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Monday, April 28, 2008
Vaisakha 8, 1930 (Saka)

LOK SABHA DEBATES
(English Version)

Thirteenth Session
(Fourteenth Lok Sabha)

(Vol. XXXIV contains Nos. 21 to 28)

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LOK SABHA

Monday, April 28, 2008/Vaisakha 8, 1930 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at eleven of the Clock

(MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*)

[English]

REFERENCE BY THE SPEAKER

Successful launch of 10 Satellites by India's Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV-C9) at Sriharikota

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, the Indian Space Research Organisation, ISRO, has once again achieved a remarkable success in placing in orbit a record number of ten satellites simultaneously, through its launch vehicle, PSLV-C9, this morning.

I had the privilege of watching this historic launch process, which is the first of its kind in the world, live, on the national broadcaster and the precision with which the mission was accomplished made me feel extremely proud of the achievement by our space scientists which will go down in the history of the Indian Space Research as a major milestone.

With one more feather in its cap, I am confident, the ISRO will soon emerge as one of the major players in the international commercial satellite launch market.

Hon. Members, I am sure all of you will join me in congratulating the Indian team of scientists, technologists and the staff of the ISRO who have made this mission a success.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Q. No. 481.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA (South Delhi): Mr. Speaker, Sir, yesterday I raised a question that Baaluji. *...(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : I know, I have got your notice.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Hon. Members, will you please take your seats?

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: The Prime Minister has also misused his office. *...(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : I have already said such matters cannot be discussed in the way you want to discuss it. Therefore, if you so think, you can give a proper Motion. I will consider it. I am told there is already legal proceedings pending. Therefore, it has become *sub judice*.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Q. No. 481. Hon. Members, please sit down.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I will request the hon. Members to please allow the Question Hour to go.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: You have stood up. Why are you pointing out finger towards him? You please sit down. What kind of doctor you are?

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Q. No. 481. Shri Ramdas Athawale.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, I am thankful to you.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: Will you call me in 'Zero Hour'?

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : On this issue, sorry I cannot. You know that only two-three days are left.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: The Prime Minister has misused his office, a Minister has misused his office. *...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: You please give a proper notice.

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH (Maharajganj, Bihar): Mr. Speaker, Sir, ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I have asked you for Bhojpuri.

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH : I have given notice for adjournment motion on the subject, regarding the Prime Minister's office. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I have not accepted it.

...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Nothing to be recorded.

*(Interruptions)...**

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE (Pandharpur): Q. No. 481. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I earnestly appeal to all the hon. Members to please allow the House to function. Very important questions are there.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Madhusudan Mistry, please take your seat.

...*(Interruptions)*

11.04 hrs.

(At this stage, Dr. Ram Lakhan Singh and some hon. Members came and stood on the floor near the Table)

MR. SPEAKER: I will not adjourn today. Go on.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing is being recorded. Do not record one word.

*(Interruptions)...**

MR. SPEAKER : Why are you bothered? I am not allowing you. Why are you hoisting your breadth? It is not being allowed.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Madhusudan Mistry, please take your seat.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Ramdas Athawale, please take your seat.

* Not recorded

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : I have said that you have to give a proper notice. Rules require that a proper notice has to be given. You do not bother to give a proper notice and then you want to dictate to the other Members. By misusing your position you are standing here. It is against the rules, against the propriety and against the decency. You are doing it day-by-day. What can I do? You go on. Today, I will not adjourn the proceedings. I will not allow on your threat.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : Nothing will be recorded. Go on. How long will you go on?

*(Interruptions)...**

MR. SPEAKER : Let the country see what you are doing. Let it go on.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : Very well, they will also see me. They have seen me also. This is the position. The Speaker has not been shown the minimum respect in this House.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : It is not being recorded. Why are you bothered? I am sure everybody is taking notice of it.

*(Interruptions)...**

MR. SPEAKER : I can only say that it is a matter of great sorrow for me.' There are important matters which have to be discussed. A lot of important questions are there, and the Finance Bill is to be discussed. I only want the House to function properly. I am earnestly requesting you to allow the House to function. If you have given notices, I will consider them.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Do not ask for any bargain with me. There is no question of bargain with me.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : Sometimes, I wonder whether we are fit enough to come here. That is what I wonder. On what basis the people are sending us here? Is it to shout only?

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Everyone should ask himself or herself whether they are serving the country.

* Not recorded

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing is being recorded. I express my annoyance and total condemnation of the manner in which the House is being run.

*(Interruptions)...**

MR. SPEAKER: Merely if you have a strong voice and if you can raise your decibel, that does not mean that the subject is strong. No.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Let me read the answers of the Ministers because I am not going to adjourn it today.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: You cannot bargain with me. There is no give and take with me.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Not on this issue.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I am earnestly appealing to all sections of the House to allow the Question Hour to go on.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I earnestly appeal to you. Question Hour is very important. Already, we have lost 13-14 minutes. I am not going to commit anything. You know the rules. Shri Ramdas Athawale has put a Question. The hon. Minister of Agriculture has to reply.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Please take down the names of the Members who are giving slogans. It should be recorded.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Hon. Member, you have got the first Question today. This is the responsibility!

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: The question is about drought. This question is about drought affected area. It is your first question and instead of asking question you are raising slogans, you have asked the question for namesake only.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : You are not concerned with drought. I charge you.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : You are being unfair to the Chair. I have said on last Friday that you should give a proper notice under the rules. You never bother about rules.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : No. I have not got it as yet.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : There is no provision for either suspension of Question Hour or Adjournment Motion which I rejected.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Leave it, I will see. Despite this you want to do it forcibly. You think that it will be done by shouting. It is not good. I am making appeal to you.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: The Speaker of Parliament, Lok Sabha is appealing to the Members repeatedly. If it is something which is not admissible now, it will not be admissible at 12 noon. I have said that I would go according to rules. I am repeatedly saying that I am not shirking out any issue. But this culture has to go from Parliament of India that anybody can come to the Well, stop the proceedings of the House, get newspaper publicity and go on.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : You do not bother about it. That is why, I say: "No work, no pay." Please agree to this. We have to agree to this. No work, no pay.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : One thousand rupees is being paid to you for this.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : We are concerned about the active members.

...(Interruptions)

* Not recorded

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: The names of those hon'ble Members who are raising slogans be noted down.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please listen, what is happening?

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I am requesting both sides again and again to behave properly.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: What is going on?

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Lights have also gone out as a result of your voice.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: It is none of the Government's business. It is ours. I have got it switched off. I am sorry to get it switched off.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Out of shame I have done it.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: All of you please take your seat. All are shouting.

...(Interruptions)

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): You please just see and do something about those who indulge in such things. *...(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Please do not bother.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: You please take your seat. I have asked the hon'ble Minister to sit down, now you please sit down.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Please do not get agitated.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing is being recorded and nothing is being shown on also.

*...(Interruptions)**

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Now everything has been shut down. Nobody is seeing you. Now you please sit down. Your purpose is solved.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: You have taken half-an-hour, now you please sit down.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I do not know why are you worrying.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: There is a question on drought.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Apart from Dr. Ram Lakhan Singh, who has the main question, we have already received requests from Shri Avinash Rai Khanna, Shri Haribhau Rathod, Shri Jaswant Singh Bishnoi, Dr. Bikram Keshari Deo, Shri Mahaveer Bhagoda for supplementary questions because they are worried about their States. Now, you are not deliberating the House to discuss a very important matter. You can see that it is a very sad day for the country.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: You know that this can not be discussed

[English]

and you want of force me.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: You may go on.

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: If you have given the notice.

[English]

I would certainly consider the notice. It has come to me only on Monday morning.

...(Interruptions)

*Not recorded.

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: All right it is enough I have stopped the live telecast. You are not being shown. Now you please take your seat.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Your photo is not coming there. Of course, I want the people to see the behaviour of the Members who are disturbing the House, whether it is this side or that side.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Have you read the rules ever?

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: You are an educated person. Do you know that there are some rules?

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Mr. Pradhan, you will be in trouble. You will have to face an inquiry.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Is there anything like 'Zero Hour' in the Rules? You are well educated. You make big talks.

...(Interruptions)

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I had requested you to allow me to raise this issue in Zero Hour. I do not know whether you will allow me or not. *...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I did not say anything.

[English]

Be fair to the Chair. Last Friday, it was raised. I said, this can not be raised like this. There is a procedure. Please follow that procedure. I have not seen it on Saturday or Sunday. Today is Monday and up till now I have not seen it.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Allow me to speak.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: I am listening to everything.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : That is why I have said all these things. But Saturday and Sunday have passed. I will see whether any Motion has come or not and will take a decision.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Despite this you want to raise this issue forcibly.

[English]

Against the rules and the procedures, you are not allowing the Speaker even to read your Motion. What can I do?

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Will you raise this issue in question hour instead of Zero Hour? Is it a matter of bargaining?

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Please go on; I am allowing it to go on. I can only say that it is most unfortunate, it is a very sad thing that we cannot allow the House to perform. ..

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: What can I do if you do not even allow the Budget Session to go on?

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : I will not allow this issue to be raised unless you give a proper Motion.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I will look into it.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: I will look into it. It was holiday on Saturday and Sunday when we have come this morning, you are not allowing the House to function. *...(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : This Hour is entirely in my control.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Let the telecast be resumed. Let the people see.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Please sit down. Why are you standing? Nothing is being recorded.

*(Interruptions)...**

MR. SPEAKER : I am again appealing to my friends on the left, please go to your seats, please allow the Question Hour to go on. I am sorry that there is a deliberate attempt to disturb this House.

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Their names may also be noted down.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Please sit down. Please take your seats. I am again earnestly appealing to you to allow the Question Hour. It is a very important Question. You are talking about the farmers and the problems of the farmers. This Question relates to the issues of the farmers. I appreciate that a very important Question has been put and the Minister is here to reply. You also want to put many supplementaries.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI HARIN PATHAK (Ahmedabad) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, we will raise this matter during Zero Hour.

MR. SPEAKER: You will raise it on you own. You never seek my permission.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I cannot commit anything.

[Translation]

I do not need respect, but do respect the House and the people as well. I am not concerned about my respect. There is no respect in the country even for the person who is presently holding the Chair in this Parliament.

...(Interruptions)

* Not recorded

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Prof. Malhotra, please cooperate with the Chair. You are such a senior Member, you are such a responsible Member. Please allow the Question Hour now.

11.37 hrs.

(At this stage, Dr. Ram Lakhan Singh and some other hon. Members went back to their seats)

MR. SPEAKER: I am thankful to all of you, including the active members, who will face some trouble.

Now, Q. 481 – Shri Ramdas Athawale – Not present.

Dr. Ram Lakhan Singh.

11.38 hrs.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[Translation]

Drought Affected States

+

*481. DR. RAM LAKHAN SINGH:
SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of districts affected by drought during the last year and thereafter till date, State-wise;

(b) whether the Government has formulated any scheme/action plan to mitigate the problems being faced by the farmers due to drought; and

(c) if so, the details thereof indicating the amount allocated under the said scheme, State-wise during the above period?

[English]

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

During the South-West Monsoon 2007 (1.6.2007 to 30.9.2007), the country as a whole received 936.9 mm of rainfall against normal average rainfall of 892.2 mm, with a deviation of +5%. The Governments of Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh declared drought in parts of the States mainly due to deficient rainfall, as under:-

Madhya Pradesh	39 districts
Rajasthan	12 districts
Uttar Pradesh	9 districts

It is primarily the responsibility of the State Governments concerned to take necessary measures in the wake of natural calamities including drought. The Government of India supplements the efforts of the States with financial and logistic support. Ready availability of funds exist with the States in the Calamity Relief Fund (CRF) to take such measures. CRF is contributed by the Government of India and States concerned in the ratio of 3:1. The Central share of CRF is normally released in two half-yearly instalments.

In case the funds available in the CRF are not sufficient to tackle the situation, the State Government concerned is required to submit memorandum for assistance from the National Calamity Contingency Fund (NCCF), which is considered in accordance with a set procedure.

For the drought of 2007-08, the Government of Madhya Pradesh submitted memoranda seeking assistance of Rs.1883.81 crores from the NCCF, which was considered in accordance with the set procedure. This will now be considered by the High Level Committee (HLC) for a decision on the quantum of assistance to States for drought relief, from the NCCF.

No memorandum for assistance from the NCCF for drought relief has so far been received from the Governments of Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.

[Translation]

DR. RAM LAKHAN SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, my question relates to drought.

MR. SPEAKER: In which subject do you have a doctorate?

DR. RAM LAKHAN SINGH: Leave it for the time being as to in which subject I have done doctorate. I am doctor in the field too.

MR. SPEAKER: Being a doctor you are shouting like this. I fail to understand this feature.

DR. RAM LAKHAN SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have asked a question on drought. This is a very important question as you have also stated repeatedly.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, there are 48 districts in Madhya Pradesh out of which 39 districts have been affected by drought. This is not for the first time when these districts have been affected by drought. Among these, some districts have been facing drought situation for the last four years consecutively. In Bundelkhand region in which my parliamentary constituency falls, water level has registered a sharp decline because of constant drought situation. There is no water in ponds and rivers and there is no fodder and water for the survival of the animals due to which both the human beings and the animals are migrating. The hon'ble Member from Congress had also visited there and there is a constant demand from the State Chief Minister to the Union Government to provide a sum of Rs. 2000 crore for the year 2007-08. The Union Government had sent its delegation there. A Committee has also conducted its study tour and even after that the Government are saying that a High Level Committee has been constituted for taking a decision on quantum of assistance sought from NCCF. I wish to know the time by which the decision is likely to be taken by this high level committee and the funds likely be provided to Madhya Pradesh because the situation is very serious over there.

[English]

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR : Sir, we have received a communication from the Government of Andhra Pradesh. I had a detailed discussion with the hon. Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh. There is a demand from the Government of Madhya Pradesh that the Government of India should provide a sum of Rs. 1,833 crore from NCCF. As per practice, we are supposed to constitute a team. The team was constituted, and it was sent. The report of the team came.

Ultimately, the Inter-Ministerial Committee is going to meet on 29th April, 2008, that is, tomorrow; and they are going to take a view on that Report. After taking a view by this IMC, the final decision will be taken by a High-Powered Committee, which is under my Chairmanship, and tentatively a meeting has been called on 7th or 8th of May, 2008.

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: You will get the funds.

DR. RAM LAKHAN SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I had asked an another question that there had always been occurrence of drought and flood due to which the situation in the country gets deteriorated. Has the Govt. evolved any scheme to tackle this situation? The then NDA Government led by hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee had chalked out a scheme for channelising the rivers which have been shelved by the present Govt. - it does not matter, but is there any scheme that the Govt. have formulated to tackle the situation arising out of occurrence of drought and floods every year in various parts of the country so that the people need not to; migrate from there?

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR: The Government of India, through its budget, to provide funds to every State every

year for the calamity relief fund. Thereafter it is their responsibility to spend the funds to tackle this situation. It is true that the situation of Bundelkhand is something different. Some of its districts fall in Uttar Pradesh and whereas some in Madhya Pradesh. That is why the Government of India while taking initiatives had constituted a team and sent it there. We have received reports from these two States. We are going to take a final view on these reports. Bundelkhand is part of these two States. Practically such a situation occurs there every year or on alternative year. Sir, there is a need to formulate separate programme which should be implemented through a long term scheme.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Now, Mr. Ramdas Athawale. Though you were not present in the confusion, I would allow you one Supplementary.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the funds are provided from the calamity relief fund to tackle the drought and flood situation. The Government of Madhya Pradesh had demanded Rs. 1883.81 crore in the year 2007 to tackle the drought situation. That proposal was received by the Govt. in 2007, but no action has been taken on that proposal so far. There is an urgent need to provide relief to the states where the drought situation arises in the country. Sharad Pawarji is a strong Minister. I want to tell him that the funds should be provided as soon as possible to the State from where such a proposal is received for drought relief. It is 2008 and till date no funds have been provided to the State of Madhya Pradesh. What is the action proposed in this regard so that the concerned State Government could receive the fund at the earliest?

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR: I have already made it clear in the House that we have received the reports about it. In this regard, tomorrow a meeting is going to be held in which these reports will be taken up for consideration. There will be another meeting on 8th of May for taking final decision on the views of that meeting. I believe that some final decision will be taken in it.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

[Translation]

SHRI AVINASH RAI KHANNA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, almost every year the situation of drought and flood, arises somewhere in the country. Hon'ble Minister has stated in his reply that the calamity fund exists with the State while there is provision of National Calamity Contingency Fund (NCCF) with the Centre. Whenever request is received from any State in this regard action is taken. This is not the issue that relates to the farmers alone. This is the issue that relates to the nation as a whole. If there is no crop, there is no inflow of foodgrains into the godowns in the country. Are you considering to provide insurance cover to the farmers against their income? If such a provision is not made frequent request for funds will be received funds will be provided but no benefits will reach the farmers. So, whether the Government propose to provide insurance cover to the farmers against their income and if so the time by which it is likely to be provided to the farmers?

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR: There is a separate scheme for insurance. The farmers of those States, where this scheme has been adopted, are eligible for this insurance.

SHRI MAHAVIR BHAGORA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to know form the hon'ble Minister whether it has come to his notice that 12 districts of Rajasthan have been affected by drought and whether the Union Government have sent there any team for its assessment. If they have sent any team, what is the outcome thereof and the extent of loss reported and on the basis of this assessment whether the Government propose to provide any relief to them?

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR: Rajasthan Government have not sent any proposal to us till date. As per provision, it is with in their authority to spend funds from CRF. If there is requirement of funds beyond the limit of CRF then each State Government sends such kind of demand to the Central Government. Thereafter, we constitute a team, but there is no such demand from the Government of Rajasthan.

SHRI NAVEEN JINDAL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, every year a large area of our country gets affected with drought. Though you, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the National Disaster Management Authority has given any guidelines to tide over the drought situation.

[English]

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR: The National Disaster Management Authority has been recently set up. In fact, about two months back, one Workshop was called by them and by the Agriculture Ministry jointly. Some definite programme will be prepared and long-term solution will be suggested.

[Translation]

SHRI BRAJESH PATHAK: Mr. Speaker, Sir, today, question has been raised on a very important issue like

drought. Every year thousands of farmers face misery in Uttar Pradesh and Bundelkhand in particular owing to drought. The hon. Minister has stated in his reply that 9 districts of Uttar Pradesh are drought affected and he has not received any demand letter from there on a prescribed form. Through you, I would like to request the hon. Minister to issue clear instructions in this regard to the officers concerned since the first request letter for Rs. 7 lakh 16 thousand crore was sent on 6.12.2007, while the second letter for Rs. 2 lakh 799.46 crore was for loan waiver related to drought relief and the third letter dated 13.3.2008 was sent by the State Government of Uttar Pradesh to the Union Government for payment of the difference arising as a result of procurement of wheat by the State Government directly from the market to save the farmers from starvation since the Union Government did not disburse the allotted quota of wheat under BPL to the Government of Uttar Pradesh, however, no action has been taken in this regard. In regard to drought relief I wish to submit another point that a Central team is sent to a State after the receipt of a demand letter to this effect. A Central team led by their Joint Secretary visited Uttar Pradesh on 22, 23 and 24 January 2008 to assess all the facts. The Central team visits the State only after the demand letter is received from the respective State, so the reply of the hon. Minister is baseless. Through you, I would request and ask the hon. Minister the time by which the funds sought for drought relief for Bundelkhand and Uttar Pradesh are likely to be released so as to provide relief to the farmers of Uttar Pradesh suffering from drought.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Last question is all right.

[Translation]

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR: The Government of Uttar Pradesh has not sent us any proposal in regard to drought. I have read in the newspaper that the State Government has made a demand for some Rs. one or two lakh crore or some Rs. 80 thousand crore for development. However, I have not received any specific proposal asking for the visit of a Central study team for conducting a study on famine relief. It is true that the scenario in Bundelkhand is different. That is why the Government of India took initiative and sent a team to Bundelkhand. We have received its report and we wish to take some measures on the basis of that report. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Brajesh Pathak, please give up this habit.

Do not record it.

*(Interruptions)...**

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister one specific question. A lot of areas in the country are drought-prone areas. So, in order to make them drought-proof areas, what steps has the Agriculture Ministry suggested to various Ministries, like Irrigation Department and other Revenue Departments? The Relief Codes of various States are outdated and archival and are there since the British time. What steps has the Government taken to change these Relief Codes in various States, which are very outdated?

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR : Whatever relief we should provide to affected people has been discussed by the Government of India last year and the latest formula for every item has been finalized and communicated to every State, and implemen-tation has been started.

Regarding long-term solution, there is a separate programme for DPAP areas, for permanently drought-affected areas. A number of programmes have been suggested, like Watershed Development Programme. All these programmes have to be implemented by the State Governments. There is a special budgetary provision for all this. Also recently, we have introduced National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme at national level. One can use this Scheme and entire labour for implementation of these types of programmes, and States can definitely give priority to this.

[Translation]

SHRI REWATI RAMAN SINGH: Mr. Speaker, I had raised a question on drought regard to drought in the last session. I would express my gratitude to the hon. Minister of Agriculture since he had sent a Central team there. The central team has submitted its report. Due to this wheat could not be sown on approximately 30 thousand hectares of land in Koraon, Bara, Meja, Karcchana. The Central team has submitted its report. The Government of Uttar Pradesh is not sending its report to the Union Government. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI BRAJESH PATHAK: The Government of Uttar Pradesh is sending its report. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Brajeshji, please sit down.

. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Why are you speaking for the Government of Uttar Pradesh.

* Not recorded

...(Interruptions)

SHRI BRAJESH PATHAK: The Government of Uttar Pradesh is constantly making efforts in favour of the farmers. It is not fair to say such baseless things in the House. *...(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Brajesh Pathak, I request you not to do this. He has a right to put a question and Minister to reply.

[Translation]

SHRI REWATI RAMAN SINGH: Sir, may I know from the hon. Minister of Agriculture that if the Government of Uttar Pradesh has not sent the report. *...(Interruptions)*

SHRI BRAJESH PATHAK: Mr. Speaker, Sir, why is it being said that the Uttar Pradesh Government did not send report.. *...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: What are you doing? Can nobody be allowed to mention the name of U.P.?

...(Interruptions)

SHRI BRAJESH PATHAK: Sir, only facts should be stated in the House , if anyone would say baseless things about Government of U.P., I would not tolerate. *...(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Do not record this.

*.....(Interruptions)**

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down. You are not a Minister of the Government you are an elected public representative from there. *...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I will circulate a copy of each rule to everyone.

SHRI REWATI RAMAN SINGH: Sir, the hon. Minister has stated that the Uttar Pradesh Government has not sent any report.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: You ask a direct, brief and specific question.

[Translation]

SHRI REWATI RAMAN SINGH: Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister that if the Government of Uttar Pradesh has not sent any report then would the hon. Minister of Agriculture provide any assistance at his level, at Central level, if not, the reasons therefor?

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR: Sir, as I stated in the House, the Uttar Pradesh Government had declared earlier that nine districts are affected by drought. Besides, the state Government has also taken a decision on the action to be taken and begun the process of implementation thereupon. However, no proposal has been received on their behalf with demand for a specific fund for drought or for team to be dispatched. Nevertheless, we have a report on the drought situation in certain districts of Bundelkhand and Coral, Mejwada and Karcchana tehsils of Allahabad district. We have constituted a team to look into it. The team visited there and prepared its report. We are about to take a final decision on this report.

MD. SALIM: Mr. Speaker, Sir this country experiences drought like situation or drought somewhere or the other. The Government talks of its preparedness in terms of CRF and NCCF by evolving a social mechanism to facilitate people. However, no rains were witnessed in the last monsoon in August, September, which caused tremendous problem to the farmers over there. High level committee would be constituted on the basis of reports sent by the State Government. NCCF or CCF lies with the State Government. This way another year would elapse and the issue of providing relief to the farmer will remain hanging fire particularly owing to politics in Bundelkhand and the issue is stuck up between the State and the Union Government. The people commit suicide thereby aggravating the problem. An year is elapsing and we are again on the threshold of the Monsoon season. I would like to know whether he would try to improve the institutionalised mechanism that was evolved so that this work becomes time bound, speedy and the relief work gets started within three-four months, otherwise the very purpose would be defeated.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: This is a federal country.

[Translation]

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR : Sir, that is why provision of CRF has been made which constitutes 3:1 ratio. The Government of India assumes the responsibility of contributing 3 parts ratio in terms of finance. This much finance we provide to every State Government in every budget. This is provided to the State Government to start

* Not recorded

relief measures in case of emergency as whenever such situation arises, it takes some time to gather the report thereof as well as to extend assistance as well.

As far as Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh are concerned, all these 3 States have been sanctioned funds to the tune of Rs. 322 crore, Rs. 481 crore and Rs. 277 crore for the year 2008-09. The Union Government is prepared to contribute 75 per cent of its share and we are ready to provide this amount.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Q. No. 482 – Shri Kinjarapu Yerrannaidu – not present.

Now, we had a good discussion on the drought affairs or problems in the States. I am thankful to all sides of the House for their belated cooperation.

Q.No. 483. Shri Balashowry Vallabhaneni – not present. Shri G.M. Siddeswara – not present.

Rain Water Harvesting

*484. +SHRI NAND KUMAR SAI:
SHRI SUGRIB SINGH:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the rain water harvesting projects have helped in recharging the declining ground water level in the various States over a period of time;

(b) if so, the details of data collected from various ongoing projects during 2006-07 and 2007-08 so far, State-wise; and

(c) the manner in which the Government proposes to protect the rain water from going waste?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ): (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

The studies conducted by the Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) under its demonstrative scheme of Artificial Recharge to Ground Water as also the measurements carried out during the period 2006-08 revealed that recharge to ground water in one year through various types of recharge structures such as percolation tanks, check dams, sub-surface dykes, recharge shafts/wells and roof top rain water harvesting systems was in the range of 196 cubic meters to 34.50 lakh cubic meters with consequent rise in the water table in some areas in the range of 0.25 to 12 meters.

