Conferences and appraisals held on the subject to review the activities to assess the level of achievements of the targets reveal certain facts which are not up to the expectations. It is also varying from State to State. The States should be urged to ensure speedy devolution of funds, functions and functionaries to empower the *Gram Sabhas*. The report of actual implementation of programmes and projects envisaged under various rural development schemes tells us a sad tale. Therefore, strict monitoring and vigilance at Central, State and District levels, and if possible at the block levels too, with the involvement of people's representatives alone can help salvage the situation.

Earmarking equal and sufficient quantum of funds by all the States to empower the panchayats financially will go a long way in fulfilling the objectives. Many States are

allotting meagre funds for the panchayats. Adequate powers are not devolved to them and the functions are not defined clearly. All these incongruent actions of various State Governments will not help strengthen the Panchayati Raj Institutions system.

The indirect mode of electing the Chairpersons of the local bodies is paving a way for numerous bottlenecks and unhealthy practices. Our experience in Tamil Nadu in the local body elections held recently bore testimony to this. A suitable mechanism therefore, should be evolved to avoid such undesirable situations in future.

So, the Government is requested to ensure equal and sufficient allotment of funds and devolution of powers by all the State Governments to the local bodies to enable them to strengthen their administrative prowess for attainment of the objectives envisioned by our great leaders and enshrined in our Constitution.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : The discussion on this is over *[Translation]* If the Hon. Members agree we now take up Zero hour.

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS : Yes Sir.

SHRI P.C. THOMAS (Muvattupuzha) : Sir, attacks on journalists are becoming very common nowadays. Recently, about two days back, a very senior journalist of 25-30 years standing had been attacked. He belongs to my constituency, but works in Delhi. He had been working with *The Times of India*, *The Indian Express* and some of the other major papers. Now, he is working as the Chief of Bureau in Zeevan TV, which is a Malayalam Channel.

Two days back, he along with camera man, was coming back to the Bureau after covering some official work, when he was attacked by a person who is known to him and two other goondas. He has been very brutally

attacked and he has been hospitalized. I understand that he has given a statement in the hospital, but no case has been registered. I also understand that somehow the persons who had attacked him are being safeguarded by some higher ups. We find that such incidents are happening again and again. So, journalists in general and in this case particularly, are facing very serious problems. I, therefore, urge upon the Government to take serious action in such cases generally and especially in this case immediately. Thank you.

SHRI K. FRANCIS GEORGE (Idukki) : Sir, I would like to associate with what he said.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Shri Francis George is allowed to associate himself with this issue.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN (Chirayinkil) : I would like to draw the attention of the Union Government to the special provisions in the Army Act. Yesterday, the Prime Minister made a declaration that the provisions will be withdrawn as far as Manipur is concerned. There were human right violations in that State and the law and order situation also had gone from bad to worse.

Considering all these aspects, especially in the interest of democracy and maintaining human rights, it is only just and proper that the special provisions with regard to Manipur State in the Army Act be withdrawn and suitable amendments may be brought before the House without delay during this Session itself. This is a matter of urgent public importance and the nation itself has taken note of the situation. While associating our feelings with the feelings of the people of Manipur, I would say that this draconian law must be changed.

[Translation]

CHAUDHARY LAL SINGH (Udhampur) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, with your permission I would like to draw the attention of the House towards an urgent matter. There have been militant attacks in our State for the last several years and it is believed that these will continue. Winters

have come now. The snowfall has also begun. The army deployed on the higher reaches start coming down. The higher reaches become insecure when the army goes down. That is why militant attacks and loot take place there.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, in my constituency people met me a few days back and told me that the army is shifting down. The militants are afraid to go there when the army is on the higher reaches because of which our villages are secured. This is an issue of the Government of India. Although the army remains in Siachen and it is replete with arrangements yet there have been some attacks recently. First was in Kulhan followed by the one in Duddu Vasantgarh, prior to that it took place in Prankot. Earlier when Shri L.K. Advani was Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Home Affairs the Government had given this assurance. Madam Sonia also visited that place and gave assurance of providing connectivity but it has not since been fulfilled. When Dudu Vasantgarh and Kulhan were attacked similar assurances were given but it is regretted that the Government or be it any other State agency step back from their words. It is requested that the condition of village Defence Committees is very bad, they do not have uniform, shoes and sophisticated weapons. I demand that the Government should take action to protect them so that they could be saved from the attack of militants.

SHRI MOHD. TAHIR (Sultanpur) : Mr. Deputy Speaker Sir, I thank you for providing me an opportunity to speak. I was made the Chairman of the Vigilance and Monitoring Committee of Sultanpur district on seniority basis. I have conducted the meetings as per rules and have been regularly sending its report to the officer. I was briefed by my officers that the first meeting of the district vigilance and monitoring committee with the District Magistrate Shrimati Kamini Chauhan under my Chairmanship was convened on 15.07.05 after its constitution. Thereafter the second meeting was convened 4-5 times and the proposal was sent to the district administration. The State and the district administration in connivance kept on postponing the meeting. When the meeting was to be convened in 2006 and I reached Sultanpur, it was postponed even before I

[Chaudhary Lal Singh]

could reach the venue. Thereafter we reviewed the meeting with the then District Magistrate Shrimati Veena Kumari and all the Members under my chairmanship on 10.06.06. Besides the development works at the grass root level were also reviewed. I regret to state that I have been removed from the above-mentioned office and Shri Rahul Gandhi has been appointed the Chairman of that committee in my place. It is against the guidelines of Government of India. This has been a move against me since I am a Bahujan Samaj Party Member. Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, It is your duty to give us protection. I want

you to look into this incident and give directions to the Government of India to restore my office.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : The House stands adjourned to meet again at 11 a.m. on 5th December, 2006.

18.45 hrs.

*The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of
the Clock on Tuesday December 5, 2006/
Agrahayana 14, 1928 (Saka)*

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