Government has taken following steps to promote rain water harvesting and ground water recharge:-

(i) Preparation and circulation of Manual and Guide on Artificial Recharge to Ground Water to States/Union Territories.

(ii) Preparation and circulation of Master Plan on Artificial Recharge of Ground Water to various States/Union Territories.

(iii) Implementation of demonstrative schemes of artificial recharge of ground water by Central Ground Water Board during VIII, IX & X Plans.

(iv) Scheme of Artificial Recharge to Ground Water through Dugwells in seven States viz. Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh.

(v) Government has advised the States/Union Territories to undertake promotion of roof top rain water harvesting in all Government buildings.

(vi) Government has circulated Model Bill to States/Union Territories for enactment of ground water legislation, which in turn has mandatory provision for roof top rain water harvesting.

(vii) The Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA) constituted under Section of 3(3) of Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 has advised States to take necessary measures to include roof top rain water harvesting in their building bye-laws and to also promote conservation of ground water in such areas.

(viii) The CGWA has issued directions under Section 5 of Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 to Group Housing Societies, Institutes/Schools, Hotels, Industrial Establishments/Farm Houses in its notified areas in NCT Delhi, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh to adopt roof top rain water harvesting.

(ix) Conducting of country-wide mass awareness and training programmes for rain water harvesting and artificial recharge of ground water.

(x) Constitution of Artificial Recharge of Ground Water Advisory Council to popularize the concept of artificial recharge among all stakeholders.

(xi) Institution of National Water Award and Bhoomijal Samvardhan Puraskars to encourage NGOs/Panchayats/Urban Local Bodies for adopting innovative

practices of ground water augmentation by rain water harvesting and artificial recharge through people's participation.

(xii) Implementation of scheme for Repair, Renovation and Restoration of Water Bodies.

[Translation]

SHRI NAND KUMAR SAI: Hon. Mr. Speaker, I would like to know from the hon. Minister the data collected statewise from the ongoing projects of ground water harvesting? The hon. Minister has not given complete information in regard to it, it should be complete. Whether the Union Government are contemplating to evolve such a scheme or introduce an ideal Bill to this effect and sending a copy of it to each State to know their views? Whether he has sent any letter or Bill to the State Governments for evolving a scheme to check the constantly depleting water table in Punjab and across the country? Whether he has received their opinion in this regard and what scheme is being evolved on this basis? Please elucidate.

MR. SPEAKER: Time is short, so you will not get its reply. He will give its reply not only to you but to the entire House.

PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ: Sir, first of all we should admit that irrigation and rain water harvesting is the obligation of the States. The Union Government intervenes in it as a matter of policy or for giving technical advice or for running a demonstrative project, however, it is the fundamental duty of the States. In regard to the scheme being run by the Government. I would like to inform you that we have 15640 such wells which are called observation wells. These wells are inspected every quarter in a year to know the level of water therein. When water level in different areas falls down then we inform the State Governments about the reducing level of the water table and thus we act as a catalyst to inform them and tell them the exact position of the receding water table. I have state-wise position of water level in various parts of the country. We have told the States about the depletion of water level and asked them that no more water should be extracted in those parts. However, in regard to rain water harvesting we have worked in this regard and informed the states as to how to recharge the ground water. We send our teams for this purpose. Beside this, we have told several States as to how we can work for rain water harvesting on the roof-tops so that drinking water is made available. These are demonstrative schemes, for example we have taught and demonstrated in 413 schools in the country that how rain water harvesting is done.

Besides this, I also have figures of several States with regard as to how to recharge ground water. We will continue to do this work, however, the preliminary work in this regard is to be done by the States. Beside, this we have also framed model bill and we dwell upon the view that such law should be enacted in all the states and several States have agreed to it.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[English]

Speed Post Gold Service

*482. SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Speed Post Gold Service launched by the Government has been successful;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government proposes to extend the service throughout the country;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the time by which it is likely to be extended throughout the country?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI A. RAJA) (a) to (e) Speed Post Gold Service is not a notified service. This was introduced between Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Hyderabad and Bangalore on trial basis for assessing market demand. Since the response to the test run has been poor and the service found commercially unviable, it has been decided to terminate the trial with effect from 30th April, 2008.

Foodgrains Production

*483. SHRI BALASHOWRY VALLABHANENI:

SHRI G.M. SIDDESWARA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the production of various foodgrains has been declining during each of the last three years and till date;

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

(c) whether the present foodgrains production is sufficient to meet the needs of the growing population; and

(d) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to increase the production of foodgrains in 2008-09 and 2009-10?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRI-

BUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) to (c) No, Sir. The total foodgrains production which was 198.36 million tonnes in 2004-05, increased to 208.60 million tonnes in 2005-06 and further to 217.28 million tonnes in 2006-07. The total foodgrains production during 2007-08 is estimated at Rs.227.32 million tonnes (3rd Advance Estimates released on 22nd April, 2008). Crop-wise production details during the years 2004-05 to 2007-08 are given in the table below:

(Million Tonnes)

Crop	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08*
Rice	83.13	91.79	93.35	95.68
Wheat	68.64	69.35	75.81	76.78
Coarse Cereals	33.46	34.06	33.92	39.67
Pulses	13.13	13.39	14.20	15.19
Total Foodgrains	198.36	208.60	217.28	227.32

*3rd advance estimates released on 22.04.2008.

The production of total foodgrains in the country estimated at 227.32 million tonnes during 2007-08 is about 13 million tonnes more than the projected demand of 214.02 million tonnes during the year.

(d) In order to increase the production of rice, wheat and pulses, a Centrally Sponsored Scheme "National Food Security Mission" (NFSM) has been launched in the country from Rabi 2007-08. It aims at adding the production of rice by 10 million tonnes, wheat by 8 million tonnes and pulses by 2 million tonnes by the end of the Eleventh Plan, i.e., 2011-12 through area increase and productivity enhancement in targeted districts. Besides, the Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) with an objective to incentivise the States to increase investment in agricultural and allied sector has been launched.

[Translation]

Opening of New Recruitment Centres

*485. SHRI DEVIDAS PINGLE:
SHRI SHISHUPAL N. PATLE:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the extent of shortage of officers faced by the Defence forces as on date;

(b) the number of Defence Personnel recruited throughout the country during the last three years and the current year, State-wise and year-wise;

(c) whether the Government proposes to open up new recruiting centres for defence personnel in the country; and

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

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) As on date, there is a shortage of 11,153,1423 and 1372 officers in the Army, Navy and Air Force respectively.

(b) Recruitment of officers in the Defence Forces is on All India basis and therefore, no State-wise data is available. The number of officers recruited during the fast three years and current year is given in Statement-I. The number of Personnel Below Officer Rank recruited during the period is given in Statement-II.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Statement-I

Number of Officers recruited during the last three years and current year

	2005	2006	2007	2008 (Up to March)
Army	2165	2221	2088	677
Navy	400	306	474	173
Air Force	544	463	485	191
Total	3109	2990	3047	1041

Statement-II

List of recruitment of Personnel Below Officer Rank (PBOR) in Army, Navy and Air Force

Sl.No.	Name of the State & UT	Army#			Navy				Air Force			
		2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2005	2006	2007	2008 (Upto March)	2005	2006	2007	2008 (Upto March)
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1.	Assam	1160	557	464	54	37	66	53	74	82	57	18
2.	Andhra Pradesh	3525	1586	1196	241	271	65	81	419	483	310	104
3.	Arunachal Pradesh	79	43	20	0	0	01	0	0	0	0	0
4.	Bihar	3134	2582	1628	376	323	391	120	1470	1978	1205	305

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
5.	Chhattisgarh	643	335	266	10	07	15	01	127	07	05	01
6.	Delhi	1031	547	476	38	15	04	0	41	86	60	12
7.	Gujarat	1773	510	755	05	02	02	07	181	121	50	16
8.	Goa	03	04	11	01	02	02	01	0	08	0	0
9.	Himachal Pradesh	1846	818	623	124	105	28	55	97	170	53	12
10.	Haryana	2521	1119	718	293	305	207	129	889	787	611	191
11.	Jharkhand	1168	629	474	27	27	30	24	150	289	184	58
12.	Jammu and Kashmir	2359	1187	850	61	112	39	47	109	206	50	09
13.	Karnataka	2026	950	760	28	18	19	0	140	97	48	18
14.	Kerala	1645	848	698	87	41	93	155	490	153	248	66
15.	Madhya Pradesh	3223	1125	1042	36	36	38	32	144	50	118	20
16.	Maharashtra	4932	1930	2138	55	54	23	16	143	99	37	18
17.	Manipur	210	163	115	45	24	37	18	99	75	69	08
18.	Meghalaya	87	53	34	02	0	03	03	01	05	01	03
19.	Mizoram	145	114	108	04	07	06	02	02	12	01	0
20.	Nagaland	415	206	189	10	10	13	14	02	10	0	0
21.	Orissa	1647	862	753	190	128	73	71	104	219	154	25
22.	Punjab	5380	2274	1533	97	66	25	18	222	415	93	42
23.	Rajasthan	4630	2025	1522	270	205	147	113	756	876	636	335
24.	Sikkim	05	08	10	09	11	13	05	23	0	02	02
25.	Tamil Nadu	3120	1149	980	22	34	16	08	156	42	11	03
26.	Tripura	128	64	30	02	02	0	01	43	05	32	0
27.	Uttar Pradesh	9801	3640	3391	543	573	404	204	774	1739	1264	476
28.	Uttarakhand	2049	1022	1196	78	72	70	67	371	370	73	23
29.	West Bengal	3102	1275	969	148	109	27	28	85	139	107	30
30.	Pondicherry	03	15	01	0	0	0	0	01	24	04	0
31.	Andaman and Nicobar	0	33	28	10	06	14	0	16	34	03	0
32.	Daman and Din	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
33.	Lakshadweep	0	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
34.	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
35.	Chandigarh	02	0	0	0	05	0	0	06	32	15	01
	Total	61792	27688	22978	2766	2607	1871	1273	7135	8613	5501	1796

Recruitment is on financial year basis in Army whereas in Navy and Air Force it is on calendar year basis. Recruitment figures for the Army for the year 2007-08 is still under compilation.

[English]

Integrated Fishery Project

*486. ADV. SURESH KURUP: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the programmes launched under the Integrated Fishery Project, Cochin for the development of fishery in the country;

(b) the nature and extent of the benefits likely to accrue therefrom to the fishery sector in the country during 2008-09;

(c) the details of the loans granted by the Government for the development and expansion of fisheries in the country during each of the last two years, State-wise;

(d) whether the Union Government has requested the States concerned to share the above loan; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) The programmes launched by the Integrated Fisheries Project, Cochin for the development of fishery in the country are:

(1) Development of value-added products by way of processing and product diversification from different varieties of fish.

(2) Development of technologies and transferring the same to the beneficiaries of rural fishermen community, small scale industries and export processing houses.

(3) Imparting training in the field of post harvest technology, refrigeration, quality control and value-addition in processing.

(4) Providing consultancy and undertaking job works in specialized products.

(5) Popularization and test marketing of value-added fish products.

(b) The benefits expected to accrue to the fishery sector in the country during 2008-2009 from these programmes are:

- Production of 100 tonnes of value added products by processing of diverse fish varieties,
- Human resource development in post harvest sector by imparting training to about 500 trainees/beneficiaries (8000 trainee days) through various training programmes,
- Benefit to the processing industry through adaptive research projects for developing new products and processes, and,
- Capacity building and skill upgradation in the area of processing and value addition, refrigeration technolcgy and post harvest infrastructure development.

(c) No loan has been granted by Government of India for the development and expansion of fisheries in the country. Loans are given by public sector banks, NABARD etc.

(d) and (e) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Utilisation of Irrigation Facilities

*487. SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH "LALAN":
DR. CHINTA MOHAN:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the availability of irrigation facilities/capacity in the country as on date;

(b) whether these facilities/capacity have not been utilised to the optimum level;

(c) if so, the details thereof, State-wise and the reasons therefor; and

(d) the concrete steps proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ): (a) to (d) Creation of irrigation potential of about 102.7 million hectares through various major, medium and minor irrigation projects implemented by the respective State Governments has been reported upto 31st March 2007, out of which about 87.2 million hectares is' reported as utilised. State-wise detail of irrigation potential created and irrigation potential utilised is given in the enclosed Statement.

The gap between the irrigation potential created and irrigation potential utilized is mainly due to non-completion of field channels and lack of on-farm development leading to inefficient use of the available water in the canal network and poor operation and maintenance.

With the objective of bridging the gap between irrigation potential created and irrigation potential utilized, the Command Area Development Programme (CAD) was initiated in 1974 and subsequently restructured as Command

Area Development and Water Management (CAD&WM) Programme during 2004. Due emphasis has been given on Participatory Irrigation Management (PIM) and capacity building to users under this programme.

Ministry of Water Resources has also taken up a study through Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Ahmedabad, IIM Bangalore, IIM Calcutta and IIM Lucknow with a view to ascertain the reasons for the gap between the irrigation potential created and irrigation potential utilized and to identify the measures for reducing the gap.

Statement

State-wise Irrigation Potential Created (IPC) and Irrigation Potential Utilised (IPU) upto the end of 2006-07

(in thousand hectares)

S.No.	Name of States	IPC	IPU
1	2	3	4
1	Andhra Pradesh	6864.64	6204.80
2	Arunachal Pradesh	119.08	92.88
3	Assam	948.38	738.81
4	Bihar	7717.78	5689.51
5	Chhattisgarh	2503.61	1835.86
6	Goa	62.16	46.90
7	Gujarat	4241.92	3708.85
8	Haryana	3829.03	3493.19
9	Himachal Pradesh	186.54	155.26
10	Jharkhand	1057.86	864.62
11	Jammu and Kashmir	1794.64	1730.69
12	Karnataka	2807.61	2485.54
13	Kerala	3388.60	2966.31
14	Madhya Pradesh	2052.52	1331.08
15	Maharashtra	6799.75	5161.21
16	Manipur	197.24	159.69
17	Meghalaya	61.76	55.94
18	Mizoram	18.08	15.23
19	Nagaland	94.17	79.57
20	Orissa	3626.67	3368.00
21	Punjab	6034.75	5898.22
22	Rajasthan	5358.25	4990.04
23	Sikkim	33.43	26.62
24	Tamil Nadu	3695.54	3685.32
25	Tripura	158.68	133.82
26	Uttar Pradesh	32357.78	25787.24
27	Uttaranchal	806.19	604.73
28	West Bengal	5823.46	4890.38

Increase in Limit of FDI

*488. SHRI DANVE RAOSAHEB PATIL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to increase the limit of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the Telecom Sector during 2008-09;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the total number of foreign investors who have come forward so far to invest in the Telecom Sector; and

(d) the extent to which the Telecom Sector is likely to be improved as a result of the proposed FDI?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) 145 FDI proposals approved in Telecom Sector during April 2004 till March 2008.

(d) FDI brings in Capital and Technology which are essential for qualitative and quantitative growth of the telecom industry.

Allocation of Imported Wheat

*489. DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the quantum of imported and indigenous foodgrains allocated to the States for distribution to the various categories of beneficiaries separately during 2007-08, State-wise and category-wise; and

(b) the quantum and price of imported and indigenous foodgrains provided per family of the said beneficiaries during the above period?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) Government makes allocation of foodgrains under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) to various States and Union Territories. During 2007-08, there was no import of rice and all quantities of rice allocated were of domestic rice only. During 2007-08, some quantities of wheat were imported. However, all wheat, whether domestically procured or imported, constitutes its stock in the Central Pool. From this stock, wheat is allocated at Central Issue Prices to States and Union Territories without any distinction being made between domestic and imported wheat. Details of allocations of rice and wheat made to States and Union Territories during 2007-08 for different categories of TPDS beneficiaries are given in the Statement.

(b) Under TPDS, Government makes allocation of foodgrains @ 35 kg. per family per month for Below Poverty Line (BPL) and Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) families based on 1993-94 poverty estimates of Planning Commission and March, 2000 population estnnat.es of Registrar General of India (RGI) or the number of families actually identified and ration cards issued to them by States/Union Territories, whichever is less. Allocations of foodgrains for Above Poverty Line (APL) category families are made depending upon their availability in the Central Pool.

The Central Issue Prices (CIP) for wheat and rice for APL, BPL and AAY categories of TPDS beneficiaries are as follows:-

(Rs per quintal)

Commodity	APL	BPL	AAY
Wheat	610	415	200
Rice	830	565	300

Since there is no distinction between domestic and imported wheat while allocating, its Central Issue Price is the same.

Statement

Allocation of Foodgrains (Rice and Wheat) under TPDS for 2007-08

(Thousand tons)

Sl. No.	States/UTs	Allotment			
		BPL	APL	AAY	Total
1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Andhra Pradesh	1,052	2,178	654	3,885
2	Arunachal Pradesh	26	62	16	104
3	Assam	475	575	295	1,346
4	Bihar	1,720	28	1,020	2,768
5	Chhattisgarh	473	51	302	825
6	Delhi	126	576	46	748
7	Goa	5	21	6	32
8	Gujarat	524	273	332	1,130
9	Haryana	209	121	123	452
10	Himachal Pradesh	133	262	83	477
11	Jammu and Kashmir	202	515	107	824
12	Jharkhand	653	52	352	1,058
13	Karnataka	770	1,373	504	2,647
14	Kerala	402	532	250	1,185
15	Madhya Pradesh	1,029	126	653	1,807
1.6	Maharashtra	1,683	176	1,022	2,881
17	Manipur	47	38	23	108
18	Meghalaya	47	64	29	140
19	Mizoram	18	56	11	85
20	Nagaland	32	79	20	131
21	Orissa	1,166	203	531	1,900
22	Punjab	131	83	65	280
23	Rajasthan	593	291	391	1,275
24	Sikkim	11	28	7	46
25	Tamil Nadu	1,259	2,806	783	4,848
26	Tripura	78	139	46	263
27	Uttar Pradesh	2,766	66	1,719	4,551
28	Uttarakhand	146	132	64	342
29	West Bengal	1,554	848	622	3,023
30	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	5	22	2	29

1	2	3	4	5	6
31	Chandigarh	3	0	1	4
32	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	5	5	2	12
33	Damen and Diu	1	1	1	3
34	Lakshadweep	1	4	0	5
35	Pondicherry	22	31	14	66
	Total	17,365	11,816	10,097	39,278

[English]

Cut in PDS Price

*490. SHRI J.M. AARON RASHID: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has made any assessment regarding the comparative price of foodgrains in the open market and under the Public Distribution System(PDS) during the current year;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government proposes to reduce the price of foodgrains allotted to the Below Poverty Line (BPL) and Above Poverty Line (APL) families under PDS to make it effectively affordable; and

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

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b) The open market prices of foodgrains are reviewed regularly by the Government. In order to ensure that the benefits of Targetted PDS reach the poor, the Central Issue Prices of wheat and rice have been kept unchanged from July 2002, even though the open market prices of wheat and rice have risen in the last six years.

The increase in the prices of foodgrains is attributable to various reasons such as regular revision in Minimum Support Prices, increase in storage and transportation cost, and upward revision in interest rates and possible speculation by private trade.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Farm Loans at Lower Rate of Interest

*491. SHRI CHANDRA BHUSHAN SINGH:
SHRI K.J.S.P. REDDY:
Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the consortium of Indian Farmers has requested the Government to extend farm credit at the rate of interest of four percent and also double the agricultural outlay in the plan funds; and

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the details regarding the farm credit and agricultural outlay 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) Consortium of Indian Farmers Associations have requested the Government to consider reducing rate of interest on all agricultural loans to 4 percent. They have assessed the total credit requirement for agricultural sector at Rs.10 Lakh Crores. The Consortium of Indian Farmers Associations in their budget proposals for 2008-09 submitted to the Union Finance Minister on 07th January, 2008 have demanded doubling of budget allotments for agriculture and rural development to Rs.24,000 crores.

To reduce the burden of interest on crop loans, the Government has decided to ensure that the farmers receives short-term credit at 7 percent with an upper limit of Rs.3.00 lakhs on the principal amount since 2006-07. For the implementation of the scheme, it has been decided to provide 2 % per annum interest subvention to Public Sector Banks, Regional Rural Banks and Cooperative Banks on their own funds and concessional refinance to Cooperative Banks and Regional Rural Banks. This scheme continues for the year 2007-08 and 2008-09 as well.

Details of target for agriculture credit vis-a-vis achievement during the last three years are given below:

Amt.(Rs. Crore)

Sl.No.	Agency	2004-05		2005-06		2006-07	
		Target	Achievement	Target	Achievement	Target	Achievement
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
(i)	Cooperative Banks*	39,000	31,424	38,600	39,786	41,000	42,480
(ii)	RRBs	8,500	12,404	15,200	15,223	15,000	20,435

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
(iii)	Commercial Banks	57,000	81,481	87,200	1,25,477	1,19,000	1,66,485
	Total	1,04,500	125,309	1,41,000	1,80,486	1,75,000	2,29,400

*includes others

Details of Plan outlay of Department of Agriculture & Cooperation during the last three years and BE for 2008-09 are given below:-

(Rs. in crore)

Year	Plan outlay
2005-06	4179.32
2006-07	4800.00
2007-08	5520.00
2008-09	6900.00*

* An amount of Rs.3165.67 crore for Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) and Rs.40.00 crore for Watershed Development for N.E. States are not included as both are state plans schemes.

[Translation]

Facilities for Beedi workers

*492. SHRI MAHAVIR BHAGORA:
SHRI AJOY CHAKRABORTY:

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

(a) the number of beedi workers in the country as on date, State-wise;

(b) the number of hospitals set up and houses constructed for the benefit of beedi workers during the last three years and current year, State-wise and year-wise;

(c) whether fresh proposals have been received from the States in this regard for implementation during the Eleventh Plan period; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) A statement showing number of beedi workers in the country, State-wise, is enclosed as Statement-I.

(b) (i) One hospital at Sagar, Madhya Pradesh, has been set up in 2007. Two hospitals, one each at Mukkudal (Tamil Nadu) and Bihar Sharif (Bihar) are under construction.

(ii) A statement showing the houses sanctioned for the benefit of beedi workers during the last three years, State-wise and year-wise, is enclosed as Statement-II.

(c) and (d) No proposal for creation of new hospital has been received from the States. However, on the recommendation of State Advisory Committee of West Bengal on Beedi Workers Welfare Fund, it has been decided to set up a new hospital at Jhalda, District- Purulia, (W.B.). The Housing Scheme is a Non-Plan Scheme and proposals are not examined/considered on Plan period basis.

Statement-I

State-wise details of the number of Estimated Beedi Workers

Sl.No.	Name of the State	Total No. of Beedi Workers Estimated
1	2	3
1.	Andhra Pradesh	7,35,000
2.	Assam	6,674
3.	Bihar	1,94,170
4	Jharkhand	89,124
5	Gujarat	46,355
6	Karnataka	2,50,078
7	Kerala	84,133
8	Madhya Pradesh	9,87,088
9	Chhattisgarh	20,481
10	Maharashtra	2,56,000
11	Orissa	1,90,313
12	Rajasthan	34,226
13	Tripura	9,372
14	Tamil Nadu	6,25,000

1	2	3
15	Uttar Pradesh	4,50,000
16	West Bengal	10,74,531
	Total	50,53,256

Statement-II

State-wise number of houses sanctioned during the last three years for beedi workers

S.No.	Name of the State/District	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
1.	Andhra Pradesh	10912	11485	6679
2.	Assam	Nil	91	Nil
3.	Chhattisgarh	Nil	Nil	420
4.	Gujarat	Nil	Nil	27
5.	Karnataka	Nil	1160	Nil
6.	Kerala	Nil	Nil	1422
7.	Madhya Pradesh	60	225	3284
8.	Maharashtra	187	129	9327
9.	Orissa	43	1634	1552
10.	Rajasthan	Nil	03	148
11.	Tamil Nadu	Nil	2898	271
12.	Uttar Pradesh	21	128	504
13.	West Bengal	1048	168	14311
14.	Bihar	1016	678	62
15.	Jharkhand	Nil	151	1126
	Grand Total	13,287	18,750	39,133

National Policy for Farmers

*493. SHRI CHANDRABHAN SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to give more powers and rights to the Panchayats under the National Policy for Farmers;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) to (c) The National Policy for Farmers, 2007 envisages according centrality to Panchayats in addressing the problems of the farmers. The Policy also provides that the Government of India would support State Governments for devolution of functions and functionaries for empowering the Panchayats.

[English]

Per-capita Calorei Consumption

*494. SHRI ABU AYES MONDAL: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of per-capita calorie consumption in the country during each of last three years;

(b) whether the per-capita calorie consumption has been on the decline;

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

(d) the measures taken or proposed to be taken by the Government to improve the situation?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) to (d) Details on per-capita calorie consumption in the country are not available on annual basis. The National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) conducts survey on nutritional intake at an interval of five years. The latest details available are those based on NSS 61st round, published by NSSO in May, 2007. This survey has found decrease in daily intake of calories in rural and urban areas between 1993-94 and 2004-05 as given below:

Year	Per-capita daily intake of calories (Kilo Calories)	
	Rural areas	Urban areas
1993-94	2153	2071
2004-05	2047	2020

In take of calories of a person depends on consumption of different food items. To educate the public in general to increase nutritional awareness, the Food and Nutrition Board under the Ministry of Women and Child Development carries out work through its field units. To ensure availability of foodgrains, particularly to weaker sections of the society, the Government implements the Targeted Public Distribution System and a number of welfare schemes. All these programmes are aimed at ensuring availability of food items to the weaker sections at affordable prices.

Implementation of Building and Other Construction Workers (RECS) Act, 1996

*495. SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Building and Other Construction Workers (Regulations of Employment and Condition of Service) Act, 1996 was enacted in 1996 and the rules were framed in 1998;

(b) if so, the present status of implementation of the Act;

(c) the names of the States where the said Act is already under implementation and those which are yet to implement the same;

(d) whether any sub-group has been constituted for ensuring the implementation of the said Act; and

(e) if so, the details and composition thereof alongwith the progress made by it, till date?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) to (c) Yes Sir. On the basis of the information received from the State Governments, the status of implementation of the Building and Other Construction Workers (Regulations of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act, 1996 is given in the enclosed Statement.

(d) and (e) A Special Group was constituted in 2004 to review the implementation of the Act by the State Governments. The Special Group is headed by the Secretary (Labour & Employment) with Director General (Labour Welfare), Chief Labour Commissioner (Central), Director General, Factories Advise Services Labour Institute, representative from the Ministry of Railways, Central Public Works Department as Members. Director, Ministry of Labour & Employment is the Convener of the Group. So far, the Group has held eleven regional meetings involving various States to impress upon the State Governments to forthwith commence the implementation of Act. As a result of these efforts, 20 States/Union Territories have constituted State Welfare Boards under the Act.

Statement

Status of Implementation of the Building and Other Construction Workers (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act, 1996 and Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Cess, Act, 1996

1.	Andhra Pradesh	• State Welfare Board has been constituted on 30.4.2007.
		• State Advisory Committee has been constituted on 16.6.07.
		• Cess Collector, Assessing Officer, and Appellate Authorities under the Cess Rules have been notified on 25-8-99.
		• Rules under the Act notified on 26.6.07.
		• Cess is being collected.
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	• Rules under the Act have been notified on 1.5.2007.
		• State Welfare Board has been constituted on 15.5.2005.
		• State Advisory Committee has been constituted on 5.7.2005.
		• Authorities under the main Act and Cess Act have been notified on 12.9.2007.
		• Cess is being collected.
3.	Assam	• Welfare Board has been constituted on 12.2.2008.
		• Implementing authorities notified on 12.2.2008.
		• Drafting of Rules are under process.
		• State Advisory Committee has been constituted on 12.2.2008.
4.	Bihar	• Rules have been finalized and notified on 7.9.2005.
		• State Welfare Board has not been constituted.

		•	State Advisory Committee has not been constituted.
		•	Implementing/cess collecting Authorities notified on 8.06.2006.
5.	Goa	•	Rules under the Act have been framed but under the process of finalizations.
		•	State Welfare Board has been constituted on 19.12.2004.
		•	The Expert Committee has been constituted.
		•	State Advisory Committee has been constituted.
6.	Gujarat	•	State Rules have been framed and Notified on 18.8.2005
		•	Welfare Board has been constituted 18.12.2004
		•	State Advisory Committee has been constituted.
		•	Enrolment of workers has already been started as well as collection of cess has commenced/authorities notified, under the Act on 3.1.05.
		•	The Act is being implemented.
7.	Haryana	•	Haryana Building and Other Construction Workers (RECS) Rules have been notified on 29.03.2005.
		•	State Welfare Board has been constituted on 2.11.2006.
		•	State Advisory Committee has been constituted on 9.4.2007.
		•	Authorities have been notified.
		•	Enrolment of workers as well as collection of cess has been started and the Act is being implemented.
8.	Himachal Pradesh	•	Rules under the Act have not been framed.
		•	State Welfare Board has not been constituted.
		•	The Expert Committee has been constituted under the Chairmanship of Labour Commissioner.
		•	State Advisory Committee has not been constituted.
9.	Jammu & Kashmir	•	Rules under the Act have been notified on 17.7.06.
		•	State Welfare Board has been constituted on 31.7.07.
		•	State Advisory Committee has not been constituted.
		•	Authorities have been notified.
10.	Karnataka	•	Rules under the Act have been framed and notified on 1.11.2006
		•	State Welfare Board has been constituted on 18.01.2007
		•	Implementing Authorities under the Act notified on 16.7.2007.
		•	State Advisory Committee has not been constituted.
		•	The Act is being implemented. Cess is being collected, registration of workers has been started and four welfare schemes are being implemented.
11.	Kerala	•	Rules under the Act have been framed and notified on 14.08.1998.
		•	State Welfare Board has been constituted.

		• Authorities under the Act notified on 12.3.1999.
		• State Advisory Committee has not been constituted.
		(The State Government had enacted the Kerala Construction Workers' Welfare Fund Act, 1989 and transferred it to the Kerala Building and Other Construction Workers' Welfare Board).
12.	Madhya Pradesh	• State Advisory Committee has not been constituted.
		• The State Rules under the Act have been formulated and notified on 1.1.2003.
		• Madhya Pradesh Building & Other Construction Workers Welfare Board has been constituted and notified on 10.4.2003.
		• Authorities under the Act notified on 2.3.2001
		• The Act is being implemented.
13.	Maharashtra	• State rules under the Act have been notified on 5.2.07.
		• State Advisory Committee has been constituted on 24.8.07.
		• Expert Committee has been constituted.
		• Registering Officers, Appellate Authority, Inspectors under the Act have not been notified.
		• Welfare Board has been constituted on 4.8.2007.
14.	Manipur	• Rules under the Act have not been framed.
		• State Welfare Board has not been constituted.
		• The Expert Committee has been constituted.
		• State Advisory Committee has not been constituted.
15.	Meghalaya	• Rules under process of framing.
		• State Welfare Board has not been constituted and finalized the Draft Rules.
		• The Expert Committee has been constituted.
		• State Advisory Committee has not been constituted.
16.	Mizoram	• Rules under the Act have not been framed.
		• State Welfare Board has not been constituted.
		• The Expert Committee has not been constituted.
		• State Advisory Committee has not been constituted.
17.	Orissa	• Rules have been framed and notified on 2.8.2002.
		• The Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Cess (Central) Rules 1998 have been adopted.
		• Welfare Board has been constituted/re-constituted on 14.1.08.
		• State Advisory Committee has not been constituted.
18.	Punjab	• The State Advisory Committee has been constituted on 7.12.99.
		• Expert Committee has been constituted.
		• Rules under the act have not been notified.

		• The Punjab Building and Other Construction Workers Board constituted vide State Government Notification No. S.O./20 CA 27/96/S-I8/2002 dated 29.5.2002.
		• Authorities under the Act have not been notified.
19.	Rajasthan	• Rules under the Act have been finalized.
		• State Welfare Board has not been constituted.
		• State Advisory Committee has been constituted on 16.12.1999.
		• Authorities under the Act not notified.
20.	Tamil Nadu	• The State Government of Tamil Nadu informed in 1999 that the State Government is implementing Tamil Nadu Construction Workers Welfare Scheme 1994 framed under the Tamil Nadu Manual Workers (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act, 1982. According to them, the scheme is more beneficial than the Central Act and has decided to continue the scheme, which is already in operation and the matter will be reviewed after two years. On detailed examination of the Scheme being implemented under State Act, it is observed that though the scheme provides welfare measures to the construction workers but it does not provide health and safety measures to the workers as available under the Central Act. The State Government has, therefore, been advised to review the matter and implement the Central Act.
		• Rules under the Act notified on 6.12.2006
		• The State Advisory Committee has been constituted.
21.	Tripura	• Rules under the Act have been framed & notified on 26.8.2002.
		• State Welfare Board has been constituted on 20.1.2007.
		• State Advisory Committee has been constituted on 27.1.2005.
		• Authorities notified on 8.2.2007
		• Cess is being collected and workers are being registered.
22.	Uttar Pradesh	• Rules under the Act have been finalized.
		• State Welfare Board has not been constituted.
		• State Advisory Committee has not been constituted.
23.	Uttaranchal	• Uttaranchal Building and Other Construction Workers (RECS) Rules 2005 have been framed and Notified of 28.06.2005.
		• Welfare Board has been constituted.
		• State Advisory Committee has been constituted.
		• Expert committee has been constituted.
24.	West Bengal	• West Bengal Building and Other Construction Workers (RECS) Rules, 2004 have been finalized and notified on 5.10.2004.
		• Welfare Board has been constituted on 20.9.2005.
		• State Advisory Committee has been constituted.
		• Expert Committee has been constituted.
		• Enrolment of workers has already been started in February 2006. The collection of cess has also started.
25.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	• Andaman & Nicobar Islands Building & Other Construction Workers (RECS) Rules, 2003 have been framed and Notified.

		• Welfare Board has not been constituted.
		• State Advisory Committee has been constituted.
		• Expert Committee has been constituted.
26.	Daman and Diu Dadar and Nagar Haveli	• Rules under the Act have been framed in 2003.
		• State Welfare Board has been constituted.
		• State Advisory Committee has been constituted.
27.	Delhi	• Rules have been notified on 10.1.2002.
		• Authorities have been notified under the Act.
		• Welfare Board has been constituted.
		• Cess is being collected and registration of workers has been started.
		• The Act is being implemented.
28.	Puducherry	• Rules under the Act have been framed and notified on 28.8.2001.
		• Authorities have been notified under the Act.
		• Welfare Board has been constituted.
		• The Act is being implemented.
29.	Jharkhand	• Rules under the Act are under finalization.
		• Authorities have not been notified under the Act.
		• Welfare Board has not been constituted.
		• State Advisory Committee has not been constituted
30.	Sikkim	• State Rules are being framed.
31.	Lakshadweep	• Committee constituted to make recommendations on implementation of the Act.
32.	Chhattisgarh	• State Advisory Committee has been constituted on 4.6.2003.
		• Rules under the Act not notified
		• Welfare Board has not been constituted
		• Implementing Authorities have not been notified.
33.	Chandigarh	• The State Advisory Committee is being constituted.
		• The Welfare Board is under process of constitution.

Concessional Loans for Ethanol Production

*496. SHRI NARHARI MAHATO:
SHRI HITEN BARMAN:

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

(a) whether the Government has any proposal for providing concessional loans from the Sugar Development Fund to the sugar mills which have their own distilleries for developing facilities for production of Ethanol;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which it is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) to (c) The Sugar Development Fund Act, 1982 was amended in June 2002 and the SDF Rules 1983 were amended in January, 2003 for providing loans to sugar mills from Sugar Development Fund (SDF) for setting up of projects for production of

anhydrous alcohol or ethanol, at a concessional rate of interest of 2% below the Bank Rate which effectively works out to 4% per annum at present.

As per SDF Rule 22, loans are already being provided from Sugar Development Fund to sugar mills which have their own distilleries for production of anhydrous alcohol or ethanol from alcohol as follows:-

i) in case of sugar factory, implementing a project for production of anhydrous alcohol or ethanol from alcohol, which has been approved for financial assistance by a Financial Institution or a scheduled bank, provided that at least 12.5% of the cost of the project, is being met by the sugar factory from its own resources as part of promoters' contribution, the SDF funding will be upto 40% of the eligible project cost or the amount as required by the Financial Institution/ Scheduled Bank whichever is less;

ii) in case any sugar factory, implementing a project for production of anhydrous alcohol or ethanol from alcohol, which has been appraised by a Financial Institution or a scheduled bank or any agency approved by the Central Government for this purpose and which undertakes to meet at least 25% of the cost of the project, from its own resources, will be eligible for loan from SDF upto 75% of the eligible cost of project.

Central Grond Water Authority

*497. SHRI N.S.V. CHITTHAN: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Ground Water Authority has been constituted to regulate, and control the ground water management and development in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof, alongwith the success achieved in controlling and regulating the ground water during the last five years; and

(c) the steps being taken/proposed to be taken to solve the shortage of ground water and river water in the country?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ): (a) to (c) The Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA) has been constituted under sub-section (3) of Section 3 of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 for the purposes of regulation and control of ground water development and management in the country.

The National Water Policy 2002 addresses various issues related to development and management of water resources. It emphasizes that water resources should be developed, conserved, utilized and managed keeping in view National perspective. A number of steps have been taken by the Government to tackle the shortage of ground water and river water in the country. These include circulation of 'Model Bill' to enable States/Union Territories to enact suitable legislation for regulation and control of ground water development and management, constitution of Artificial Recharge of Ground Water Advisory Council, preparation of a Master Plan for artificial recharge to ground water, carrying out of studies on artificial recharge of ground water and organisation of mass awareness programmes and training of stakeholders on rain water harvesting and artificial recharge to ground water.

CGWA has notified 43 areas in the country for regulation of ground water development and management and has notified 65 over-exploited areas in various States for registration of ground water abstraction structures. CGWA has also issued directions to the States to take measures to adopt artificial recharge to ground water/promote rain water harvesting in the over-exploited areas falling under their jurisdiction and ensure inclusion of roof top rain water harvesting in the building bye-laws.

In addition to the above, the Government has instituted Bhoomijal Samvardhan Puraskars & National Water Award to encourage the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)/ Gram Panchayats/ Urban Local Bodies (for population up to 1 lakh) for adopting innovative practices of ground water augmentation. A scheme on "Artificial Recharge to ground water through Dug wells" for augmenting the ground water resources in hard rock areas of 7 States has been launched. Farmers Participatory Action Research Programme (FPARP) has also been launched to create awareness about water conservation and rainwater harvesting in the country.

The steps taken to arrest decline in ground water and surface water include creation of new storage capacity of 64 Billion Cubic Meters (BCM) in addition to existing storage capacity of 225 BCM, inter-linking of rivers, water harvesting, ground water recharge and conservation of water bodies, lakes, etc. These steps have yielded positive impact on ground water regime.

Funds for River Basin Projects

*498. SHRI DUSHYANT SINGH: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government is providing funds for some river basin projects in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof during the last three years, State-wise and project-wise;

(c) whether any such project is also being funded by the World Bank or any other International Financial Institutions; and

(d) if so, the details of the financial assistance obtained for such projects during the above period, project-wise?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ): (a) State Governments are implementing major, medium and minor irrigation river valley projects in their States. The Union Government is providing funds to the State Governments under Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme (AIBP) for expeditious completion of selected ongoing major/medium projects and surface water minor irrigation schemes.

(b) The State-wise and project-wise details of central assistance released under AIBP during last three years are given in the enclosed Statement-I.

(c) and (d) State Governments are also implementing water resources projects with the assistance of the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, JBIC-Japan and Germany. The list of the externally funded projects is given in the enclosed Statement-II.

Statement-I

Central Assistance (CA) / grant released under AIBP during 2005-06 to 2008-09

(Rs. In crore)

Sl. No.	Name of State/Project (Started in Plan)	Amount				Total
		2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	
		Grant	Grant	Grant	Grant	
(1)	(2)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10a)	(10)
Major, Medium & Minor Irrigation Projects						
Andhra Pradesh						
1	Sriram Sagar (Stage-I) (III) (C)			0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
2	Cheyyeru (Annamaya) (V) (C)			0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
3	Jurela (VI) (C)	17.8890		0.0000	0.0000	17.8890
4	Somasilla (V) (C)			0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
5	Nagarjunsagar (II) (C)			0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
6	Madduvalasa (V) (C)			0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
7	Gundalavagu (V)(C)			0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
8	Maddigedda (V) (C)			0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
9	Kanupur Canal (III) (D)			0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
10	Yerrakalva (V)			0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
11	Vamsedhera Ph.I		6.6830	0.0000	0.0000	6.6830
12	Flood Flow Canal of SRSP	120.0000	127.4000	74.0000	61.0000	382.4000
13	Sriramsagar Project-II	2.2690	72.0000	0.0000	0.0000	74.2690
	81 Minor Irrigation Schemes		27.0000	0.0000	0.0000	27.0000
14	Tadipudi LIS		48.2200	0.0000	0.0000	48.2200

(1)	(2)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10a)	(10)
15	Pushkara LIS		33.1155	13.9692	0.0000	47.0847
16	Ralivagu		6.7095	0.0000	0.0000	6.7095
17	Gollavagu		28.3500	32.1200	0.0000	60.4700
18	Mathadivagu		28.3500	8.6700	0.0000	37.0200
19	Peddavagu		50.6250	0.0000	0.0000	50.6250
20	Gundlakamma Reservoir	59.6100	39.7425	0.0000	0.0000	99.3525
21	Valligallu Reservoir		36.0855	26.2500	0.0000	62.3355
22	Ali Sagar LIS (C)		13.5000	2.8700	0.0000	16.3700
23	J.Chokkarao LIS		298.1300	405.0000	0.0000	703.1300
24	A.R. Guthpa LIS		10.[illegible]00	6.5500	0.0000	17.5000
25	Nilwal		2.8500	15.5500	0.0000	18.4000
26	Khomaram Bhima		7.7800	109.8300	27.9300	145.5400
27	Thotapalli Barrage	63.1410		24.6400	11.9500	99.7310
28	Tarakarma Thirtha Sagaram Project	33.0060		0.0000	0.0000	33.0060
29	Swarnamukhi Med Irrigation Project	5.9310	5.9310	0.0000	0.0000	11.8620
30	Palemvagu	9.5355		0.0000	0.0000	9.5355
31	Musurimilli Project			35.1800	27.7700	62.9500
32	Rajiv Bhima LIS			233.1400	269.8700	503.0100
	(Andhra Pradesh)-Total	311.3815	843.4220	987.7692	398.5200	2541.0927
Arunachal Pradesh						
	337 M.I. Schemes in 1999-2000 (C-337-3/02)			0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
	364 MI Schemes in 2000-01 (C-384-3/03)			0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
	286 MI Schemes in 2002-03 (C-286-3/05)			0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
	275 MI Schemes in 2003-04 (C-275-3/06)	8.7750		0.0000	0.0000	8.7750
	243 MI Schemes in 2005-06 (C-211-3/07)	9.2250	27.0000	2.7100	1.0200	39.9550
	231 MI Schemes in 2007-08			44.4700	6.5500	51.0200
	(Arunachal Pradesh)-Total	18.0000	27.0000	47.1800	7.5700	99.7500
Assam						
33	Pahumara (A.P. 1978-80)	1.7550		1.2600	1.8900	4.9050
34	Hawaipur LIS (VI) (C)			0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
35	Rupahi LIS (A.P. 1978-80) (C)			0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
36	Dhansiri (V)			5.2900	7.3100	12.6000

(1)	(2)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10a)	(10)
37	Champamati (VI)			0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
38	Borolla (A.P. 1978-80)	3.6000		4.3200	6.4800	14.4000
39	Kolonga (V) (C)			0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
40	Burhi Dihang LIS (A.P. 1978-80)			0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
41	Bordikarai (V) (C)			0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
42	Mod. of Jamuna Irr. Project (IX)	7.2450		4.3200	6.4800	18.0450
43	Integ. Irri. Scheme Kollong Basin (V)(C)			0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
	6 MI Schemes in 1999-2000 (KAAC) (C-S-3/01)					0.0000
	39 MI Schemes (General area) in 2000-01 (C- 13-3/07)	3.7260		2.3400	3.5000	9.5660
	5 MI Schemes in 2001-02 (KAAC) (C-4-3/03)					0.0000
	5 MI Schemes in 2002-03 (KAAC) (C-5-3/04)					0.0000
	4 MI Schemes in 2002-03 (NC Hills) (C-2-3/04)					0.0000
	24 MI Schemes (KAAC) in 2003-04 (C-24-3/06)					0.0000
	24 MI Schemes (KAAC) in 2004-05 (C-24-3/07)	11.7178	15.3300			27.0478
	11 MI Schemes (NC Hills) in 2004-05					0.0000
	22 MI Schemes in 2005-06 (KAAC) (C-22-3/07)	6.8894	7.8100	12.8860		27.5854
	47 MI Schemes (KAAC) in 2006-07 (C-14)		7.1285	23.9820	5.0300	36.1405
	10 MI Schemes (KAAC) in 2007-08			16.4200	4.9000	21.3200
	92 MI Schemes (General area) in 2007-08			6.5200	9.7800	16.3000
	(Assam)-Total	34.9332	30.2685	77.3380	45.3700	187.9097
Bihar						
44	Western Kosi Canal (III)	5.9640	1.7000	21.8200	8.2800	37.764C
45	Upper Kiul (V)(C)	0.0750		0.0000	0.0000	0.0750
46	Durgawati (V)	1.4000		0.0000	0.0000	1.4000
-	Bansagar (V)			0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
47	Orni Reservoir (V)(C)			0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
48	Bilasi Reservoir (V) (C)			0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
49	Sene canal modernisation (VII)	8.7990	1.5300	27.5900	19.3700	57.2890
50	Batane (V)			0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
	4 MI Scheme in 2007-08			3.5500	0.0000	3.5500
51	Punpun Barrage Project			9.2800	1.9700	11.2500
	(Bihar)-Total	16.2380	3.2300	62.2400	29.6200	111.3280

(1)	(2)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10a)	(10)
Chhattisgarh						
52	Hasdeo Bango (A.P. 1978-80) (C)			0.0000		0.0000
53	Shivnath Diversion (V) (C)			0.0000		0.0000
54	Jonk Diversion (IV) (C)			0.0000		0.0000
55	Koserteda	1.5640		9.3800		10.9440
56	Mahanadi Reservoir	6.1005		8.3440		14.4445
57	Barnai (C)			0.0000		0.0000
58	Minimata (Hasdeo Bango Ph.IV)			19.6700	29.5100	49.1800
	43 MI Schemes in 2006-07		10.7050	30.6100		41.3150
	77 MI Schemes in 2007-08			28.9600	21.6800	50.6400
	(Chhattisgarh)-Total	7.6645	10.7050	96.9640	51.1900	166.5235
Goa						
59	Salauli Phase-1 (IV) (C)			0.0000		0.0000
60	Tillari (V)		1.9100	32.4800	15.1100	49.5000
	(Goa)-Total		1.9100	32.4800	15.1100	49.5000
Gujarat						
61	Sardar Sarovar (VI)	339.6000	121.8885	585.7200	251.9000	1299.1085
62	Jhuj (A. P. 1978-80) (C)			0.0000		0.0000
63	Sipu (AP. 1978-80) (C)			0.0000		0.0000
64	Mukteshwar (VI) (C)			0.0000		0.0000
65	Harnav-II (V) (C)			0.0000		0.0000
66	Umaria (V) (C)			0.0000		0.0000
67	Damanganga (IV) (C)			0.0000		0.0000
68	Karjan (V) (C)			0.0000		0.0000
69	Sukhi (V) (C)			0.0000		0.0000
70	Deo (V) (C)			0.0000		0.0000
71	Watrak Kadana RB Canal (A.P. 1978-80) (C)			0.0000		0.0000
72	Aji-IV (IX)			0.0000		0.0000
73	Ozat-II (VIII)			0.0000		0.0000
74	Brahamini-II (IX)			0.0000		0.0000
75	Bhadar-II			0.0000		0.0000
	(Gujarat)-Total	339.6000	121.8885	585.7200	251.9000	1299.1085

(1)	(2)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10a)	(10)
Haryana						
76	Gurgaon Canal (III) (C)			0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
77	WRCP (VIII) (C)	6.0000	3.1700	0.0000	0.0000	9.1700
78	JLN Lift Irri. (V) (D)			0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
	(Haryana)-Total	6.0000	3.1700	0.0000	0.0000	9.1700
Himachal Pradesh						
79	Shahnehar Irrgn. Project (VIII)	8.8340	0.7200	21.4100		30.9640
80	Sidhata (IX)	6.0750	1.0000	25.7300		32.8050
81	Changer Lift (IX)	1.1475	0.5000	23.4000		25.0475
	28 MI Schemes in 1999-2000 (C-28-3/06)					0.0000
	17 MI Schemes in 2000-01 (C-17-3/05)	0.6930				0.6930
	102 MI Schemes in 2005-06 (C-19-3/07)	13.3290	1.7100	16.4100		31.4490
	116 MI Schemes in 2007-08			27.1000		27.1000
	(Himachal Pradesh)-Total	30.0785	3.9300	114.0500	0.0000	148.0585
Jammu and Kashmir						
82	Marwal Lift @ (IV) (C)			0.0000		0.0000
83	LethporaLift @ (IV) (C)	0.3008		0.0000		0.3008
84	Koil Lift @ (V) (C)			0.0000		0.0000
85	Mod. of Ranbir Canal (VII)	7.5600		20.0600	3.2700	30.8900
86	Mod. of Pratap Canal (VII) (C)	2.9160	2.7000	2.6300	3.9400	12.1860
87	Mod. of Kathua Canal (VII) (C)	0.9990		0.0000		0.9990
88	Rajpora lift (A.P. 1978-80)	4.7700	1.8900	12.8600	5.2400	24.7600
89	Trai Lift (A.P. 1978-80)	4.4208	1.8450	12.5400	5.0300	23.8358
90	Igophey (IX) (C)	0.2700		0.0000		0.2700
91	Rafiabad Lift Irrigation (IX)	2.8270	1.6546	10.5400	4.0600	19.0816
92	Zaingir Canal (IX) (C)	0.6992		0.0000		0.6992
93	Mod. of Dadi Canal Project		3.2670	16.7100	6.2900	26.2670
94	Mod. of Martand Canal		4.4600	2.9200	4.3700	11.7500
95	Mod. of Mav Khul		2.4300	1.4600	0.8200	4.7100
96	Mod. of Babul Canal			2.3100	1.2900	3.6000
97	Mod. of Kandi Canal			10.3900	5.8100	16.2000
98	Parachik Knows Canal Project			1.6200	2.4300	4.0500

(1)	(2)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10a)	(10)
	54 MI Schemes in 2003-04 (Jammu)	7.4250	2.2200			9.6450
	27 MI Schemes in 2003-04 (Kashmir) (C-5-06-07)	4.5000	5.6250	9.3800		19.5050
	3 MI Schemes in 2006-07 (Kashmir)		1.3500	6.9600	3.8900	12.2000
	62 MI Schemes in 2006-07 (Jammu)		10.3300			10.3300
	133 MI Schemes (Kashmir) in 2007-08			73.0151	34.9600	107.9751
	111 MI Schemes (Jammu) in 2007-08			15.8300	14.9500	30.7800
	(Jammu and Kashmir)-Total	36.6878	37.7716	199.2251	96.3500	370.0345
Jharkhand						
99	Gumani (V)	1.3620	0.3900	3.7100		5.4620
100	Torai (V) (D)			0.0000		0.0000
101	Latratu (VII) (C)			0.0000		0.0000
102	Kansjora (VII)	0.4800		0.0000		0.4800
103	Sonua (VI)	0.7080		0.9000		1.6080
104	Surangi (VII)			1.1344		1.1344
105	Tapkara Res. Scheme (VI) (C)			0.0000		0.0000
106	Upper Sankh	1.4400	0.9000	1.8000	2.7000	6.8400
107	Panchkhero	1.0470		1.6800	1.0200	3.7470
	(Jharkhand)-Total	5.0370	1.2900	9.2244	3.7200	19.2714
Karnataka						
108	UKP Stage-I (IV)	17.3778		0.0000		17.3778
109	Malprabha (III)	6.0000	13.5000	35.3400	18.9000	73.7400
110	Hirehalla (VI) (C)			0.0000		0.0000
111	Ghatprabha (V)	19.5000	30.8050	29.0400	43.5700	122.9150
112	Karanja (V)			0.0000		0.0000
113	UKP Stage-II (IX)	95.3571	78.6597	145.6400	61.2400	380.8968
114	Gandorinala (VIII)	2.5410	4.7500	45.5300		52.8210
	UKP St.I Phase III		32.6582	72.0100	42.7400	147.4082
115	Maskinala (C)			0.0000		0.0000
116	Votehole Medium Project			0.2900		0.2900
117	Varahi Project			22.0500		22.0500
	(Karnataka)-Total	140.7759	160.3729	349.9000	166.4500	817.4988

(1)	(2)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10a)	(10)
Kerala						
118	Kallada Project (III) (C)			0.0000		0.0000
119	Muvattupuzha (V)	9.3591	13.9280	0.0000		23.2871
120	Karapuzha		2.7188	0.0000		2.7188
	(Kerala)-Total	9.3591	16.6468	0.0000	0.0000	26.0059
Madhya Pradesh						
121	Indira Sagar (VI)	41.9504	9.8900	94.7700		146.6104
122	Bansagar (Unit-I) (V)(C)	15.6000	0.8300	13.2400		29.6700
-	Bansagar (Unit-II) (V)	18.1420	4.0400	56.6000	26.8600	105.6420
123	Upper Weinganga (V) (C)			0.0000		0.0000
-	Rajghat Dam (V)			0.0000		0.0000
124	Sindh Phase-II (VI)	24.5290		6.3100	9.4700	40.3090
125	Sindh Phase-I (IV)(C)			0.0000		0.0000
126	Mahi (VI)	8.2600	5.3600	49.4700	24.4000	87.4900
127	Bariarpur (V)	6.3750	0.7600	12.0400		19.1750
128	Urmil (V) (C)			0.0000		0.0000
129	Banjar (V) (C)			0.0000		0.0000
130	Bawanthadi (VI)	2.4501	0.5100	10.8300		13.7901
131	Mahan (VI)	4.8000	0.3700	6.6400		11.8100
132	Omkareshwar (VIII)	9.1119	1.9900	26.7800	11.5600	49.4419
133	Bargi Dam RBC 16 Km.-63 Km.(V)	25.5480		0.0000		25.5480
	Bargi Div. Pro. Canal (63 Km to 104 Km)	11.3302	2.0600	25.9500		39.3402
	17 MI Scheme in 2006-07		22.5000	20.2500		42.7500
	146 MI Schemes in 2007-08			108.0750	1.5700	109.6450
	Bargi Diversion Ph.III			9.4500	14.1800	23.6300
134	Pench Diversion Project Ph.I			3.3000		3.3000
	Omkareshwar Project Ph.II			16.1100	24.1600	40.2700
	Omkareshwar Canal Ph.III			16.0400	24.0600	40.1000
	Indira Sagar Canal Ph.III			24.4900	36.7400	61.2300
	(Madhya Pradesh)-Total	168.0966	48.3100	500.3450	173.0000	889.7516

(1)	(2)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10a)	(10)
Maharashtra						
135	Gosikhurd (VI)	30.0477	2.0900	59.5900	59.3400	151.0677
136	Surya (A.P. 1978-80) (C)			0.0000		0.0000
137	Waghur (V)	7.6068	4.3400	67.8700	39.4300	119.2468
138	Bhima (III)(C)			0.0000		0.0000
139	Upper Tapi (IV) (C)			0.0000		0.0000
140	Upper Wardha (V)		29.0385	22.0800		51.1185
141	Wan (VI) (C)			0.0000		0.0000
142	Jayakwadi (V) (C)			0.0000		0.0000
143	Vishnupuri (A.P. 1978-80) (C)	1.4145		0.0000		1.4145
144	Bahula (V) (C)	0.5700		0.0000		0.5700
143	Krishna (III)	13.9200	82.8036	23.8900	23.4700	144.0836
146	Kukadi (AP 66-69)	24.2880	41.6216	55.4600		121.3696
147	Upper Manar	5.3960	3.9955	11.6600	0.4900	21.5415
148	Hetwane			0.0000		0.0000
149	Chaskman	10.3032	9.2625	12.3400		31.9057
150	Upper Pen Ganga	2.4765	5.8941	23.9500		32.3206
-	Bawanthadi	13.5990	0.2900	10.0200	10.8800	34.7890
151	Lower Dudhana	24.0000	26.7618	8.3000	12.4500	71.5118
-	Tillari	8.1600	1.0600	23.0650		32.2850
152	Warna	9.0000		22.5000		31.5000
153	Wan Phase II		2.0295	0.0000		2.0295
	96 New Surface MI Schemes 2006-07 (C-17-3/07)		124.8300	65.3300	97.9900	288.1500
154	Punad		15.9813	3.2400		19.2213
155	Pothra Nalla		5.6255	4.5300		10.1555
156	Utawali		10.2546	8.3000		18.5546
157	Purna		22.1211	20.3700		42.4911
158	Nandur Madhmeshwar		16.5340	47.8300	38.7100	103.0740
159	Kar		4.2100	7.8820		12.0920
160	Lower Wardha		29.9300	7.4900	11.2400	48.6600
161	Lal Nalla		5.9000	14.2700		20.1700
162	Khadakpurna		5.8900	98.8600	63.5700	168.3200
163	Arunavati		0.5900	12.5400		13.1300

(1)	(2)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10a)	(10)
164	Tajanpore LS		2.5000	0.0000		2.5000
165	Khadakwasla (II) (C)			0.0000		0.0000
166	Kadvi ()			0.0000		0.0000
167	Kasarsai (C)			0.0000		0.0000
168	Jawal Gaon (C)			0.0000		0.0000
169	Kumbhi (C)			0.0000		0.0000
170	Kasari (C)			0.0000		0.0000
171	Patgoan (C)	3.2250		0.0000		3.2250
172	Madan Tank	1.5105		0.0000		1.5105
173	Dongaragaon	1.5090		0.0000		1.5090
174	Shivna Takli	4.4325	11.9677	0.0000		16.4002
175	Amravati	1.1820		0.0000		1.1820
176	Guj Medium Irrigation Project	4.7415		1.1500		5.8915
177	Bembla Irrigation Project			173.5430	10.7700	184.3130
178	Chandra Bhaga Irrigation Project			11.4900		11.4900
179	Sapan Irrigation Project			45.9500		45.9500
180	Uttarmand Project			1.3200		1.3200
181	Sangola Branch Canal			11.3000		11.3000
182	Pentakli Project			9.4700		9.4700
	38 MI Scheme in 2007-08			21.1600	19.5200	40.6800
183	Tarali Project			10.0600	15.0900	25.1500
184	Dhom Balakwadi Project			17.2200		17.2200
185	Morna Gureghar Project			2.6200		2.6200
186	Arjuna Project			1.5800		1.5800
187	Prakasha Barrage			9.7900	14.6900	24.4800
188	Sulwade Barrage			13.6800	20.5200	34.2000
189	Sarangkheda Barrage			10.5500	15.8200	26.3700
	(Maharashtra)-Total	167.3822	465.5213	972.2500	453.9800	2059.1335
Manipur						
190	Khuga (VI)	31.6260	32.5620	11.8800	14.7060	90.7680
191	Thoubal (A.P. 1978-80)	36.7650	86.2200	28.8000	43.2000	194.9850
192	Dolaithabi Barrage Project	1.9125	19.2900	13.5000		34.7025

(1)	(2)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10a)	(10)
	108 M.I. Schemes in 1999-2000 (C-108-3/01)					0.0000
	118 MI Schemes in 2002-03 (C-118-3/06)	1.5030		0.0000		1.5030
	211 MI Schemes in 2005-06 (C-211-3/07)	3.8970	18.2322			22.1292
	242 MI Schemes in 2007-08			49.8070		49.8070
	(Manipur)-Total	75.7035	156.3042	103.9870	57.9000	393.8947
Meghalaya						
193	Rongai Valley (VIII)			0.0000		0.0000
	38 M.I. Schemes in 1999-2000 (C-38-3/06)	0.5750				0.5750
	8 M.I. Schemes in 2000-2001 (C-2-3/07)	1.0000	0.7500			1.7500
	27 MI Schemes in 2007-08			1.1600	1.2500	2.4100
	(Meghalaya)-Total	1.5750	0.7500	1.1600	1.2500	4.7350
Mizoram						
	10 M.I. Schemes in 1999-2000 (C-10-3/02)					0.0000
	4 M.L Schemes in 2001-02 (C-4-3/03)					0.0000
	20 MI Schemes in 2003-04 (C-20-3/05)					0.0000
	43 MI Schemes in 2004-05 (C-43-3/06)	9.3150	2.2553			11.5703
	47 MI Schemas in 2006-07 (C-1 -3/07)		11.9801	23.7734		35.7535
	62 MI Schemes in 2007-08			10.5700	13.2700	23.8400
	(Mizoram)-Total	9.3150	14.2354	34.3434	13.2700	71.1638
Nagaland						
	468 M I Schemes in 1999-2000 (C-488-3/01)					0.0000
	72 MI Schemes in 2001-2002 (C-72-3/05)					0.0000
	1 MI Scheme in 2002-03 (0-1-3/04)					0.0000
	136 MI Schemes in 2003-04 (G-136-3/06)	5.7510				5.7510
	46 MI Schemes in 2005-06 (C-43-3/06)	2.2477	0.2995			2.5472
	173 MI Schemes in 2006-07		10.3000	29.1200		39.4200
	70 MI Schemes in 2007-08			11.3900		11.3900
	(Nagaland)-Total	7.9987	10.5995	40.5100		59.1082
Orissa						
194	Upper Indravati (KBK) (A.P. 1978-80)	31.6170	3.5500	92.9100		128.0770
195	Subernrekha Multipurpose (VII)	12.4272	8.9600	179.9500	69.4100	270.7472
196	Rongali (IV)	7.4688	8.2055	9.1900		24.8643

(1)	(2)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10a)	(10)
197	Anandpur Barrage (IV)			0.0000		0.0000
	Integrated Anandpur Barrage (KBK)	1.4400	2.2455	4.9300		8.6155
198	Upper Kolab (V) (C)	1.9242		0.0000		1.9242
199	Titlagarh (VIII)	4.1040	3.3275	17.3300		24.7615
200	Lower Indiravati (KBK) (IX)	64.5395	58.6908	85.1500	58.7300	267.1103
201	Lower Suktel (IX)	13.6440	29.7008	53.5366	40.9900	137.8714
202	Potteru (IV) (C)			0.0000		0.0000
203	Naraj Barrage (IX) (C)			0.0000		0.0000
204	Telengilri Irr. Project (KBK)	4.0950	1.3400	31.5500	4.7800	41.7650
205	Ret. Irr. Project (KBK)	2.9205	12.6410	33.5300		49.0915
206	Kanupur (VIII)		2.4600	95.8784	81.4600	179.7984
207	Chheligada Dam		1.9935	5.5340		7.5275
208	Improvement of Sasan Canal (C)	3.8190				3.8190
209	Salandi Left Main Canal (C)					0.0000
210	Improvement of Salki Irr. Project (C)					0.0000
	16 MI Schemes in 1999-2000 (C-15-3/06)	3.0000	0.7000	7.0000		10.7000
	6 MI Schemes in 2000-01	0.3750	0.0700	5.9800		6.4250
	20 MI Schemes in 2007-08			1.8900		1.8900
	(Orissa)-Total	151.3742	133.8846	624.3590	255.3700	1164.9878
Punjab						
211	Ranjit Sagar Dam (VI) (C)			0.0000		0.0000
212	Remodelling of UBDC (IX) (C)	6.0000		0.0000		6.0000
213	Irr. to H.P. below Talwara (IX)	6.0966		0.0000		6.0966
214	Shahpur Kandi (IX)			0.0000		0.0000
215	Kandi Canal Extension St.II	14.2200		0.0000		14.2200
216	Rehabilitation of 1st Patiala Feeder and Kotla Branch (New ERM)			13.5000		13.5000
	(Punjab)-Total	26.3166	0.0000	13.5000		39.8166
Rajasthan						
217	Jaismand (Modernisation) (VI) (C)			0.0000		0.0000
218	Chhapi (V) (C)			0.0000		0.0000
219	Panchana (V) (C)			0.0000		0.0000

(1)	(2)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10a)	(10)
220	IGNP Stage-II (V)	23.8002		0.0000		23.8002
221	Bisalpur (VII) (C)			0.0000		0.0000
222	Narmada Canal (VI)	46.7520	9.6700	140.5000	60.1200	257.0420
223	Gambhiri (Modernisation) (VI) (C)			0.0000		0.0000
224	Chauli (VIII)(C)	1.9590	1.1300	0.0000		3.0890
225	Mahi Bajaj Sagar (IV) (C)	10.8960		0.0000		10.8960
226	Mod.of Gang Canal (VI)	6.8880	0.8000	16.0300		23.7180
	(Rajasthan)-Total	90.2952	11.6000	156.5300	60.1200	318.5452
Tripura						
227	Gumti (V)	1.3500	0.9400	0.0000		2.2900
228	Manu (VI)	6.7500		0.0000		6.7500
229	Khowai (VI)	8.1000		0.0000		8.1000
	397 MI Schemes in 1999-2000 (C-397-3/03)					0.0000
	130 MI Schemes in 2000-01 (C-130-3/04)					0.0000
	79 MI Schemes in 2001-02 (C-79-3/04)					0.0000
	220 MI Schemes in 2002-03 (C-220-3/05)	4.1670				4.1670
	176 MI Schemes in 2005-06 (C-129-3/07)	11.6280	15.5831			27.2111
	80 MI Schemes in 2006-07		5.9900	2.2000	1.8900	10.0800
	87 MI Schemes in 2007-08			5.9000	6.7400	12.6400
	(Tripura)-Total	31.9950	22.5131	8.1000	8.6300	71.2381
Tamil Nadu						
230	WRCP (VIII) (C)			0.0000		0.0000
	(Tamil Nadu)-Total			0.0000		0.0000
Uttar Pradesh						
231	Upper Ganga & Madhya Ganga (V) (C)			0.0000		0.0000
232	Sharda Sahayak (III) (C)			0.0000		0.0000
233	Saryu Nahar (V)	45.0000	28.5450	57.1000	34.6900	165.3350
234	Kharif Channel in H.K. Doab (VII) (C)			0.0000		0.0000
235	Rajghat Dam (V) (C)			0.0000		0.0000
236	Gunta Nala Dam (VI) (C)			0.0000		0.0000
237	Bansagar (V)	32.1000	18.8965	41.5200	18.8500	111.3665
238	Lakhwar Vyasi (V) (D)			0.0000		0.0000
239	Tehri (VII) (C)	25.0230		0.0000		25.0230

(1)	(2)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10a)	(10)
240	Gyanpur Pump Canal (VII) (C)			0.0000		0.0000
241	Eastern Ganga Canal (V)	15.2220	22.5549	20.1000	8.3300	66.2069
242	Rajghat Canal (V)	7.9020	2.2160	4.7600		14.8780
243	Mod. of Agra Canal (V)	4.9200	5.0190	10.8000		20.7390
244	Jarauli Pump Canal (1990-91)(C)	0.5610	0.8600	0.5900		2.0110
245	Mod. of Lahchura Dam	2.4000	3.3540	3.9800		9.7340
246	Imp. of Hardoi Branch System (ERM)		0.4500	11.8400		12.2900
	(Uttar Pradesh)-Total	133.1280	81.8954	150.6900	61.8700	427.5834
Uttarakhand						
	185 Nos. Surface MI Schemes in 2002-03 (C-185-3/04)					0.0000
	8 MI Schemes in 2002-03 (C-7-3/04)					0.0000
	226 MI Schemes in 2004-05 (C-226-3/06)	33.8175				33.8175
	3 MI Schemes in 2004-06	2.6730				2.6730
	15 MI Schemes in 2005-06	1.3770	9.8600			11.2370
	502 MI Schemes in 2005-06	42.5712	64.7698	84.1600		191.5010
	16 MI Schemes in 2006-07		10.1000			10.1000
	898 MI Schemes in 2007-08			142.5600		142.5600
	78 MI Schemes in 2007-08			38.9300	11.2900	50.2200
	Total	80.4387	84.7298	265.6500	11.2900	442.1085
West Bengal						
247	Teesta Barrage (V)*		6.0000	0.0000		6.0000
248	Kangsabati (II) (C)			0.0000		0.0000
249	Mod. of Barrage & Irrg. System of DVC (VI) (C)			0.0000		0.0000
250	Tatko (V)		0.3200	0.4200	0.6200	1.3600
251	Patloi (V)		0.3200	0.4100	0.2600	0.9900
252	Hanumata (VII)	0.0287	0.0600	0.0000		0.0887
253	Subernarekha Barrage (VII)+			0.0000		0.0000
	32 New MI Schemes in 2007-08			8.1200		8.1200
	(West Bengal)-Total	0.0287	6.7000	8.9500	0.8800	16.5587
Sikkim						
	129 M.I. Schemes in 1999-2000 (C-129-3/02)					0.0000
	62 M.I. Schemes in 2002-03 (C-62-3/04)					0.0000
	100 MI Schemes in 2004-05 (C-100-3/06)	0.6750				0.6750
	79 MI Schemes in 2005-06	0.2363	3.3236			3.5599
	63 MI Schemes in 2007-08			3.2400		3.2400
	(Sikkim)-Total	0.9113	3.3236	3.2400		7.4749
	Grand Total	1900.3142	2301.9722	5445.7051	2163.3600	11811.3515

C – Completed Project - Inter State Project

Statement-II

On-going Externally Assisted Projects

S.No.	Funding Agency	State	Name of Projects	Amount disbursed (in Million Donor Currency and Rs. in crores)		
				2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	World Bank	Karnataka	Karnataka Community Based Tank Management Project CR.3635-IN	SDR 9.266 Rs. 59.838	SDR 80 Revised SDR 63.420 (Rs 425.7)	SDR 1.624 Rs. 10.228
2	World Bank	Madhya Pradesh	Madhya Pradesh Water Sector Restructuring Project LN 4750-IN	US$ 0.466 Rs. 2.081	US$ 7.773 Rs. 34.729	US$15.363 Rs. 61.773
3.	World Bank	Maharashtra	Maharashtra Water Sector Improvement Project-LN4796-IN	US$ 31.788 Rs. 143.206	US$ 0.666 Rs. 3.018	US$10.985 Rs. 44.091
4.	World Bank	Rajasthan	Rajasthan Water Sector Restructuring Project Cr.3603-IN	SDR 18.610 Rs. 119.683	SDR 12.158 Rs. 81.877	SDR 7.571 Rs.46.960
5.	World Bank	Uttar Pradesh	UP Water Sector Restructuring Project Cr.3602-IN	SDR 6.430 Rs. 41.426	SDR 6.274 Rs. 42.160	SDR 4.405 Rs. 27.641
6.	World Bank	Tamil Nadu	Tamil Nadu Irrigated Agriculture Modernization and Water Bodies Restoration and Management Projects (Cr.No. 4846-IN Cr.No.4255-IN)	Nil	US$ 485 million	US$ 17.986 SDR 6.066 Rs. 110.193
7.	World Bank	Karnataka	Karnataka Community Based Tank Management Project (Cr. No. 3635-1-IN)	Nil	SDR 8.295 Rs. 55.317	SDR 0.000 Rs. 0.000
8.	World Bank	Andhra Pradesh	Andhra Pradesh Community Based Tank Management Project (Cr. No. 4857-IN)	Nil	Nil	SDR 2.745 Rs. 17.159
9.	ADB	Chhattisgarh	Chhattisgarh Irrigation Development Sector Project 2159-IND	Nil	US$ 0.000 Rs. 0.000	US$ 1.406 Rs. 5.671

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10.	JBIC-Japan	Andhra Pradesh	Modernization of Kurnool-Cuddapah Canal (Tranche-II)	JY 835.068 Rs. 31.795	JY 329.598 Rs. 12.066	JY 215.072 Rs.7.764
11.	JBIC-Japan	Andhra Pradesh	Andhra Pradesh Irrigation and Livelihood Improvement Project	Nil	JY 23974 (Rs. 960.0)	JY 38.167 Rs. 1.419
12.	JBIC-Japan	Orissa	Rengali Irrigation Project (Tranche-II)	JY 740.352 Rs. 28.910	JY 1070.593 Rs. 43.865	JY 2053.236 Rs. 76.410
13.	JBIC-Japan	Rajasthan	Rajasthan Minor Irrigation Improvement Project	JY 0.000 Rs. 0.000	JY 8.607 Rs. 0.320	JY 0.290 Rs. 0.010
14.	Germany	Maharashtra	Minor Irrigation Project (Kfw-financial cooperation)	Euro 1.691 Rs. 8.992	Euro 1.887 Rs. 10.952	Euro 1.617 Rs. 9.112
15.	Germany	Himachal Pradesh	Rural Water Supply & Minor Irrigation(GTZ-Technical Cooperation)	Nil	Euro 2.659 (Grant)	Nil

Assistance to Handloom Sector

*499. SHRI TUKARAM GANPAT RAO RENGE PATIL:
SHRI KASHIRAM RANA:

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has received any complaints from the Handloom Weavers Associations regarding ignoring the handloom sector and weavers in respect of providing financial assistance to them;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto alongwith the steps taken for providing necessary assistance to the handloom sector and the weavers; and

(c) the details of the comparative figures of funds allocated and released by the Government for the powerloom and handloom sectors separately during each year of the Tenth Plan and thereafter till date, sector-wise?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI SHANKERSINH VAGHELA): (a) and (b) No such complaints have been received from Handloom Weavers Associations. However, for providing financial assistance to handloom weavers, Government of India is presently implementing following five schemes:

1. Integrated Handlooms Development Scheme
2. Marketing & Export Promotion Scheme
3. Mill Gate Price Scheme
4. Handloom Weavers Comprehensive Welfare Scheme
5. Diversified Handloom Development Scheme.

(c) The details of comparative figures of funds allocated and released by the Government for the powerloom and handloom sectors separately during each year of the Tenth Plan and thereafter till date, sector-wise are as follows:

(Rs. in crore)

Year	Handloom Sector		Powerloom Sector	
	Funds Allocated	Amount Released	Funds Allocated	Amount Released
2002-03	140.00	130.83	6.91	4.52
2003-04	156.77	130.28	9.75	8.22
2004-05	154.56	154.09	10.28	5.70
2005-06	156.00	192.88	7.50	5.52
2006-07	185.00	195.67	5.24	3.00
2007-08	315.00	292.58	9.99	9.67
2008-09	340.00	3.94	10.00	-

[Translation]

Mineral Water Producing Companies

*500. SHRI HARIKEWAL PRASAD: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of companies engaged in the production of mineral water in the country at present, state-wise;

(b) the norms fixed by the Government for production of mineral water in the country; and

(c) the number of companies against whom action has been taken for violating the said norms during the last three years and the current year?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) The number of companies engaged in production of ISI marked Packaged Natural Mineral Water in the country, state-wise, is given as under:

State	No. of licensees
Gujarat	01
Himachal Pradesh	08
Uttar Pradesh	01
Uttarakhand	02
Total	12

(b) Norms for production of Packaged Natural Mineral Water are contained in the Indian Standard IS 13428:2005. These norms pertain to tolerance limits for physical, chemical and toxic substances including pesticide residues.

(c) During the last three financial years from 2005-06 to 2007-08, Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) took action for violation of norms contained in the relevant Indian Standard against 7 companies having valid Certification Mark Licence. During the current financial year 2008-09, no violation of the norms has been observed by BIS till date.

[English]

Social Security Scheme, 2004

4779. SHRI JASUBHAI DHANABHAI BARAD: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the present status of the Unorganised Sector Worker's Social Security Scheme launched by the Government during 2004;

(b) the number of the workers enrolled under the said scheme, since its inception, State-wise and year-wise; and

(c) the expenditure incurred thereon so far for implementing the said scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) The Unorganised Sector Workers' Social Security Scheme, 2004 launched in January, 2004 on pilot basis in fifty districts of the country has since been closed.

(b) About 3500 workers have been enrolled under the scheme and around Rs. 17.5 lakh was collected as contribution.

(c) The contributions received from workers under the scheme have been utilized towards making premium payments under the Universal Health Insurance Scheme (UHIS) and Personal Accident Insurance Scheme for the relevant period.

Illegal Routing of International Calls

4780. SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATEL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has suffered huge losses due to illegal routing of international calls in the country;

(b) if so, the details in this regard during 2007-08;

(c) whether the Government has set up any mechanism to check such illegal routing of international calls in the country;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the action taken/being taken by the Government to make such system more effective?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) Sir, illegal routing of international calls is assessed to have caused a loss of about Rs. 145 Crores to the Government during the last three financial years.

(b) Sir, the number of set up detected and the quantum of national revenue loss assessed, pertaining to the year 2007-08 are:

No of Set up	Assessed loss
26	Rs. 18.26 Crores

(c) Yes, Sir. 34 Vigilance Telecom Monitoring (VTM) Cells have been created under the Department of Telecommunications (DOT) in various Licence Telecom Service Areas and Major Telecom Districts of the country.

(d) Sir, the VTM Cells, with the help of law enforcement agencies, constantly endeavor to check illegal routing of international calls. VTM Cells also act as the interface

between Security Agencies and Licensed Service Providers.

(e) Sir, the following measure are taken by the Government:

(i) An Inter Ministerial Group coordinated by DoT, is in place to look into the enhanced role and functions of VTM Cells and recommend the activities to be carried out by VTM Cells concerning security aspects.

(ii) The Government is also setting up a Centre for Communication Security Research and Monitoring, where Call Data Records (CDRs) will be analysed for detection of illegal routing of calls and grey market telecom set up.

[Translation]

Stock Limit for Future Market Trading

4781. SHRI RAGHUVEER SINGH KOSHAL: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state the maximum stock limit stipulated for the goods related to future market alongwith the maximum time of their holding?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): The futures markets do not stipulate any separate stock limit for goods. The stock limits apply to actual physical stocks of notified commodities in the States which issue such limits. The commodity futures markets, however, stipulate limit on open position which an individual operator or a member can hold on any given day. Each commodity has specified open position limits for each member of an Exchange and for clients trading through them. The maximum limits on open position prescribed for some of the important agricultural commodities traded on the Exchange platform is given in the enclosed Statement.

Statement

Limit on open interest imposed by the Commission in respect of major agricultural commodities.

(Tonne)

S.No	Commodity	Open Position Limit	
		Member*	Client
1	2	3	4
1	Gram	40,000	10,000
2	Masur	12,000	4,000
3	Moong	9,000	3,000
4	Yellow peas	12,000	4,000
5	Burmese peas	7,500	2,500
6	Maize	30,000	10,000
7	Barley	32,500	6,500
8	Mustard seed	60,000	20,000
9	Soyseed	60,000	20,000
10	Castor oil	6,000	2,000
11	Refined Soya Oil	60,000	20,000
12	Rice Bran Oil	6,000	2,000
13	Mentha Oil	1500	300
14	Guar Gum	3,000	1,000
15	Guar Seed	9,000	3,000
16	Gur	30,000	10,000
17	Sugar -S	50,000	20,000
18	Sugar-M	60,000	20,000
19	Jeera	1000	300
20	Turmeric	9,000	3,000
21	Red Chilli	4,500	1,500
22	Pepper	3,000	900
23	Rubber	12,000	4,000
24	Raw Jute	24,000	8,000
25	Potato	45,000	15,000
26	Arecanut	10,000	2,000

* A member's open position limits is either the absolute number indicated above or 15% of the total market open position in the commodity, whichever is higher.

[English]

Feed Plant of NDDB

4782. SHRI M. SREENIVASULU REDDY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) is providing financial support to Prakasam District Milk Producers Cooperation Union in Andhra Pradesh for setting up of feed plant;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the amount sanctioned for the plant;

(c) whether there is any proposal to help the Union in technological upgradation 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 TASLIMUDDIN): (a) No Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of the reply at (a) above.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. However, the National Dairy Development Board has sanctioned Rs. 270.80 lakh to Prakasam District Cooperative Milk Producers' Union for dairy related activities viz augmenting of existing milk processing facilities and refurbishing of spray drying plant. Of this Rs. 190.65 lakh has been released till 31-03-2008.

[Translation]

Reimbursement to FCI

4783. SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government grants reimbursement to Food Corporation of India (FCI) for undertaking activities related to food;

(b) if so, the basis on which the said reimbursement is granted;

(c) the details of subsidy granted as reimbursement during the Tenth Five Year Plan, year-wise and item-wise;

(d) whether subsidy is provided to the State Governments for undertaking procurement under the decentralized procurement scheme;

(e) if so, the details of the subsidy paid for procurement during the Tenth Five Year Plan, State-wise, year-wise and foodgrain-wise;

(f) whether cases of corruption and financial irregularities have been detected in FCI during the Tenth Five Year Plan; and

(g) if so, the details thereof and 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 (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) and (b) The food subsidy is released to the Food Corporation of India (FCI) for the quantity of foodgrains distributed under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) and other welfare schemes (OWS). The difference between the economic cost of foodgrains of the FCI and issue prices is borne by the Central Government as food subsidy.

(c) The details of food subsidy released by the Government to the Food Corporation of India during the Tenth Five Year Plan, year-wise and item-wise is given in the Statement-I.

(d) and (e) The details of food subsidy released to the State Governments/Agencies for procurement under the Decentralised procurement scheme during the Tenth Five Year Plan, State-wise and year-wise are given in the Statement-II.

(f) and (g) FCI has informed that 214 cases have been detected due to defalcation of accounts/misappropriation from 2003 to 2007. Appropriate action has been taken against delinquents and penalties have been awarded by the concerned disciplinary authorities according to the merit of the case.

Statement-I

The details of food subsidy released to the Food Corporation of India during the Tenth FiveYear Plan

(Rs. in crore)

Year	Consumer Subsidy	Buffer	Total
2002-03	16700.36	5973.36	22673.72
2003-04	20376.36	3497.68	23874.04
2004-05	21688.99	1591.01	23280.00
2005-06	19507.61	363.39	19871.00
2006-07	20376.49	409.72	20786.21

Statement-II

The details of food subsidy released to the State Governments undertaking procurement under the decentralised procurement scheme during the Tenth Five Year Plan

(Rs. in crore)

Sl.No.	Name of the State	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.	Chhattisgarh	158.60	89.94	628.87	550.40	419.05
2.	Madhya Pradesh	128.27	66.74	118.75	219.71	34.74

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3.	Orissa	-	-	40.96	70.79	180.13
4.	Tamil Nadu	-	45.82	27.21	221.40	272.81
5.	Uttarakhand	13.97	80.43	92.73	78.08	94.19
6.	Uttar Pradesh	1120.70	975.62	1377.96	1821.27	1779.80
7.	West Bengal	81.19	27.41	179.97	191.21	197.23
8.	Karnataka	-	-	-	10.07	-
9.	Kerala	-	-	-	37.07	63.43
	Total	1502.73	1285.96	2466.45	3200.00	3041.38

[English]

Telephone Network without Optical Fibre Cable

4784. SHRI SHRINIWAS DADASAHEB PATIL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether demand for new land line connection has reduced owing to increase in use of mobile phones in the country;

(b) if so, whether the Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) network would be phased out to replace it by WLL technology in order to reduce the infrastructure involved in laying OFC;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether any city has been indentified as a pilot project for OFC less Telephone Network city in the country; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) to (e) Do not arise in view of (b) above.

Publication of New Telephone Directory

4785. SHRI NAVEEN JINDAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has fixed any time period for bringing out new telephone directory in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the telephone subscribers in Delhi and Mumbai are asking for new telephone directories;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the time by which new directories are likely to be made available to the subscribers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) and (b) Sir, telephone directory of Basic telephones is to be printed SSA wise (Secondary Switching Area wise). The main directory is to be printed in the first year followed by supplementary directories in the following two years.

(c) and (d) One request has been received in Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL) Delhi from Federation of Resident Welfare Associations, Rattan Park, New Delhi-15.

No such request has been received in MTNL, Mumbai.

(e) Updated directory information of Delhi and Mumbai is already available on:

(i) 197

(ii) CD-ROM

(iii) Internet

Setting up of Software Stations

4786. SHRI REWATI RAMAN SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to set up Software Station in Bangalore from foreign countries especially China;

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

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) There is no such proposal of the Department of Information Technology (DIT). DIT deals with the matters relating to Software Technology Parks.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Soil Testing Laboratories

4787. SHRI K.C. PALLANI SHAMY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the names of places where Soil Testing Laboratories are located in the country, State-wise;

(b) whether the Government has any proposal to set up more such laboratories in the country, State-wise particularly in the State of Tamil Nadu;

(c) if so, the details thereof alongwith the locations identified for setting up of the same; and

(d) the time by which the new laboratories are likely to 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) At present there are 651 Soil Testing Laboratories (STLs) functioning in the country. A Statement showing State-wise number of STLs working during 2006-07 is enclosed as Statement.

(b) to (d) The Government has proposed to set up 500 new STLs and 250 Mobile STLs in the country including Tamil Nadu under the newly formulated Centrally Sponsored Scheme "National Project on Management of Soil Health & Fertility". For the present new laboratories can be set up under scheme of "Balanced and Integrated Use of Fertilizer" subsumed under Macro Management Scheme. The Tamil Nadu Government is setting up 11 laboratories under Macro Management Scheme at (i) Thiruvallur, (ii) Thiruvanamalia (iii) Villunuran (iv) Namakkal (v) Krishnagiri (vi) Nagapattnanm (vii) Karar (viii) Perambadur (ix) Thrivarur (x) Virudhunagar and (xi) Ariyalur.

Statement

State-wise Number of Soil Testing Laboratories, Analyzing Capacity, and Utilization During 2006-2007 Under State Governments / UTs and Fertilizer Industry

S.No.	Name of the State	No. of Soil Testing Laboratories						Total	Annual Analyzing Capacity in '00000'	Sample Analyzed in '00000'	Capacity Utilization (%)
		State Govt.		Fert. Industry		Total					
		Static	Mobile	Static	Mobile	Static	Mobile				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
I	**Soutn Zone**										
1.	Andhra Pradesh	80	4	3	8	83	12	95	5.28	4.93	93.4
2.	Karnataka	23	3	2	0	25	3	28	2.74	2.32	84.7
3.	Kerala	14	9	1	0	15	9	24	3.72	2.18	58.6
4.	Tamil Nadu	19	16	2	1	21	17	38	8.34	7.56	90.6
5.	Pondicherry	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0.02	0.02	108.4
6.	Andaman and Nicobar	1	1	0	0	1	1	2	0.12	0.11	91.7
	Total	138	33	8	9	146	42	188	20.22	17.12	81.7
II.	**West Zone**										
7.	Gujarat	18	2	3	1	21	3	24	2.40	3.11	129.6
8.	Madhya Pradesh	25	0	0	3	25	3	28	3.43	2.08	60.6

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
9.	Maharashtra	29	0	5	5	34	5	39	2.18	2.05	94.0
10.	Rajasthan	22	11	1	1	23	12	35	3.80	3.49	91.8
11.	Chhattisgarh	4	4	0	0	4	4	8	0.60	0.40	66.7
12	Goa	1	1	0	0	1	1	2	0.24	0.21	87.5
	Total	99	18	9	10	108	28	136	12.65	11.34	89.6
III.	**North Zone**										
13.	Haryana	30	0	0	1	310	1	31	3.13	2.51	80.2
14.	Punjab	53	13	0	1	53	14	67	6.01	3.20	53.2
15.	H. P.	11	2	0	0	1	2	13	1.00	0.92	0.92
16.	Uttar Pradesh	70	18	4	3	74	21	95	16.27	16.84	103.5
17.	J & K Jammu	3	3	-	-	3	3	6	0.41	0.40	97.6
	Shrinagar	3	1	-	-	3	1	4	0.75	0.08	10.7
	J & K Total	6	4	-	-	6	4	10	1.16	0.48	41.4
18.	Uttaranchal	13	3	0	0	13	3	16	0.83	0.71	84.9
19.	Delhi	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0.05	0.01	20.0
	Total	184	40	4	5	188	45	233	29.61	25.15	84.9
IV.	**East Zone**										
20.	Bihar	23	0	0	0	23	0	23	2.0	0.64	32.0
21.	Orissa	11	0	0	0	11	0	11	1.20	1.02	85.1
22.	West Bengal	14	7	0	0	14	7	21	1.26	0.38	30.2
23.	Jharkhand	7	2	0	0	7	2	9	0.67	0.14	21.0
	Total	55	9	0	0	55	9	64	5.13	2.18	42.5
V.	**N.E. Zone**										
24.	Assam	8	4	0	0	8	4	12	1.06	0.59	56.1
25.	Tripura	2	4	0	0	2	4	6	0.21	0.18	83.8
26.	Manipur	3	1	0	0	3	1	4	0.15	0.12	80.0
27.	Nagaland	3	0	0	0	3	0	3	0.45	0.12	27.7
28.	Arunachal Pradesh	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0.05	0.03	54.3
29.	Meghalaya	1	1	0	0	1	1	2	0.10	0.06	56.2
30.	Sikkim	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0.08	0.08	97.0
31.	Mizoram	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0.08	0.08	100.0
	Total	20	9	0	0	20	9	29	2.18	1.26	57.8
	Grand Total	496	110	21	24	517	134	651	69.79	57.05	81.7

Land Share Companies

4788. DR. BABU RAO MEDIYAM: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether National Commission of Farmers has recommended against setting up land share companies;

(b) if so, whether the Government proposes to stop the formation of such companies; 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) The National Commission on Farmers, in its Fourth Report has recommended that corporatisation of agriculture is not desirable from any angle. The Commission recommended farmer-friendly Contract Farming, Small Farmers' Estates and Farmers' Cooperatives etc. Accordingly, the National Policy for Farmers, 2007 has incorporated provisions for encouraging Cooperative Farming and Service Cooperatives, Group Farming by Self Help Groups, Small Holders' Estates and Contract Farming, which will benefit the small and marginal farmers for gaining efficiency and economies of scale in their farming operations. The National Policy for Farmers does not provide for Land Share companies.

[Translation]

Remuneratice Prices to Farmers

4789. SHRI GIRIDHARI YADAV: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the farmers particularly in Bihar are not getting the remunerative prices for their crops in comparison to the input cost;

(b) if so, the steps being taken by the Government in this regard;

(c) whether the Government proposes to give a package to ameliorate the pitiable condition of the farmers in Bihar; and

(d) 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) and (b) The Government's price policy for agricultural commodities seeks to ensurere munerative prices to the farmers for their produce with a view to encourage higher investment and production, and to safeguard the interest of consumers by making available supplies at reasonable prices. The price policy also seeks to evolve a balanced and integrated price structure in the perspective of the overall needs of the economy.

The Government decides on the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for various agricultural commodities taking into account the recommendations of the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP), the views of State Governments and Central Ministries as well as such other relevant factors which are considered important for fixation of support prices. The CACP, while formulating its recommendations on price policy considers a number of important factors which includes cost of production. The MSPs announced by the Government are applicable throughout the country, including Bihar.

(c) and (d) The scheme of debt waiver and debt relief for farmers announced by the Government in the Union Budget for 2008-09 is applicable to all the farmers in the country. All direct agricultural loans disbursed to farmers by scheduled commercial banks, regional rural banks and cooperative credit institutions up to March 31, 2007 and overdue as on December 31, 2007 will be covered under the scheme. However, for marginal farmers (i.e., holding upto 1 hectare) and small farmers (1-2 hectare), there will be a complete waiver of all loans that were overdue on December 31, 2007 and which remained unpaid until February 29, 2008.

[English]

Citrus Farming Project

4790. SHRI K.S.RAO: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of citrus farming project launched in Punjab by foreign investment company in collaboration with Council of Citrus and Agri-Juicing of Punjab;

(b) whether any feasibility study regarding its viability was conducted; and

(c) 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) A Citrus farming project has been launched by the State Government of Punjab solely through the Council for Citrus and Agri-

Juicing in Punjab. No collaboration with any foreign investment company has been envisaged for implementing the project.

(b) and (c) A feasibility study was conducted by National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development Consultancy Services (NABCONS) and a detailed project report was prepared in which Citrus farming project was declared as a technically feasible and financially viable project.

[Translation]

AIDS in Armed Forces

4791. SHRI RAJNARAYAN BUDHOLIA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether some of the soldiers in the Armed Forces are suffering from AIDS;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the measures being taken by the Government for their treatment?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Total number of AIDS cases in three services as compiled for the years 2004, 2005 and 2006 are as follows:

Year	Army	Navy	Air Force	Total
2004	132	08	04	144
2005	67	06	03	76
2006	30	02	03	35

(c) The Armed Forces have established 10 Immuno Deficiency Centres in selected Military Hospitals. These centres provide investigation, treatment and follow up of all HIV positive persons in the Armed Forces under the supervision of a physician, dermatologist, pathologist and a public health specialist. The centres are equipped with state-of-the-art medical equipment and facilities for detection and treatment of HIV/ASDS cases. In these centres anti-retroviral therapy is provided free to the patient till such time the individual is in service, after which these medicines are supplied through Ex-Servicemen Contributory Health Scheme. Regular follow up of patients, their close relatives, alongwith education about the illness is also carried out.

[English]

Production of Rice

4792. SHRI M.K. SUBBA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether production of rice in the State of Assam and other North Eastern States has declined during 2006-07 and 2007-08;

(b) if so, the details regarding rice production in those States during the last three years; and

(c) the steps taken by the Union Government to help these States overcome the shortfall?

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 details of production of crops from the North Eastern States other than Assam are collected only at the time of the final estimates, which, for the year 2007-08, are not yet due. The estimated production of rice in the State of Assam during 2007-08 (3rd Advance Estimates released on 22.4.2008) is 29.17 lakh tonnes as compared to 29.16 lakh tonnes during 2006-07.

(b) The details of rice production in the North Eastern States during the last three years is as under:-

State	Production of Rice (LakhTonnes)		
	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Assam	34.71	35.53	29.16
Manipur	4.36	3.86	3.86
Meghalaya	1.94	1.52	2.00
Mizoram	1.04	0.99	0.30
Nagaland	2.60	2.63	2.64
Sikkim	0.22	0.22	0.22
Tripura	5.45	5.53	6.21

(c) To increase the production of Rice in the country, including North Eastern States, Government is implementing a Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Integrated Cereals Development Programme in Rice Based Cropping System Area (ICDP-Rice) since October 2000 under Macro Management Mode of Agriculture. This scheme is implemented on 90:10 sharing basis between Government of India and the States. Under this scheme, assistance is provided to the farmers for distribution of seeds, propagation of improved production technology, Integrated Pest Management (IPM), training of farmers including women, farm implements and installation of sprinkler irrigation system. Besides, Frontline Demonstrations are also organized by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research/

State Agriculture Universities on the farmers' fields to popularize the frontier technologies among farmers.

Further, Government has launched the National Food Security Mission to increase the production of Rice, among others, by 10 million tonnes by the end of the 11th Five Year Plan (2011-12) in the targeted districts of the country, including districts of the State of Assam.

Textile Institutes

4793. SHRI E.G. SUGAVANAM: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) the number of skilled labours likely to join the workforce in the textile sector during the Eleventh Plan;

(b) whether the Government has any proposal to set up large number of textile institutes in the country at the district level;

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

(d) the time by which the above institutes are likely to be set up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) to (d) The textiles have been recognized as a thrust area for growth during the Eleventh Five Year Plan due to the sector's potential to boost productivity, employment and investment. Thus, it is projected that an additional 5 million jobs will be created for skilled labours in the textile sector during the Eleventh Plan. This, in turn, will create the need for an enlarged training and educational infrastructure. The Scheme of Neighbourhood Apparel & Textile Training Institutes for Job Assurance (NATIJA) has been formulated for establishing a network of employment-linked training facilities in basic garment manufacturing technology. The Scheme is designed to meet the projected demand of 4 million trained workers required in the garment industry over the next 5 years. This Scheme is to be operated at regional and sub-regional level across the country on Public Private Partnership (PPP) model. The existing ITIs/ Polytechnics and other such Institutes could be considered for locating such centres in the initial phase. Creation of new training centres may be considered subsequently to meet the demand, as and when required. However, no time frame in this regard can be indicated at this stage.

[Translation]

Funds for Pisciculture

4794. SHRI CHANDRA DEV PRASAD RAJBHAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the amount of funds allocated and utilised for Pisciculture in the country during the last three years, State-wise;

(b) whether the allocated funds have been utilised properly by the States; and

(c) 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 TASLIMUDDIN): (a) to (c) Pisciculture is a State subject and funds for this sector are primarily provided by the State Governments. However, under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme on "Development of Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture", Central Government also provides funds to the State for Pisciculture. The details of funds released and utilized for Pisciculture under the Scheme during the last three years, State-wise are given in the enclosed Statement. Funding under the scheme is shared between the Centre and the State in a proportion of 75:25. Utilisation Certificate for funds sanctioned earlier is a precondition for further release of funds to the State Governments.

Statement

Amount of funds allocated & utilised for Pisciculture in the country from 2005-06 to 2007-08 (during the last three years) State-wise under the Central Sponsored Scheme on Development of Inland Fisheries & aquaculture

(Rs. in lakh)

S.No.	Name of State	Funds Released 2005-2008	Funds Utilized 2005-2008
1	2	3	4
1	Andhra Pradesh	583.00	520.00
2	Arunachal Pradesh	91.19	57.17
3	Assam	40.00	0.00
4	Bihar	60.00	23.35
5	Chhattisgarh	250.00	150.00
6	Goa	5.27	0.00
7	Gujarat	57.34	46.61

1	2	3	4
8	Haryana	263.50	158.75
9	Himachal Pradesh	111.28	78.85
10	J & K	264.83	264.83
11	Jharkhand	124.35	74.35
12	Karnataka	218.42	52.82
13	Kerala	599.08	319.08
14	M.P	510.00	293.52
15	Maharashtra	23.00	0.00
16	Manipur	75.00	75.00
17	Meghalaya	0.00	0.00
18	Mizoram	250.00	250.00
19	Nagaland	318.61	282.06
20	Orissa	384.47	306.62
21	Pondicherry	5.00	0.00
22	Punjab	0.00	0.00
23	Rajasthan	47.80	37.25
24	Sikkim	34.50	34.50
25	Tamil Nadu	120.00	115.39
26	Tripura	146.50	116.20
27	UP	939.51	650.42
28	Uttrakhand	57.28	48.28
29	West Bengal	815.22	550.00
30	Fishchopped	0.23	0.00
	Total	6395.38	4505.05

[English]

Excavation of Badagara-Mahe Canal

4795. SHRIMATI C.S. SUJATHA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has received proposal for Excavation of Badagara-Mahe Canal and development of feeder canals under Centrally Sponsored Scheme;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): *(a) No Sir. No such proposal has been received by the Government.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

Medical Facilities for Retired MTNL Employees

4796. DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether MTNL has recently withdrawn medical facilities for their retired employees;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the date from which it has been withdrawn;

(c) whether any alternative arrangements have been made to this effect;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether reimbursement will be admissible to those retired employees, who are undergoing treatment in the empanelled hospitals after withdrawal of the facility;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) to (d) In MTNL, medical facilities for the retired personnel consist of an OPD component and In-Door component which is distinct from one another. While the OPD component has been retained intact, the indoor treatment provisions have been withdrawn with effect from 20.03.2008 and are to be replaced by a new alternative arrangement which is under finalization.

(e) and (f) Yes, Sir. Hospitalization shall continue to be supported and dealt with by the management in conclusion

*Part (a) to (c) of the reply to Q.No. 4795 was subsequently corrected through a correcting statement made in the House on 15.12.2008. Accordingly, the reply has been corrected as under:

The State Government of Kerala has informed that as part of the development of the State Waterways, the State Government proposes to excavate the Badagara-Mahe Canal. Like wise, for the optimal utilization of National Waterways-III, the State Government proposes to develop the feeder canals leading to the National Waterway. With the above objective, various proposals were prepared and submitted by the State Government before Inland Waterway Authority of India (IWAI)/Government of India seeking assistance under the 90:10 CSS (Central Sponsored Scheme) for the Inland Water Transport (IWT) Sector.

Recently IWAI has informed that CSS for IWT has been discontinued by the planning Commission with effect from 1-4-07.

The Statement was delayed due to delay in receipt necessary information from the Government of Kerala.

of the ongoing hospitalization, i.e., till discharge from the hospital on the lines followed so far.

(g) Does not arise in view of (e) and (f) above.

Development of IT Sector

4797. SHRI P.C. THOMAS: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the position of India in IT development amongst other nations in the world;

(b) the status of the IT development in various States of the country, State-wise;

(c) the status of e-governance in the country, State-wise; and

(d) the amount of assistance provided by the Union Government to the States during the last three years, as on date, State-wise and year-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) In terms of E-Government Readiness', as per the UN E-Government Survey 2008 Report, India ranks at 113 out of a total of 192 countries. This ranking is based on the e-government readiness index, which is a composite index, comprising the web measure index, the telecommunication infrastructure index and the human capital index.

(b) to (d) The details of implementation of major e-governance projects namely Common Service Centres (CSCs), State Wide Area Network (SWAN), Capacity Building (CB) and State Data Centre (SDC) and the financial assistance provided to the States in this regard are given in the enclosed Statement-I to V.

Statement-I

Common Service Centre (CSC) Implementation Status

Sl.No.	State	No. of CSCs (1:6)	No. of CSCs proposed to be set up	No. of CSC Roll out initiated	Sanctioned Amnt. (Rs. Cr.)	Amount released to state (GOI share) (Rs. Cr.)	1st installment of ACA released (Rs. Cr.)
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	Assam	4375	4375	4375	69.38	8.67	8.67
2	West Bengal	6797	6797	6797	107.79	13.47	12.95
3	Bihar	7516	8463	8463	119.20	14.90	14.9
4	Orissa	8558	8558		135.72	16.97	16.75
5	Jharkhand	5436	4562	4562	86.21	10.78	10.75
6	Chhattisgarh	3385	3385		53.68	6.71	6.71
7	Madhya Pradesh	9232	9232	9232	146.41	18.30	18.3
8	Haryana	1159	1159	1159	18.38	2.30	2.3
9	Punjab	2112	2112		33.49	4.19	4.19
10	Tripura	145	145	145	2.30	0.29	0.29
11	Rajasthan	6626	6626		105.08	13.14	10.95
12	Uttarakhand	2804	2804		44.46	5.56	5.56
13	Uttar Pradesh	17909	17909	17909	284.02	35.55	35.55
14	Gujarat	3090	6000	6000	49.00	6.13	6.13
15	Andhra Pradesh	4687	4687		74.33	9.29	9.29

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
16	Himachal Pradesh	3361	3366		53.30	6.66	6.66
17	Kerala	227	3178		3.60	0.45	0.45
18	Tamil Nadu	2720	5440		43.13	5.39	5.39
19	Maharashtra	7285	7285		115.53	14.44	14.10
20	Arunachal Pradesh	678	74		10.75	1.34	1.34
21	Manipur	399	399		6.33	0.79	0.79
22	Meghalaya	1004	225		15.92	1.99	1.99
23	Mizoram	136	36		2.16	0.27	0.27
24	Nagaland	220	220		3.49	0.44	0.44
25	Sikkim	75	45		1.62	0.2	0.20
26	Pondicherry	44	44		0.70	0.09	
	Total			58642		198.30	194.92

Proposal Awaited from: Jammu & Kashmir, Karnataka, Andaman, Lakshadeep, Daman and Diu, Dadra & Nagra Haveli,
States Not inclined to implement CSC scheme: Delhi, Goa, Chandigarh

Statement-II

Statewide Area Network (SWAN) Implementation Status

Sl.No	Name of States/UTs	DIT Share	Amount released as Grant in Aid	Remark
		(Rs. in Crore)		
1	2	3	4	5
State				
1	Andhra Pradesh	97.77	20.00	Revised proposal under review
2	Arunachal Pradesh	35.46	7.09	RFP/ BoM under review & finalisation
3	Assam	72.50	15.00	Implementation under progress
4	Bihar	159.06	31.81	Implementation under progress
5	Chhattisgarh	51.25	10.25	Bid process initiated
6	Goa			
7	Gujarat	91.52	40.74	Implementation under progress
8	Haryana	62.62	12.53	SWAN Implemented and operational
9	Himachal Pradesh	50.21	17.32	SWAN Implemented and operational
10	Jammu and Kashmir	37.54	7.51	RFP / BoM under review & finalisation
11	Jharkhand	93.44	16.00	Implementation under progress
12	Karnataka	95.34	19.00	Contract Signed
13	Kerala	78.70	16.00	Implementation under progress

1	2	3	4	5
14	Madhya Pradesh	116.70	23.34	Bid process initiated
15	Maharashtra	110.78	22.16	Contract Signed
16	Manipur	13.97	2.79	Implementation under progress
17	Meghalaya	13.56	2.71	Bid process initiated
18	Mizoram	14.63	2.93	RFP/ BoM under review & finalisation
19	Nagaland	13.15	2.63	RFP / BoM under review & finalisation
20	Orissa	95.64	19.13	Bid process initiated
21	Punjab	62.23	12.00	Implementation under progress
22	Rajasthan	77.37	15.47	Bid process initiated
23	Sikkim	19.94	9.50	Implementation under progress
24	Tamil Nadu	97.17	19.00	SWAN Implemented and operationnl
25	Tripura	20.04	10.50	Implementation under progress
26	Uttarakhand	39.64	7.93	Financial bid evaluation in progress
27	Uttar Pradesh	168.72	94.00	Implementation under progress
28	West Bengal	66.93	13.00	Implementation under progress
	UTs			
1	Andaman and Nicobar			
2	Chandigarh	4.09	2.00	Implementation under progress
3	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	2.78	0.00	RFP / BoM under review & finalisation
4	Daman and Diu	2.50	0.00	RFP/ BoM under review & finalisation
5	Lakshadweep		0.00	Proposal under review
6	NCT of Delhi	8.90	5.80	SWAN Implemented and operational
7	Puducherry	7.24	1.45	Implementation under progress
	Total	1881.38	479.59	

Statement-III

Fund (DIT Grant) release details for year 1 of Capacity Building (CB) scheme

S.No.	State/UT		DIT	Total	Status
1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Assam	NE	218.0	218.0	Released in March 08
2	Andaman and Nicobar	UT	182.4	182.4	Released in March 08
3	Andhra Pradesh		218	218.0	Released in March 08
4	Bihar		218	218.0	Released in March 08

1	2	3	4	5	6
5	Chandigarh	UT	182.4	182.4	Released in March 08
6	Chhattisgarh		218	218.0	Released in March 08
7	Goa		128.5	128.5	Released in March 08
8	Gujarat		218	218.0	Released in March 08
9	Himachal Pradesh		128.5	128.5	Released in March 08
10	Jharkhand		218.0	218.0	Released in March 08
11	Karnataka		218	218.0	Released in March 08
12	Kerala		218.0	218.0	Released in March 08
13	Madhya Pradesh		218.0	218.0	Released in March 08\
14	Maharashtra		218.0	218.0	Released in March 08
15	Manipur	NE	128.5	128.5	Released in March 08
18	Mizoram	NE	75.0	75.0	Released in March 08
17	Nagaland	NE	75	75.0	Released in March 08
18	Orissa		218.0	218.0	Released in March 08
19	Pondicherry	UT	182.4	182.4	Released in March 08
20	Punjab		218.0	218.0	Released in March 08
21	Rajasthan		218	218.0	Released in March 08
22	Sikkim	NE	75.0	75.0	Released in March 08
23	Tamil Nadu		218	218.0	Released in March 08
24	Tripura	NE	128.5	128.5	Released in March 08
25	Uttar Pradesh		218	218.0	Released in March 08
26	Uttarakhand		128.5	128.5	Released in March 08
27	West Bengal		218	218.0	Released in March 08
	Released DIT-GIA Funds:		4902.7	4902.7	

Statement-IV

State Development Centres (SDC) Implementation Status

S.No.	Name of the State	Total Outlay for 5 years (In crores)	First Installment of Funds Released (In Crores)
		DIT Share	DIT Share
1	2	3	4
1.	Andhra Pradesh	18.37	4.19
2	Chhattisgarh	18.24	4.12
3	Haryana	13.5	4.18
4	Himachal Pradesh	16.32	3.72
5	Jharkhand	13.31	4.16
6	Kerala	18.31	4.16
7	Madhya Pradesh	18.37	4.19
8	Maharashtra	18.38	4.19
9	Manipur	15.16	3.14
10	Meghalaya	15.37	3.25
11	Nagaland	12.37	2.69

1	2	3	4
12	Orissa	16.94	3.47
13	Pondicherry	10.28	2.64
14	Punjab	13.44	3.72
15	Sikkim	10.06	2.53
16	Tamil Nadu	18.41	4.21
17	Tripura	15.44	3.28
18	West Bengal	17.89	3.95
19	Assam	11.97	3.82
20	Gujarat	18.30	4.40
21	Rajasthan	12.59	4.05
22	Uttar Pradesh	18.41	4.20
23	Goa	12.48	1.80
	Total	353.91	84.06

Statement-V

State-wise, year-wise details of assistance

(Rs. in Crores)

S. No.	States/UTs	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Assam	8.0144	11.9562	7.0940
2.	Andhra Pradesh	14.3361	12.5470	36.2740
3.	Andman and Nicobar	-	0.1474	01.8240
4.	Bihar	06.0600	46.7117	02.2000
5.	Chandigarh	02.0400	0.0600	01.4240
6.	Chhattisgarh	10.2500	06.7100	06.3200
7.	Common Service Centre (CSC) North-East States Arunachal Pradesh Manipur, Nagaland Mizoram	-	-	12.8255
8.	Delhi	47.1794	203.4631	110.0036
9.	Gujarat	08.8600	0.0225	35.8135
10.	Goa	-	-	03.0850
11.	Haryana	10.7000	04.9900	20.0140
12.	Jammu & Kashmir	02.5240	-	07.5100
13.	Jharkhand	05.3000	11.4300	09.9200
14.	Kerla	04.7000	0.07070	10.9665
15.	Karnataka	05.5000	01.2700	02.1800
16.	Lakshdweep	-	00.0600	-
17.	Madhya Pradesh	04.7000	18.3715	13.4461
18.	Manipur	-	02.7900	05.9662
19.	Mizoram	-	02.9300	03.9994
20.	Meghalaya	-	03.0020	06.4700
21.	Maharashtra	-	06.7693	46.9802
22.	Nagaland	-	02.6300	03.8763
23.	Orissa	20.5300	16.9654	07.3132
24.	Punjab	05.3550	07.5706	09.1745
25.	Pondicherry	01.6000	-	05.9995
26.	Rajasthan	16.1700	13.5616	06.2540
27.	Sikkim	10.2064	04.1350	04.2825
28.	Tamil Nadu	14.4015	15.1986	14.9845
29.	Tripura	07.8500	0.28740	04.5650
30.	Uttarakhand	-	-	09.6829
31.	Uttar Pradesh	19.2350	-	103.0649
32.	West Bengal	04.0000	16.3319	09.0712

[Translation]

Shortage of Aircraft Carrier

4798. SHRI HANSRAJ G. AHIR:
SHRI RASHEED MASOOD:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is an acute shortage of Aircraft carrier and aircrafts to be used therein;

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

(c) whether the situation has been aggravated due to delay in acquisition of the carrier Admiral Gorshkov;

(d) if so, whether the Government is exploring other anenues for acquisition of Aircraft Carrier; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (c) The Indian Navy presently has one aircraft carrier with limited number of integral fighter aircraft and helicopters. One indigenous Aircraft Carrier is under construction at Cochin Shipyard Limited, Kochi. Besides, INS Vikramaditya (ex Admiral Gorshkov) is being refitted in Russia. Existing aircraft are being upgraded and additional fighter aircraft are being inducted.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) The need for contacting other country does not arise.

[English]

Financial Assistance to Fishery Survey of India

4799. SHRI RAMESH DUBE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission has been extending financial assistance to Fishery Survey of India;

(b) if so, the details of financial assistance received by Fishery Survey of India during each of the last three years;

(c) the manner and the purpose for which the said assistance was utilised; and

(d) the amount of assistance the remained unutilized or spent for purposes other than for which it was sanctioned by the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission alongwith 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 TASLIMUDDIN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Under an ocean-wide Tuna Tagging Programme covering the eastern and western Indian Ocean, financial assistance has been extended to the Fishery Survey of India (FSI) by the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) as stated below:

i.	Tuna Tagging Programme in Lakshadweep covering Western Indian Ocean (2005-06)	US $ 24925
ii.	Tuna Tagging Programme in Andaman and Nicobar waters covering Eastern Indian Ocean (2007-08)	US $ 71209

(c) Assistance provided by Indian Ocean Tuna Commission for implementation of Tuna Tagging Programme was released for incurring expenditures as specified in the Letter of Agreement which include tagging equipments, publicity, reward to fishermen for recapture of tagged tunas, travel and field allowances to scientists involved in the tagging programme, expenditure for chartering pole and line boats of private fishermen from Lakshadweep and their transport to Andaman as well as operational costs, bait fish collection, etc. The funds were released in instalments at different stages upon actual implementation of the programme subject to the submission of progress reports and expenditure statements.

(d) Release of funds was done stage-wise as per the Letter of Agreement and since release of final instalment of funds is made only upon submission of the final report and audited statement of expenditure and acceptance of the same by Indian Ocean Tuna Commission/ Food and Agricultural Organization, the question of unutilized funds does not arise. Assistance provided by Indian Ocean Tuna Commission has to be utilized strictly for the purpose for which it is provided, as stipulated in the Agreement.

Check on Brain-drain in C-DOT

4800. SHRI EKNATH MAHADEO GAIKWAD: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons on which all appointments including scientists and engineers are made on contract basis in the Centre for Development of Telematics (C-Dot);

(b) whether due to contract basis system, the brain-drain is regularly prevailing in this organization;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) the number and percentage of expertise leaving this organization during the last three years, as on date; and

(e) the steps taken/being taken by the Government to prevent the brain-drain from this organization?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) Sir, C-DOT was set up as an autonomous R & D project organization on 25th August 1984, when all appointments were made on contract basis. This practice has been followed ever since.

(b) and (c) Sir, even though appointments are made on contract basis, the contracts are normally reviewed and renewed regularly. However some employees leave the organization for personal reasons, including disparity in compensation level at C-DOT vis-a-vis private Telecom & IT industry.

(d) Sir, the details are given below.

Year	Number of Employees Left	Employees Turnover (%age left)
2005-06	166	18.8%
2006-07	148	18.8%
2007-08	83	11.2%

(e) Sir, the following steps are taken by the Government to contain the turnover of employees.

(i) Merit based grade-promotions.

(ii) Responsibility promotions.

(iii) Award policy.

(iv) Benefits like books & journals allowance, membership of professional bodies.

[Translation]

Non-payment of Salary by Private Companies

4801. SHRI SUBHASH MAHARIA: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has received complaints regarding non-payment of salaries, wages and other payments by various private companies to their employees, workers and labourers in the country during each of the last three years;

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

(c) whether the employees, workers and labourers are on the verge of starvation due to non-payment of salary, wages and other payments;

(d) if so, the steps being taken by the Government to ensure payment of such dues to the said employees, workers and labourers alongwith the action taken against the defaulting companies; and

(e) the efforts made by the Government to create awareness among the employees, workers and labourers regarding their rights under labour laws?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) to (c) As per the Payment of Wages Act, 1936, regular and timely payment of wages to workers is a mandatory requirement. The enforcement of the Act is secured by the appropriate Governments under their respective jurisdiction who also oversee their implementation. In case of private companies, the appropriate Government is the concerned State Government. The data regarding non-payment of legitimate dues of workers working in private companies, which fall under State sphere, is not maintained centrally. However, as and when complaints in this regard are received, these are referred to appropriate governments for ensuring redressal of the grievances of workers.

(d) Under the statutory provisions of the Act, the appropriate Government officials conduct regular inspections and direct the employer to make payment of legitimate dues to the workers. In case of non adherence of the provisions, the defaulting employers are liable to face legal and penal actions.

(e) The Central Board for Workers Education set up at Nagpur carries out Workers Education scheme at National, Regional and Village levels whereby awareness is sought to be created among the working class about their rights and obligations. The number of workers trained during the last three years is as under:-

Year	Number of Workers trained (in Lakhs)
2004-05	3.20
2005-06	3.28
2006-07	2.85

[English]

Use of Liquor Spray to Enhance Agricultural Productivity

4802. SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the horticulture farmers in certain parts of the country are spraying liquor on their crops to enhance agricultural productivity; and

(b) 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) No authentic data/reports are available for spraying of liquor on horticultural crops for enhancing agricultural productivity.

(b) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Review of performance of postal work

4803. SHRI HEMLAL MURMU: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has reviewed the performance of existing system of posts, especially the services of speed post, money order and savings bank etc. in the country;

(b) the total number of complaints received by the Government with regard to poor performance of postal services, especially the money order and speed post services during the last three years and the current year in the country, State-wise;

(c) the number of places in the country, especially in the districts of Jharkhand and Bihar which do not have speed post service as on date;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken/being taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) and (b) The Department of Posts regularly reviews the performance of various postal services including Speed Post, Money Order and Savings Bank. The review of the performance and initiating steps to improve quality of service are ongoing process. The number of Speed Post and Money Order complaints State - wise and year - wise are given in Statement-I and II respectively.

(c) to (e) All the districts of Bihar, Jharkhand and other states have Speed Post Service. The network of Speed Post Service is extended after taking into account the market requirements, customer needs, expected business,, transport facilities available etc.

Statement-I

Number of Speed Post Complaints State-wise and Year-wise

Circle	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
1	2	3	4
Andhra Pradesh	1041	539	731
Assam	1386	1165	1236
Bihar	580	1514	417
Chhattisgarh	1611	1128	603
Delhi	14878	6175	1572
Gujarat	15	18	17
Daman, Diu and Dadra Nagar Haveli	Nil	Nil	Nil
Haryana	1861	2383	3289
Himachal Pradesh	67	66	83
Jammu and Kashmirc	137	201	207
Jharkhand	92	107	132
Karnataka	1841	2741	2542
Kerala	1554	1663	2007
Madhya Pradesh	225	234	259
Maharashtra	1506	1555	2374
Goa	Nil	04	03
Meghalaya	35	28	55
Manipur	81	106	93
Mizoram	108	123	156
Nagaland	29	38	47
Tripura	206	59	109
Arunachal Pradesh	Nil	Nil	Nil
Orissa	962	963	977
Punjab	44	28	62
Chandigarh	9	11	13
Rajasthan	1223	3298	3378
Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry	999	1408	1984
Uttar Pradesh	180	143	102
Uttarakhand	263	341	418
West Bengal	72	27	107
Sikkim	8	19	17
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	34	39	91
APS	69	80	92
Total	31116	26204	23173

Statement-II

Number of Money Order Complaints State-wise and Year-wise

Circle	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
1	2	3	4
Andhra Pradesh	19195	15287	13264
Assam	2595	1864	980
Bihar	6406	20569	9634
Chhattisgarh	262	1334	927
Delhi	49455	31597	31860
Gujarat	46436	28018	21038
Daman, Diu and Dadra Nagar Haveli	82	196	144
Haryana	701	512	558
Himachal Pradesh	6490	2488	1833
Jammu and Kashmir	3513	2694	1966
Jharkhand	338	301	243
Karnataka	24175	21892	22966
Kerala	9167	6003	5557
Madhya Pradesh	24912	14172	8453
Maharashtra	70333	45825	37896
Goa	1561	1397	1377
Meghalaya	788	777	521
Manipur	312	244	278
Mizoram	108	123	156
Nagaland	47	58	85
Tripura	1756	1614	1583
Arunachal Pradesh	162	122	116
Orissa	7274	6469	4335
Punjab	30432	18201	12500
Chandigarh	8862	1959	1436
Rajasthan	13303	8551	1605
Tamil Nadu	36328	25454	24394
Pondicherry	780	620	656
Uttar Pradesh	1310	1215	1007
Uttarakhand	7900	6864	4582
West Bengal	1146	1182	1088
Sikkim	37	95	38
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	258	253	325
APS	9084	7131	2680
Total	385508	275081	216081

IT Units in Industrial Parks

4804 SHRI SURAJ SINGH:
SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has not granted approval to Information Technology (IT) units to function in the Industrial Parks;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reasons for not granting approval in this regard;

(d) whether the Government proposes to formulate a scheme for extension of Information Technology (IT) industry on the lines of Industrial Parks; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The notification of Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) permits only manufacturing units in the industrial parks.

(d) and (e) Yes, Sir. Government has formulated a policy for setting up of Information Technology Investment Regions (ITIRs). The regions would encompass Information Technology / Information Technology Enabled Services (IT/ITES) units and Electronic Hardware Manufacturing Units.

Losses of MTNL due to issue of share

4805. SHRI V.K. THUMMAR:
DR. DHIRENDRA AGARWAL:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether MTNL has suffered a loss of Rs. 100 Crores on the preferential shares issued by Indian Telephone Industries (ITI) Limited;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether no action has been taken against the officials responsible for the same;

(d) whether this amounts to an act of illegal;

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

(f) the remedial steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) No. Sir.

(b) to (f) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

Issue of IPO for BSNL

4806. SHRI RAKESH SINGH:
SHRI P. RAJENDRAN:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has any proposal to bring Initial Public Offer (IPO) for Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL);

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

(c) whether the said process is likely to lead to its privatisation;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether such proposal is being opposed by the Employees Union in BSNL; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) Sir, there are no active proposals to bring IPO for Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) at present.

(b) to (d) Do not arise in view of (a) above.

(e) and (f) The joint forum of BSNL Union/Associations of Non-Executives and Executives employees in their notice dated 24.01.2008 for indefinite strike from 26.02.2008 had demanded that IPO/Disinvestments proposal in BSNL may be dropped.

The proposed strike has been deferred by the joint forum on the basis of assurance given by the office of Hon'ble MOC&IT that matter would be discussed internally in the Ministry and then a suitable decision would be taken in this regard.

[English]

Shortage of Telephone Cables

4807. SHRI VIKRAMBHAI ARJANBHAI MADAM: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a long waiting list of landline phones and shortage of telephone cables in the country especially in Gujarat;

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

(c) the steps taken/being taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) and (b) Sir, the circle-wise, waiting-list of landline phones and availability of telephone cable as on 31.3.2008 is given in the enclosed Statement. There is no shortage of cable in any circle including Gujarat Telecom Circle.

(c) Following steps have been taken by the Government to clear the pending waiting list:

(i) To meet the demand of wireline telephones in rural areas, BSNL is now laying cable up to 5 Kms of exchange against the earlier standard of 2.5 Kms.

(ii) BSNL has deployed WLL network in rural areas to meet the demand of scattered and far-flung rural areas where connection of telephone is not techno-commercially feasible on landlines.

(iii) Remote and far-flung areas which are not possible to be covered with terrestrial technology, are planned to be covered with Digital Satellite Phone Terminals (DSPTs).

(iv) The mobile network of BSNL covers most of the national highways, important towns, pilgrim centers and state highways. BSNL plans to cover all villages with population up to 1000 with mobile services over next three years.

Statement

Status of Waiting List of Landline Phone and Telephone Cables as on 31.03.2008

BSNL

Sl. No.	Name of the Circle/Distt.	Waiting List	Cable available with the Circles (LCKM)*
1	2	3	4
1	Andaman and Nicobar	198	0.33867
2	Andhra Pradesh	11,014	4.36119

1	2	3	4
3	Assam	1,063	2.77679
4	Bihar	48,642	4.74968
5	Chhattisgarh	18	0.83160
6	Gujarat	13,278	4.41922
7	Haryana	2,912	2.84883
8	Himachal Pradesh	11,724	1.44996
9	Jammu and Kashmir	4,490	2.56935
10	Jharkhand	987	4.10668
11	Karnataka	40,301	7.94601
12	Kerala	45,304	4.64369
13	Madhya Pradesh	5,244	3.42733
14	Maharashtra	32,480	4.93272
15	North-East-I	0	0.98834
16	North-East-II	616	1.02956
17	Orissa	4,529	2.44144
18	Punjab	133	6.26375
19	Rajasthan	5,530	5.76409
20	Tamil Nadu	11,822	5.42598
21	Uttarakhand	83	1.31374
22	Uttar Pradesh (East)	16,523	4.15707
23	Uttar Pradesh (West)	1,662	5.40653
24	West Bengal	49,217	3.12047
25	Kolkata	0	4.08700
26	Chennai	656	2.68811
	Total	3,08,426	92.08777

MTNL

Sl. No.	Name of the Circle/Distt.	Waiting List	Cable available with the Circles (LCKM)*
1	MTNL Delhi	0	Sufficient quantity available
2	MTNL Mumbai	0	
	Total	0	

* LCKM – Lac Conductor Kilo Meter

[Translation]

Registered Trade Unions in BSNL and MTNL

4808. CH. MUNAWAR HASSAN: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of registered trade unions in Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) and Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL);

(b) the number of unions for which election have been held in both these Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) since 1998;

(c) the number and names of employees unions participated in said election and total number of votes polled by each union alongwith their vote percentage;

(d) the percentage of votes mandatory required by any union to protect its registration; and

(e) the steps being taken by the Government to cancel the registration of unions which failed to secure requisite number of votes or abstained from the election?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) The total number of registered trade union in BSNL and MTNL are 12 and 17, respectively.

(b) Number of unions for which elections have been held in BSNL is 8 (eight) and in MTNL it is 9 (nine).

(c) Number of Employees Unions participated in said election as above is given at Statement-I. Votes polled by each union along with their vote percentage is given in Statement-II.

(d) There is no mandatory requirement of votes to be secured by any union to protect its registration in election in so far as the percentage of votes polled is concerned.

(e) Registration of a Union is not required to be cancelled when it does not participate in the election or fails to secure a minimum percentage of votes.

Statement-I

List of Unions operating in MTNL, New Delhi

1. Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd. Staff Union
2. Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd. Workers' Union
3. BTU of Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd.
4. Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd. Mazdoor Sangh
5. Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd.Karmachari Union
6. Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd. Kamgar Union

7. Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd. Karmachari Vikas Sanghatan
8. Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd. Staff Welfare Union

List of Unions operating in MTNL, Mumbai

1. Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Karmachari Sangh
2. Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Karmachari Front
3. Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Republican Employees' Union
4. MTNL Staff Union, Class III & IV
5. Bhartiya Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Employees Union
6. MTNL Personnel Staff Association
7. Sanchar Union of Non-Executives of MTNL
8. Voice of Telecom Employees (India)
9. Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd, Workers' Union

List of Unions of Non-Executive Employees (BSNL)

1. National Federation of Telecom Employees (BSNL)
2. BSNL Association of Telecom Mechanic
3. BSNL National Telecommunication Staff Union
4. National Union of BSNL Workers (FNTO)
5. Bahujan Trade Union of BSNL
6. BSNL Mazdoor Sangh
7. BSNL Employees Union
8. All India Backward Classes, Telecom Employees Sanghthan
9. BSNL Workers Rastriya Union
10. Telecommunication Employees Progressive Union
11. BSNL Employees Congress
12. BSNL Employees Sangh

No. of votes polled, Union-wise, during the third membership verification in BSNL

Sl. No.	Name of the Union	Votes Polled	%age of votes polled
1	2	3	4
1.	All India Backward Classed Telecom Employees Sangthan	419	0.16
2.	Bahujan Trade Union of BSNL	329	0.12
3.	BSNL Association of Telecom Mechanics	5565	2.10
4.	BSNL Employees Sangthan	1536	0.58
5.	BSNL Employees Union	151216	56.97
6.	NFTE BSNL	87189	32.85
7.	National Union of BSNL Workers (FNTO)	1204	0.45
8.	Telecom Employees Progressive Union	174	0.07

Statement-II

Result of the Secret Ballot held on 10.1.2007 for determining the relative strength of Trade Unions operating in Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited, New Delhi

	Votes Number	Percentage
Total No. of voters as per voter list	20516	
Total No. of votes cast	19304	
Votes cast in favour of BHARTIYA MAHANAGAR TELEPHONE NIGAM KARAMCHARI SANGH (Symbol-Table Lamp)	67	0.34%
Votes cast in favour of BHUJAN TRADE UNION OF MTNL (Symbol-Appu)	229	1.86%
Vote cast in favour of MTNL KARAMCHARI UNION (Symbol-Heater)	98	0.50%
Votes cast in favour of MTNL MAZDOOR SANGH (Symbol-Walkie Talkie)	11261	58.33%
Votes cast in favour of MTNL STAFF UNION (Symbol-Satellite)	7523	38.97%
Votes cancelled/rejected	126	

The Result of the Secret Ballor conducted at Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd., Mumbai to verify the membership of the Union operating therein (10.1.2007)

	Votes Number	Percentage
	1	2
Total Strength	20812	
Total No. of Voters as per Voters list	20812	
Total No. of Votes cast	19592	

	1	2
Votes cast in favour of MTNL STAFF UNION	235	1.19%
Votes cast in favour of Mahanagar Telephone Nigam	9732	49.67%
Kamgar Sangh Votes cast in favour of Mahanagar Telephone Nigam	7306	37.29%
Kamgar Front Votes cast in favour Sanchar Union of Non-Executive of MTNL	2172	11.08%
Votes cancelled	147	

[English]

Army Exercise in Pokhran

4809. SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI:
SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether three soldiers were killed and two critically injured while firing 120 mm mortar bombs during the exercise at Pokhran firing range;

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

(c) whether an inquiry has been made with regard to the mishap;

(d) if so, the outcome thereof and the action taken against the persons responsible for the mishap; and

(e) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to check recurrence of such incidents?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (e) The accident on 19.3.2008 was caused due to bore premature, while the shell exploded within the barrel of 120MM mortar resulting in bursting of barrel into pieces. This resulted in three fatalities and two injuries. All such instances are investigated through a Court of Inquiry to ascertain the cause and reasons leading to the accident. As an immediate action to prevent such recurrence, the suspect 'lot' of ammunition used during firing has been segregated and banned from firing.

[Translation]

Direct subsidy to BPL families

4810. SHRI ILYAS AZMI: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government had directed the State Governments to provide direct subsidy to Below Poverty Line (BPL) and Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) beneficiaries to check corruption in Public Distribution System (PDS);

(b) if so, the details thereof and reaction of the States thereto;

(c) whether any action plan has been received from the Government of Uttar Pradesh for implementation of the said scheme;

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

(e) the reasons for delay in implementation of the said scheme?

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) No, Sir.

(c) to (e) The State Government of Uttar Pradesh has submitted a proposal to grant cash food subsidy to the BPL/ AAY families in lieu of distribution of foodgrains in two districts viz. Hardoi and Lakhimpur Kheri on a pilot basis. This issue was also discussed in a meeting of the Union Food Secretary with State/UT Food Secretaries on 8.2.2008 in Hyderabad and three other States viz. Delhi, Haryana and, Punjab have shown interest in the above pilot scheme under consideration. The formal proposals from these State Governments are awaited.

[English]

Action Against Contents of Internet

4811. SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the contents on internet, printed material or pictures which contain vulgar display is causing harm to young minds in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) and (b) The Internet contains large volume of content of diverse categories.

Whenever a complaint is lodged regarding some objectionable material hosted on website, appropriate action is initiated.

(c) Actions taken/being taken by the Government in this regard are as under:-

(i) Licence Agreement for provision of Internet service provides that the Licensee shall take necessary measures to prevent objectionable and obscene content from being carried on his network, consistent with the established laws of the country. Once specific instances of such infringement are reported to the Licensee by the enforcement agencies, the Licensee shall ensure that the carriage of such material on his network is prevented immediately.

(ii) Section 67 of the Information Technology Act. 2000 provides for punishment for publishing and transmitting information in electronic form which is obscene.

(iii) Government has further introduced Information Technology (Amendment) Bill, 2006 on 15.12.2006 in Lok Sabha, which proposes provision of punishment for publishing or transmitting material containing sexually explicit act in electronic form.

Ban on On-line Trading of Gold

4812. SHRI M. APPADURAI: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is contemplating to ban on-line trading of gold to stop speculative trade and check prices; and

(b) 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 THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) No Sir. There is no such proposal.

(b) Does not arise.

National Identity Card Projects Under NEGP

4813. DR. M. JAGANNATH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has proposed to set up a National Identity Card Project under National E-Governance (NEGP) plan in the country; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) and (b) The National Citizen Database is one of the Mission Mode Projects under the National E-Governance Plan (NeGP) in the country, to be implemented by the Ministry of Home Affairs/Registrar General of India (RGI). To test check feasibility of the processes and the methodology for undertaking such a project in the entire country, a Pilot Project was undertaken by the RGI for implementation from November, 2003 in selected areas of 12 states and 1 union territory namely Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Delhi, Goa, Gujarat, Jammu & Kashmir, Rajasthan, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and Puducherry covering a population of nearly thirty one lakh. The implementation of the pilot project has been completed on 31.03.2008 with the issuance of more than 12 lakh identity (smart) cards to the citizens of age 18 years and above in the pilot areas. 20 Multi National Identity Card Centres (MNIC) set up one in each tehsil/block of the pilot areas, will remain functional till 31.03.2009 for maintenance and updating of database. Besides, they will be providing services to the identity card holders as well as those who could not be verified earlier.

The Planning Commission has accorded 'in principle' approval to the scheme for preparation of National Population Register (NPR) during the Eleventh Plan, to be undertaken by the RGI. The scheme envisages collection of information on specified items of each individual at the time of population enumeration during Census 2011.

Vanaspati Factories

4814. SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH:
SHRI K. FRANCIS GEORGE:

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

(a) whether the Government has recently decided to allow import of edible oils in large quantities at reduced import tariff;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor indicating the quantity imported and duty cuts allowed on different categories of Edible Oil;

(c) whether a number of Vanaspati Units have closed down or are on verge of closure due to such imports;

(d) if so, whether some States have represented against such imports;

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

(f) the steps taken by the Government to protect the domestic oil industry and the workers rendered jobless as a results 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) and (b) No, Sir. The import of edible oils except coconut oil is under Open General Licence (OGL). Import of edible oils depends upon commercial judgement of the importers. However, for increased availability and softening of prices of edible oils which have been rising during the last one year, the import duty on crude and refined edible oils has been reduced to zero and 7.5%, respectively.

(c) A number of vanaspati units in the country have been closed down due to various reasons which include creation of production capacity not commensurate with availability of raw materials, obsolete technology, poor economics of scale, shift in consumer preference towards soft oils etc.

(d) and (e) Kerala State has represented that the recent changes made by Government of India in the import-export policy on edible oils has severely affected the coconut farmers and therefore, requested to restore the tariff on import of palm oil to previous levels and permit, export of coconut oil. The prices of edible oils have been rising during the last one year. For increased availability and softening of the prices of edible oils in the domestic market, export of edible oils has been banned w.e.f. 17.3.2008 and w.e.f. 1.4.2008 the import duty on crude and refined oils has been reduced to zero and 7.5%, respectively. However, export restrictions have been lifted in respect of Coconut Oil (through Cochin Port) alongwith certain oils produced from minor forest origin w.e.f. 1.4.2008.

(f) Some of the steps taken to protect the domestic oil industry and hence workers include:-

(i) Import of oilseeds/edible oils except copra/coconut oil has been allowed on Open General Licence (OGL)

(ii) W.e.f. 01.04.2008 import duty on crude vegetable oils of edible grade has been kept at zero as compared to at 7.5% for refined oils to facilitate raw materials availability.

(iii) In order to encourage production of solvent extracted oils in the country and to promote export of extractions, excise duty on food grade hexane has been reduced from 32% to 16%.

(iv) Excise duty on refined edible oils/vanaspati/interesterified fat etc. has been withdrawn.

(v) In order to harmonize the interests of farmers, processors and consumers, the import duty structure on edible oils is reviewed from time to time.

Workers Killed In Building Collapse in Delhi

4815. SHRI JUAL ORAM: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of construction workers and labourers killed in building collapse in Delhi during the last one year and thereafter till date;

(b) the number of families rehabilitated alongwith the amount of compensation paid to the families of deceased during the above said period; and

(c) the effective steps taken by the Government to punish the guilty?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) 16 construction workers and labourers were killed in building collapse in Delhi during the last one year.

(b) A sum of Rs. 14,41,8877- has been paid as compensation under the provisions of the Workmens' Compensation Act, 1923 to the dependents of 4 deceased.

(c) FIR has been filed against the employers under the Indian Penal Code, 1860.

[Translation]

4816. DR. DHIRENDRA AGARWAL:
SHRI HARIKEWAL PRASAD:
Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the steps taken by the Government to increase the production of defence related industries functioning under the private sector and public sectors separately;

(b) the success achieved as a result thereof; and

(c) the total value of defence production during the last three years, year-wise and the value of defence material imported during the said period, year-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) and (b) Government has taken various steps to increase defence production in the country.

In May 2001, the defence sector was opened up to 100% for Indian private sector participation with FDI permissible up to 26%, both subject to licensing. As on date, 80 Letters of Intent/Industrial Licences have been issued to various Indian companies for production of defence items, issues like shared development cost and minimum order quantity have been addressed in the 'Make' procedure notified as part of Defence Procurement Procedure-2006.

Government has taken steps like greater autonomy to profit making Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs) by according Nav-Ratna/Mini-Ratna status, delegation of administrative and financial powers to the DPSUs/Ordnance Factory Board (OFB) and promotion of in-house R&D by DPSUs/OFB.

Government has also included provisions relating to offset; maintenance, through Indian industry, of 'Buy' category of items procured from overseas sources and level playing field to Indian suppliers vis-a-vis foreign vendors to encourage defence production. Indian defence industries also get transfer of technology through the 'Buy & Make' process. All these provisions have been incorporated in Defence Procurement Procedure-2006.

As a result of the various steps taken by the Government, private sector has shown more interest in participation in defence production and the performance of the public sector in defence production has improved.

(c) As per enclosed Statement.

Statement

Value of Defence Production in respect of DPSUs and OFB

(Rs. in Crores)

	Value of Defence Production		
	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007
HAL	4264.00	4648.83	6924.68
BEL	2835.00	2981.00	3034.00
BDL	466.00	534.27	385.83
BEML	597.64	716.05	846.24
MDL	540.63	518.37	1872.24
GRSE	470.28	662.18	641.66
GSL	141.83	249.78	267.07
MIDHANI	54.60	66.66	115.65
Total	9369.98	10377.14	14087.37
OFB	6189.00	6877.00	6197.00

(Rs. in Crores)

	Value of Defence Imports by the Services		
	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007
Army	2393.99	1928.98	1115.64
Navy	5781.58	4446.78	4228.52
Air Force	9995.45	4484.72	2962.11
Total	18171.02	10860.48	8306.27

HAL - Hindustan Aeronautics Limited
BEL - Bharat Electronics Limited
BDL - Bharat Dynamics Limited
BEML - Bharat Earth Movers Limited
MDL - Mazagon Dock Limited
GRSE - Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers Limited
GSL - Goa Shipyards Limited
MIDHANI - Mishra Dhatu Nigam Limited
OFB - Ordnance Factory Board

[English]

Village Labour Banks

4817. DR. K.S. MANOJ: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to establish Village Labour Banks(VLBs) in the country;

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

(c) the time by which such VLBs are likely to be established during the Eleventh Five Year Plan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) There is no proposal under consideration of the Central Government to establish Village Labour Banks (VLBs) in the country.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Check on Import of Chinese Mobile Handsets

4818. SHRI L. RAJAGOPAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Chinese mobile handsets are flooding into the Indian markets;

(b) if so, whether the above handsets do not have Unique Identification Number or IMEI with the result they are not traceable;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether these sets will not become a security threat as these may be used by terrorists or anti-social elements for anti-social activities in the country;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the steps taken /being taken by the Government to prevent import of such mobile sets?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) Sir, there are reports that mobile handsets manufactured in China are available in India.

(b) Sir, some of the low cost Chinese handsets are reported to be without Unique Identification or IMEI.

(c) to (e) Sir, some of the mobile networks are reported to have subscribers using such handsets. However, verification of subscribers done before provision of mobile connections. Generally, a target subscriber is tracked by the mobile number and therefore absence of IMEI does not prevent tracking of anti-social elements.

(f) At present, import of new mobile handsets is freely allowed into the country.

[English]

Soldiers on Siachen Glacier

4819. SHRI UDAY SINGH:
SHRIMATI JAYAPRADA:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the soldiers deputed on the Siachen Glacier are facing extreme hardships because of the army's repeated failure to provide them with special clothing and the equipment required;

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

(c) whether the Government has taken any special steps to provide special benefits and facilities to soldiers posted at the Siachen Glacier; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) and (b) The soldiers posted at Siachen are being provided special clothing and equipment as per authorization. A total of 55 items of Special Clothing, Ski and Mountaineering Equipment are authorized to the troops posted at locations characterized by extreme cold climate conditions, including the Siachen Glacier. The quantities authorized in respect of these items have been increased by the Ministry of Defence in April 2005. After the increase, 27351 sets of equipment, and an equal quantity as reserve for contingencies, are authorized.

(c) and (d) Improvements in special benefits and facilities to soldiers posted at Siachen Glacier is an ongoing process. Armed Forces personnel posted in delineated areas of Siachen as on date receive 'Siachen Allowance' at the rate of Rs.7000 per month for officers and Rs.4667 per month for Personnel Below Officers Rank. The allowance is concurrently available with 'Highly Active Field Area Allowance', the rates of which vary from Rs.1620 per month (For Naik/Sepoy & equivalent) to Rs.4200 per month (For Lt. Col. and above). The personnel posted in Siachen Glacier are also authorized special ration, which meets the higher calorie requirements and facilitates rehydration.

Contribution of Women in Dairy Sector

4820. SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO:
SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL:
SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a vast scope for women in dairy sector;

(b) if so, whether there is a need to associate more women with self help groups, especially in the dairy sector to ensure their contribution to the country's economy;

(c) whether there is any proposal to provide central assistance to women associated with diary sector for use of modern technology in agriculture and animal husbandry sectors;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the details of the assistance provided by the Central Government to each State for the development of dairy sector during the last three 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 TASLIMUDDIN): (a) to (d) Yes Sir, Government of India is implementing two Centrally Sponsored dairy development schemes i.e 'Intensive Dairy Development Programme (IDDP)' & 'Strengthening Infrastructure for Quality and Clean Milk Production (CMP)' and two Central Sector Schemes viz 'Assistant to Cooperatives' (A to C) and 'Dairy/Poultry Venture Capital fund (DPV)'. Women are also benefiting under the schemes.

National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) is implementing a programme namely 'Enhancing Women involvement in Dairy Co-operatives' to support Milk Unions to enhance & sustain participation of women in management & governance of dairy co-operatives. Women Self Help Groups (SHGs) are an important component of the programme.

Ministry of Women & Child Development is also implementing a scheme i.e. Support to Training and Employment Programme (STEP) for Women which aims at overall development of women in deferent sectors including dairy.

(e) The State-wise assistance provided by the Central Government for development of, dairy, sector during the last three years under the schemes IDDP,CMP, A to C & DPV is given in the Statement-I to III.

Statement-I

State-wise assistance provided by the Central Government for dairy development under different schemes in 2005-06

(Rs. in lacs)

Sl.No.	States	IDDP	CMP	A to C	DPV*	Total
1	Andaman and Nicobar	0.00				0.00
2	Andhra Pradesh	135.00	65.50		25.96	226.46
3	Arunachal Pradesh	0.00				0.00
4	Assam	0.00	8.52		137.16	145.68
5	Bihar	100.00	0.00		0.00	100.00
6	Jharkhand	146.89	0.00		6.57	153.46
7	Goa	0.00	91.48			91.48
8	Gujarat	0.00	251.25		6.50	257.75
9	Haryana	153.83	238.53	100.00		492.36
10	Himachal Pradesh	0.00	0.00		3.00	3.00
11	Jammu and Kashmir	0.00	0.00		5.30	5.30
12	Kerala	329.44	368.04		69.47	766.95
13	Karnataka	0.00	53.85		202.56	256.41
14	Madhya Pradesh	369.21	193.98	250.00	28.06	841.25
15	Chhattisgarh	0.00	0.00		3.00	3.00
16	Maharashtra	500.10	494.50	38.00	116.86	1149.46
17	Manipur	0.00	0.00		6.55	6.55
18	Meghalaya	65.00	0.00		0.00	65.00
19	Mizoram	74.29	22.47		103.00	199.76
20	Nagaland	256.21	13.97		0.00	270.18
21	Orissa	817.68	271.12		42.04	1130.84
22	Pondicherry	0.00	19.30		0.00	19.30
23	Punjab	0.00	87.11		12.96	100.07
24	Rajasthan	322.55	197.12		49.11	568.78
25	Sikkim	350.61	47.28		13.47	411.36
26	Tamil Nadu	0.00	111.50	175.00	2.47	288.97
27	Tripura	0.00	0.00		31.92	31.92
28	Uttar Pradesh	166.32	341.49	165.00	26.88	699.68
29	Uttaranchal	201.12	0.00		82.41	283.53
30	West Bengal	0.00	162.76		0.00	162.76
	Total	3988.25	3039.76	728.00	975.24	8731.25

* Interest Free Loan @ 50% of the project cost provided by GOI

Statement-II

State-wise assistance provided by the Central Government for dairy development under different schemes in 2006-07

(Rs. in Lacs)

Sl. No.	States	IDDP	CMP	A to C	DPV*	Total
1	Andaman and Nicobar	0.00				0.00
2	Andhra Pradesh	288.45	83.75		0.00	372.20
3	Arunachal Pradesh	0.00			3.00	3.00
4	Assam	0.00	20.00		209.34	229.34
5	Bihar	237.55	0.00		0.00	237.55
6	Jharkhand	20.00			3.93	23.93
7	Goa	0.00				0.00
8	Gujarat	0.00	113.28		1.59	114.87
9	Haryana	657.35	234.77	145.00		1037.12
10	Himachal Pradesh	39.00	38.78		13.92	91.69
11	Jammu and Kashmir	0.00			8.14	8.14
12	Kerala	240.00	460.43		109.91	810.34
13	Karnataka	72.00	196.13		62.37	330.50
14	Madhya Pradesh	100.59	177.15	285.00	167.55	730.29
15	Chhattisgarh	50.00				50.00
16	Maharashtra	72.00	442.58		320.09	834.67
17	Manipur	160.00	5.00		4.50	169.50
18	Meghalaya	30.00			1.20	31.20
19	Mizoram	90.00	0.00		136.50	226.50
20	Nagaland	162.70	9.44			172.14
21	Orissa	104.61	114.01		48.49	267.11
22	Pondicherry		0.00		281.71	281.71
23	Punjab		50.00	20.00		70.00
24	Rajasthan	0.00	70.40			70.40
25	Sikkim	140.21	20.00		24.99	185.20
26	Tamil Nadu	356.47	106.18			462.65
27	Tripura	40.00			87.36	127.36
28	Uttar Pradesh	19.00	322.69			341.69
29	Uttaranchal	467.98			98.26	566.24
30	West Bengal	0.00			11.00	11.00
	Total	3347.91	2464.59	450.00	1593.84	7856.33

* Interest Free Loan @ 50% of the project cost provided by GOI

Statement-III

State-wise assistance provided by the Central Government for dairy development under different schemes in 2007-08

(Rs. in Lacs)

Sl.No.	States	IDDP	CMP	A to C	DPV*	Total
1	Andaman and Nicobar	11.34				11.34
2	Andhra Pradesh	298.33	99.63		22.50	420.46
3	Arunachal Pradesh	0.00			0.00	0.00
4	Assam	0.00			415.80	415.80
5	Bihar	0.00			5.97	5.97
6	Jharkhand	107.64			23.60	131.24
7	Goa		40.00		15.95	55.95
8	Gujarat		342.42		0.00	342.42
9	Haryana	200.00	125.33	94.51	5.00	424.84
10	Himachal Pradesh	340.05	2.40		31.35	373.80
11	Jammu and Kashmir				65.74	65.74
12	Kerala	465.25			106.29	571.54
13	Karnataka		69.89		209.00	278.89
14	Madhya Pradesh	285.00	309.44		118.00	712.44
15	Chhattisgarh	100.00	161.77		5.00	266.77
16	Maharashtra	200.00	200.60		1259.08	1659.68
17	Manipur	200.00			96.27	296.27
18	Meghalaya				2.42	2.42
19	Mizoram	139.70	22.47		110.50	272.67
20	Nagaland	35.00	0.00		0.00	35.00
21	Orissa	302.56	0.00		89.98	392.54
22	Pondicherry	50.00			0.00	50.00
23	Punjab		81.25		20.91	102.16
24	Rajasthan	310.00	286.97		160.59	757.55
25	Sikkim	75.30	17.28			92.58
26	Tamil Nadu	125.00		175.00	133.05	433.05
27	Tripura	90.00			233.39	323.39
28	Uttar Pradesh	100.00	203.82	188.57	41.49	533.88
29	Uttaranchal				155.33	155.33
30	West Bengal	70.83	75.20	46.92	108.69	301.64
	Total	3456.00	2088.47	505.00	3435.89	9485.35

* Interest Free Loan (@) 50% of the project cost provided by GOI

[Translation]

Promotion of IT Sector

4821. SHRI TEK LAL MAHTO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is making efforts to promote information technology in the country specially in Jharkhand;

(b) if so, the initiatives taken for promoting the information technology in the State during the last two year;

(c) the number of institutes established and upgraded for the expansion of information technology in the country specially in Jharkhand; and

(d) the details of funds allocated and spent under the said head in the country especially in Jharkhand during the last three years, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Some of the major e-Governance projects undertaken in Jharkhand are as follows: The Government has approved a Project for establishing 4562 Common Service Centres (CSCs) in Jharkhand. The Government has also approved a project for establishing a State Data Centre in the State. A Scheme for creation of Capacity to better develop, implement and monitor e governance Schemes in Jharkhand has also been sanctioned for the State. In addition, the DIT has initiated an Information Security Education and Awareness Project (ISE&AP) in which Indian School of Mines (ISM) Dhanbad is a participating institute.

(c) STPI has created 51 Software Technology Parks for promoting IT across the country. One STPI Centre has also been established in Ranchi.

(d) Details of Projects approved and funds released to Jharkhand under e-Governance head are at Statement-I. Details of funds received and released under e-Governance budget head of DIT is at Statement-II. The Department of Information Technology (DIT) has also released Rs 3.22 lakhs as grant in aid to ISM Dhanbad and also supplied equipment worth Rs 15 lakhs (approx) under ISE&AP.

Statement-I

Allocations/Releases made during the last three years 2005-06, 2006-07 and 2007-08 to Jharkhand State for e-Governance activities

Jharkhand

S. No.	Project	Total Outlay & AA dt. (Rs.)	Amount Sanctioned & date (Rs.)
1	2	3	4
2005-06			
1.	State Wide Area Network (SWAN) for the State of Jharkhand	Rs. 77.91 Crores AAdt. 31.03.05	Rs. 4 Crores
2.	The Project "e-Kalyan e-Gov. initiative for welfare Department in the Jharkhand State	Rs. 132.60 Lakhs AA dt. 29.03.2006	Rs. 50.00 Lakhs
3.	The Project "eGWARAJ an e-Gov. initiative for Natural Resource Management for Sindega District of Jharkhand	Rs. 158.86 Lakhs AA dt. 29.03.2006	Rs. 80.00 Lakhs
2006-07			
1.	File Tracker - A Pilot Project to Monitor the Movement of Files/Papers in Govt. Offices in the State of Jharkhand	Rs. 125.00 lakhs AA dt. 19.06.2006	Rs. 65,00,000/
2.	Project Common Services Centre in the State of Jharkhand.	Rs. 86,21,06,112/- AA dt. 09.11.06	Rs. 10,77,63,264/-

1	2	3	4
2007-08			
1.	Project File Tracker to Monitor Movement of Files ex in the State of Jharkhand	Rs. 125.00 Lakhs AA dt. 19.06.2006	Rs. 60,00,000/-
2.	National workshop on "e-Governance Awareness".	Rs. 1.00 Lakhs AA dt. 15.06.2007	Rs. 1,00,000/-
3.	Organizing 5 Divisional workshops in the State of Jharkhand	Rs. 5.00 Lakhs AA dt. 12.08.2006	Rs. 5,00,000/-
4.	Organizing Seminar/ Workshop on NeGP Awareness - 8 States	Rs. 15.00 Crores AA dt. 09.03.2007	Rs. 2,00,000/-
5.	Project e-Kalyan in the State of Jharkhand	Rs. 132.60 Lakhs AA dt. 29.03.2006	Rs. 70,00,000/-
6.	Capacity Building in the State of Jharkhand	Rs. 1070.60 Lakhs AA dt. 26.02.2008	Rs. 2,18,00,000/-
7.	Land Record in the State of Jharkhand	Rs. 140.00 Lakhs AAdt. 09.10.2003	Rs. 70,00,000/-
8.	State Data Centre in the State of Jharkhand	Rs. 46.92 Crores AA. dt. 28.02.2008	Rs. 4,16,00,000/-
9.	e-GSWA RAJ on e-Gov Initiative for Natural Resource Management for Sindega Dist. of Jharkhand State	Rs. 1,58,86,000/- AA dt. 29.03.2008	Rs. 50,00,000/-
10.	e-District in the State of Jharkhand	Rs. 319.69 Lakhs AA dt. 28.03.2008	Rs. 1,59,84,000/-

Statement-II

Allocation and Expenditure during the last three years

(Rs. In Crore)

Year	Allocation	Expenditure
2005-06	300.00	299.87
2006-07	452.45	433.84
2007-08	552.40	547.82

Investment in Telecom Sector

4822. SHRI AJIT JOGI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state the total amount invested in Telecommunication Sector in the country during the last three years, as on date?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): The capital investment in Telecommunication Sector is the country during the last three years are approximately as under:-

Years	Amount invested (Rs. in Crore)
2005-06	21835
2006-07	34021
2007-08	39897 (Provisional)

[English]

Social Security Number of EPF Subscribers

4823. SHRI SUBRATA BOSE: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the total expenditure incurred on Business Processing and Re-engineering project by Employees Provident Fund (EPF) Organisation;

(b) the reasons for failure to issue Social Security Number (SSN) to all EPF subscribers; and

(c) the time by which the SSN likely to be issued to all EPF subscribers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) The total expenditure incurred on the

'Re-inventing EPF India' Project upto 31-03-2008 was about Rs. 51 crore.

(b) and (c) So far, Social Security Number (SSN) in respect of 33,48,391 members have been allotted. The process of allotment of SSN is continuously going on. No time-frame can be fixed at this stage. However, Government is making efforts to expedite the process.

Spectrum Controversy

4824. SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether a consultation has been held among National Security Adviser, Department of Telecommunications (DoT) and Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) to resolve spectrum controversy;

(b) if so, the outcome thereof;

(c) whether all the hurdles that were preventing clearance of spectrum has been finalised;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the time by which a final decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) to (e) A Group of Ministers (GoM) has been constituted for vacation of spectrum and raising resources for the purpose. In its first meeting (September 2007), among other, a committee was setup under the National Security Adviser (NSA), with Secretary (Telecom), Defence Secretary, Wireless Advisor to the Govt. of India, Signal Officer-in-Charge, Army Headquarters, and a representative from Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO), for speedy release/vacation of spectrum. The meeting of this committee scheduled during February 2008 has been deferred. Meanwhile, the scheme for providing alternate network for release of spectrum has commenced.

Kisan Vikas Parishad

4825. SHRI G. KARUNAKARA REDDY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposes to set up Kisan Vikas Parishad so as to resolve the problems of farmers;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which the final decision in this regard is likely to be taken?

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) Presently, there is no proposal to set up Kisan Vikas Parishad under consideration of the Ministry of Agriculture. However, in Centrally Sponsored Scheme "Support to State Extension programmes for Extension Reforms", Commodity oriented Farmer Interest Groups (FIGs) are promoted at block/village level to make the technology generation/dissemination farmer driven. These village level FIGs may be federated at block/district level. In order to address the extension needs of these groups, the Scheme envisages ATMA's close linkages with various players operating at cutting edge level viz. public, private, NGOs, para extension workers, input dealers,etc.

Redressal of Consumer Grievances

4826. SHRI RUPCHAND MURMU: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is planning to provide a more friendly and hassle-free legal system where consumers could get their grievances addressed without delays; and

(b) if so, the details of the mechanisms are likely to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

Smart Cards to ESI Beneficiaries

4827. SHRI PRABODH PANDA: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Employees State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) proposes to provide/issue Smart Cards to ESI beneficiaries for their medical treatment;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which said cards are likely to be provided/issued to all ESI beneficiaries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR

FERNANDES): (a) to (c) A study is being undertaken by the Employees' State Insurance Corporation on providing Smart Cards to ESI Beneficiaries for their medical treatment. Based on the outcome of the study, a final decision in the matter will be taken.

Unauthorised PCOs

4828. SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the STD-PCOs allocated to the handicapped and the unemployed persons are being run by other unauthorisedly;

(b) if so, the number of such cases that have come to the notice of the Government during the last three years, as on date;

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

(d) if so, the details of the findings of such an enquiry; and

(e) the action taken or proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) No, Sir. No such case has come to notice in BSNL/MTNL.

(b) to (e) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

[Translation]

Procurement of Wheat

4829. SHRIMATI KALPNA RAMESH NARHIRE:
SHRI SRICHAND KRIPLANI:

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

(a) the details of rice, wheat and other crops procured during the last three years, State-wise and year-wise;

(b) the number of farmers benefited from the said procurement State-wise and year-wise;

(c) whether the payments due to farmers for procurement of their crops has since been cleared; and

(d) if so, the details thereof, State-wise and year-wise?

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 state-wise and year-wise details of rice, wheat and coarse grains procured during the last three years are at Statement enclosed.

(b) The State-wise and year-wise data regarding number of farmers benefited under the procurement operation is not maintained by the Government.

(c) and (d) FCI has informed that it is their endeavour to release the payment to farmers within 48 hours of the purchase of the stocks, at centers of FCI.

Statement

State-wise and year-wise procurement of wheat in last three marketing years.

(in lakh tonnes)

S.No.	Name of State	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
1.	Punjab	90.10	69.46	67.81
2.	Haryana	45.29	22.29	33.50
3.	Uttar Pradesh	5.60	0.49	5.46
4.	Rajasthan	1.59	0.02	3.83
5.	Chandigarh	-	-	-
6.	Delhi	0.02	-	Neg.
7.	Himachal Pradesh	-	Neg.	-
8.	Madhya Pradesh	4.84	-	0.57
9.	Gujarat	-	-	-
10.	Bihar	-	Neg.	0.08
11.	Uttarakhand	0.40	-	0.02
12.	Chhattisgarh	-	Neg.	-
	Total	147.85	92.25	111.27

Neg.: below 500 MTs

State-wise and year-wise procurement of rice in last three marketing years

(In '000 tonnes)

States/U.T.	2004-2005	2005-06	2006-07
1	2	3	4
A&N Islands	1	-	-
Andhra Pradesh	3906	4971	5327
Arunachal Pradesh	-	-	-
Assam	Neg.	1	
Bihar	343	524	476
Chandigarh	19	13	10

1	2	3	4
Chhattisgarh	2837	3265	2858
Delhi	-	-	-
Gujarat	-	-	-
Haryana	1662	2054	1773
Himachal Pradesh	2		
Jammu and Kashmir	1	3	
Jharkhand	1	2	5
Karnataka	21	48	22
Kerala	33	94	151
Madhya Pradesh	42	136	74
Maharashtra	205	194	96
Nagaland	11		
Orissa	1590	1785	1993
Pondicherry	-		6
Punjab	9106	8855	7828
Rajasthan	22	23	10
Tamil Nadu	652	926	1078
Uttar Pradesh	2971	3151	2549
Uttaranchal	316	336	176
West Bengal	944	1275	644
All India Total	24685	27656	25075

State-wise and year-wise procurement of coarsegrains in last three marketing years

(In '000 tonnes)

States/U.T.	2004-2005	2005-06	2006-07
Andhra Pradesh	223.22	593.90	
Chhattisgarh	10.	9.22	
Gujarat			
Haryana	130.12	4.90	
Karnataka	429.07	446.04	
Madhya Pradesh	2.04	3.00	
Maharashtra	31.50	96.97	Neg.
Pondicherry			
Punjab	0.2		
Rajasthan			
All India Total	827.07	1154.01	Neg.

Outstanding dues for use of Defence Aircrafts

4830. YOGI ADITYA NATH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether huge amounts are outstanding against the former Cabinet Ministers including former Prime Ministers for use of defence aircrafts for unofficial journeys;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government for recovery of outstanding dues from them?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) and (b) The outstanding amount due against the former Cabinet Minister including former Prime Ministers for use of defence aircraft for unofficial journeys are as follows:-

(i) Rs.4,60,336/- from Shri V.C. Shukla for the journey on 15.4.1994.

(ii) Rs.5,91,31,476/- from Late Shri Chandrashekhar for the journeys during the period January 1991 to June 1991.

(iii) Rs.54,61,497/- from Shri H.D. Deve Gowda for the journeys during the period September 1996 to March 1997.

(c) Necessary steps have been undertaken by the Government to recover the dues by way of sending notices or initiating appropriate recovery process.

[English]

Closure of Sugar Mills

4831. SHRI RANEN BARMAN: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of sugar mills lying closed in the country during the last three years and the current year, State-wise;

(b) the number of employees rendered un-employed due to closure of the said sugar mills, State-wise;

(c) whether the Government has formulated any scheme to revive these closed sugar mills;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the steps taken to provide alternative employment or financial support to workers rendered jobless due to closure of 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) The number of sugar mills in the country which did not work during the last three sugar seasons and current sugar season, State-wise, is given below:

List of Non-Working Sugar Mills during 2004-05, 2005-06, 2006-07 and 2007-08 Sugar Seasons

State	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Andhra Pradesh	8	5	5	5
Assam	3	3	3	3
Bihar	18	19	19	19
Gujarat	5	6	5	5
Haryana	0	1	1	1
Karnataka	14	12	9	10
Kerala	2	2	2	2
Madhya Pradesh	5	5	5	5
Maharashtra	90	47	25	24
Nagaland	1	1	1	1
Orissa	2	3	3	2
Puducherry	1	1	0	0
Punjab	3	4	7	7
Rajasthan	2	2	2	2
Tamil Nadu	4	3	3	3
Uttar Pradesh	17	16	14	23
West Bengal	1	1	1	1
Total	176	131	105	113

(b) The data on the number of employees becoming unemployed due to closure of these sugar mills is not maintained by this Department.

(c) and (d) It is the responsibility of the entrepreneur concerned to take steps to restart the closed sugar mills. However, Sugar Development Fund Rules, 1983, provides that a potentially viable sick sugar undertaking can take Sugar Development Fund (SDF) loan for (i) modernization or rehabilitation of plant and machinery and (ii) sugarcane development. The loan from the Fund should be recommended by the Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR) for sugar mills in private and public sector or the Committee of Rehabilitation (CoR) which has been set up in the Department of Food and Public Distribution to consider cases of sugar mills in co-operative sector.

(e) The Government is not required to provide alternative employment or financial support to workers rendered jobless due to closure of sugar mills as the interest of workers employed in closed mills in the country including closed sugar mills is protected under the relevant laws.

Development of Floriculture

4832. SHRI VIJOY KRISHNA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is huge potential for growth of floriculture industry in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise alongwith the quantum of financial assistance provided to various States, particularly Bihar to bring more area under flower cultivation;

(c) whether the Government proposes to set up Agri Export Zones for floriculture besides a large number of clusters under National Horticulture Mission; and

(d) if so, the details thereof indicating the number of zones proposed to be set up in various States, particularly in Bihar?

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 Statewise details of area under floriculture in the country and the quantum of funds provided for the development of floriculture during 2007-08 through various schemes of Government is given in the enclosed Statement. No funds have been released to Bihar during 2007-08. However, an amount of Rs. 460.11 lakh was released to Bihar during 2006-07 for covering 2321 hectares under floriculture.

(c) and (d) Government has set up six Agri Export Zones (AEZ) for floriculture in the States of Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Sikkim, and Uttarakhand. Presently there is no new proposal for setting up of AEZ for floriculture in any part of the country including Bihar. Under National Horticulture Mission floriculture is being promoted in various clusters of the country including 23 Districts of Bihar.

Statement

Area under Floriculture and Funds released under various schemes during 2007-08

S.No.	State	Area under floriculture* (000 ha)	Funds released under National Horticulture Mission	Funds released under National Horticulture Board	Funds released under Technology Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture in Northen Eastern States	Total
1	Andhra Pradesh	23.500	146.500	1.520	0.000	148.020
2	Arunachal Pradesh	0.000	0.000	0.000	91.000	91.000
3	Assam	1.000	0.000	0.000	325.000	325.000
4	Bihar	0.200	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
5	Chhattisgarh	2.200	149.180	0.000	0.000	149.180
6	Delhi	5.500	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
7	Gujarat	8.400	99.910	178.930	0.000	278.840
8	Haryana	5.700	218.630	0.000	0.000	218.630
9	Himachal Pradesh	0.500	0.000	48.870	22.110	70.980
10	Jammu and Kashmir	0.300	0.000	10.640	70.000	80.640
11	Jharkhand	0.000	34.130	2.810	0.000	36.940
12	Karnataka	22.300	683.145	469.650	0.000	1152.795
13	Kerala	0.000	34.986	5.300	0.000	40.286
14	Madya Pradesh	3.800	240.635	28.710	0.000	269.345
15	Maharasthra	14.500	490.005	762.270	0.000	1252.275
16	Manipur	0.500	0.000	0.000	41.600	41.600
17	Meghalaya	0.100	0.000	0.000	197.000	197.000
18	Mizoram	0.100	0.000	0.000	377.000	377.000
19	Nagaland	0.100	0.000	0.000	586.000	586.000
20	Orissa	1.900	327.160	1.630	0.000	328.790
21	Punjab	1.000	45.510	25.730	0.000	71.240
22	Rajasthan	4.300	70.955	0.000	0.000	70.955
23	Sikkim	0.100	0.000	32.660	195.130	227.790
24	Tamil Nadu	27.800	307.731	390.450	0.000	698.181
25	Uttar Pradesh	8.400	810.960	204.500	0.000	1015.460
26	Uttarakhand	0.800	0.000	288.310	120.250	408.560
27	West Bengal	18.700	104.550	5.940	0.000	110.490
28	NE Region	0.000	0.000	23.380	0.000	23.380
	Total	151.700	3763.987	2481.300	2025.090	8270.377

* Figures are provisional

[Translation]

Small and Medium Irrigation Projects in Madhya Pradesh

4833. SHRIMATI YASHODHARA RAJE SCINDIA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Madhya Pradesh had sent the proposals of 27 small and one medium size pench irrigation projects to get economic assistance from Indo-German Bilateral Development Corporation?

(b) if so, the decision taken by the Government thereon; and

(c) the details of the progress made so far in respect of the said proposals?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) to (c) Proposal in respect of 32 irrigation projects including one major i.e. the Pench Diversion Project, 3 medium irrigation projects and 28 minor irrigation Schemes for funding under Indo-German Bilateral Cooperation was received from the Government of Madhya Pradesh in the year 2004. After preliminary examination of the proposal in respect of the minor and medium irrigation projects, the observation/comments were sent to the Government of Madhya Pradesh. The compliance of the observations in respect of the projects have not been received from Government of Madhya Pradesh.

Subsequently, on the request of the State Government, the proposal relating to the Pench Diversion Project was recommended to the Department of Economic Affairs for inclusion in the Rolling Plan 2007-09 of JBIC.

Supply of Various Items

4834. SHRI BAPU HARI CHAURE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has received any request for supply of groundnut, sesame and soyabean seeds from the Maharashtra Government;

(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 (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) to (c) The Government of India has not received any specific request for supply of groundnut, sesame and soyabean seeds from the Maharashtra Government. However in the Zonal Input Conference for Kharif held in February 2008, the Government of Maharashtra indicated the demand and the availability of certified/quality seeds including that of groundnut, sesame and soyabean which is considered to be adequate. The details are furnished in the enclosed Statement.

Statement

The details of Demand and Availability of Certified/Quality Seeds in Maharashtra for Kharif 2008

(Quantity in Quintals)

Crop	Demand	Availability			Total availability
		Maharashtra State Seed Corporation	National Seed Corporation	Private Sources	
Groundnut	19620	9000	175	11425	20600
Sesame	1071	410	5	910	1325
Soybean	843075	425480	20400	421300	867180

[English]

Salinity of Land

4835. SHRI PRATIK P. PATIL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been large scale salination of land in sugar producing States such as Maharashtra;

(b) if so, the extent and details of land cultivating sugarcane which has been affected due to salination, particularly in Maharashtra; and

(c) the steps taken or proposed 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) to (c) As per Central Soil Salinity Research Institute, Karnal - Indian Council of Agricultural Research (2005), about 8.60 million ha. area is suffering from the problem of salinity/alkalinity in the country, which includes 0.53 million ha. of Maharashtra State The total area under sugarcane cultivation is 5.15 million ha. in the country, including 1.05 million ha. of Maharashtra State and no separate data about salinization due to sugarcane cultivation is available.

Both salinity and alkalinity are due to accumulation of salts at the root zone of crops and no separate estimates on extent of salinity and alkalinity area are available. In the areas where drainage is not adequate, ground water table is raised mainly due to seepage from unlined canals and excess application of irrigation water. The rise in ground water table brings the excessive harmful salts on the soil surface causing salinity. The accumulation of excess salt in the root zone, results in a partial or complete loss of soil productivity and the presence of such salt adversely effects the growth of most of crop plants.

Government of India, Ministry of Water Resources is implementing a Centrally Sponsored Scheme on Reclamation and Development of Waterlogged and Salinity Area in Irrigated Command. Under this programme, both preventive as well as ameliorative measures are being taken to check salinity. The preventive measures include lining of canal in vulnerable reaches, On farm development works such as construction of lined field channels and field drains, rotational supply (warabandi) of irrigation water to farmers, conjunction use of surface and ground water, propagation of improved methods of irrigation among farmers through training, adaptive trials and demonstrations. Ameliorative measures include construction of surface and sub-surface drains, vertical drainage and bio-drainage for disposal of excess water and leaching of soils to flush out excess salts from root zone of crops.

Unclaimed Money with EPF Account

4836. SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the amount of unclaimed money with Employees Provident Fund (EPF) account as on date, State-wise;

(b) whether the Government has drawn up any scheme for the utilization of this unclaimed/dead money;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the other steps taken by the Government to ensure that unclaimed money is neither misused nor disbursed to wrongful claimants?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) The amount lying in the Inoperative Account (earlier known as Unclaimed Deposit Account) as on 31-03-2007 was Rs. 1,624.69 crore. The region-wise details are given in the enclosed Statement.

(b) and (c) As per existing provisions of Employees' Provident Funds Scheme 1952, the amount lying under 'Inoperative Account' can not be utilised for any other purpose except for refunding/paying back the same to the rightful claimants.

(d) Instructions have been issued to all the field offices of Employees' Provident Fund Organisation to scrutinise the claims of Inoperative Account carefully and release the amount to the rightful claimants in accordance with the prescribed procedure.

Statement

Region-wise details of amounts lying in the Inoperative Account

Sl.No.	Region	Amount lying in Inoperative Account (as on 31.03.2007)
1	2	3
1	Andhra Pradesh	2719882598.84
2.	Bihar	640455.03
3.	Chhattisgarh	0.00
4.	Delhi	66589337.59
5.	Goa	43749950.85
6.	Gujarat	23487620.00
7.	Haryana	31945484.60
8.	Himachal Pradesh	136194000.00
9.	Jharkhand	503214.65
10.	Karnataka	32225486.00
11.	Kerala	1761187.00
12.	Madhya Pradesh	1906442186.00
13.	Maharashtra	5616505176.91
14.	North Eastern Region	4241478.53

1	2	3
15.	Orissa	1142242.08
16.	Punjab	126239635.37
17	Rajasthan	11566301.14
18.	Tamil Nadu	753176829.12
19.	Uttar Pradesh	126619132.73
20.	Uttaranchal	26790140.43
21.	West Bengal	4617192299.32
	Total	16246894756.19

[Translation]

Provision of Mobile Tower and Infrastructure

4837. SHRI MITRASEN YADAV: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to erect tower and to develop other infrastructure required for the expansion of the mobile telephone in the country on the private-public partnership and mutual cooperation;

(b) if so, the total number of towers to be erected on such partnership and mutual cooperation;

(c) the total number of districts to be covered under the scheme; and

(d) the total estimated cost likely to be incurred thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) A scheme has recently been launched by Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) to provide subsidy support for setting up and managing 7871 number of infrastructure sites (towers) in 500 districts spread over 27 States for provision of mobile services in the specified rural and remote areas, where there is no existing fixed wireless or mobile coverage. The infrastructure so created shall be shared by three Service Providers for provision of mobile services including other Wireless Access Services like Wireless on Local Loop (WLL). The infrastructure in form of towers and provision of mobile services shall be created by both Private and Public Sector Companies. The agreements effective from 01.06.2007 have been signed by USOF with the successful Infrastructure Providers and Service Providers in May 2007.

(d) As per the representative rates arrived as an outcome of the bidding process, total subsidy outgo from USO Fund under this scheme would be about Rs. 587.88 Crore over a period of 5 years.

[English]

Broadband Internet Facility

4838. DR. K. DHANARAJU: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Broadband internet facility has penetrated the rural areas in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the speed of Broadband is 2 MB or less than that;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the Government has any proposal to reduce the tariff for the unlimited use of 2MB Broadband facility; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) About 2350 Blocks covering more than 20,000 villages have been covered with Broadband connectivity.

(c) and (d) The minimum speed of Broadband is 256 Kbps which can be increased upto 8 Mbps depending upon the distance of the customer from the serving exchange and the condition of cable pair available.

(e) No, Sir.

(f) Does not arise in view of (e) above.

Fertility of Agricultural Land

4839. SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the fertility of all kinds of agricultural land in the Union Territory of Andaman and Nicobar Islands is decreasing continuously; 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) There is no evidence that the fertility of Agricultural lands of Union Territory of Andaman and Nicobar Islands is deteriorating continuously. However, the land adjacent to denuded Forest and Tsunami affected agriculture land have deteriorated in its fertility. To restore soil fertility of these land, the following measures are being taken:

(i) Soil Conservation Measures on Watershed Basis in Hilly areas.

(ii) The Tsunami affected agriculture lands are reclaimed by improving drainage, addition of organic matter and leaching of salt by flooding through rain water.

(iii) Integrated Nutrient Management through training and demonstration.

Reduction in Ragi and Jowar

4840. SHRI C.H. VIJAYASHANKAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a drastic reduction in the production of essential cereals Ragi and Jowar in the country particularly in Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Orissa and Maharashtra;

(b) if so, the details regarding production of these cereals in the above mentioned States during the last three years;

(c) the reasons for the decrease in the production of Ragi and Jowar;

(d) whether the Government proposes to increase the production of Ragi and Jowar particularly in Karnataka; 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) to (c) Production of Ragi in the country was 1.44 million tonnes during 2006-07 which increased to 2.07 million tonnes during 2007-08 (3rd Advance Estimates released on 22.04.2008). Production of Jowar in the country was 7.15 million tonnes during 2006-07 which increased to 7.73 million tonnes during 2007-08 . The details of production of Ragi and Jowar in the States of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Orissa and Maharashtra during 2005-06 to 2007-08 are given in the table below:

Ragi

('000 Tonnes)

States	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08*
Karnataka	1724.0	816.0	1401.0
Andhra Pradesh	79.0	64.0	62.0
Tamil Nadu	132.7	148.2	185.0
Orissa	40.3	43.1	45.0
Maharashtra	132.0	123.0	120.0

* 3rd Advance Estimates released on 22.04.2008.

Jowar

('000 Tonnes)

States	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08*
Karnataka	1665.0	1312.0	1544.0
Andhra Pradesh	588.0	411.0	473.0
Tamil Nadu	231.4	294.0	349.0
Orissa	5.7	5.8	6.0
Maharashtra	3904.0	3772.0	4200.0

* 3rd Advance Estimates released on 22.04.2008.

Production of Ragi and Jowar decreased in Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra because of less area coverage under the crop during 2006-07 as compared to 2005-06.

(d) and (e) To increase the production of Ragi and Jowar in the country, including Karnataka, Government is implementing a Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Integrated Cereals Development Programme in Coarse Cereals Based Cropping System Area (ICDP-Coarse Cereals) since October 2000 under Macro Management Mode of Agriculture. This scheme is implemented on 90:10 sharing basis between Government of India and the States. Under this scheme, assistance is provided to the farmers for distribution of seeds, propagation of improved production technology, Integrated Pest Management (IPM), training of farmers including women, farm implements and installation of sprinkler irrigation system. Besides, Frontline Demonstrations are also organized by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research/State Agriculture Universities on the farmers' fields to popularize the frontier technologies among farmers.

Indo-US logistic Sharing Agreement

4841. SHRI S. AJAYA KUMAR: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is considering to sign a military to military logistic sharing agreement with the United States of America; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) and (b) India has defence cooperation with many friendly foreign countries including USA. Defence Cooperation with USA commenced in the early 1990s and has been smoothly and steadily progressing since then. As part of the India - US Defence Cooperation, various Agreements / MOUs have been signed on need basis and on mutually agreed terms and conditions. There is no agreement by the specific name of "military to military logistic sharing agreement" with the United States of America. However, consideration and signing of Defence Cooperation related Agreements/MOUs is an ongoing and continuing process.

[Translation]

Provision of Loans

4842. SHRI NIHAL CHAND:
SHRI SUBHASH MAHARIA:
Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is formulating a special scheme for providing loans to landless and marginal farmers belonging to Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes; and

(b) 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) There is no proposal under consideration of the Government for formulating a special scheme for providing loans to landless and marginal farmers belonging to Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes. Several measures have already been initiated by the Government for improving institutional credit flow to the farmers including the landless and marginal farmers belonging to Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes.

Research Work in Defence Sector

4843. SHRIMATI KIRAN MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the amount spent by the Government on research work in defence sector during the last three years;

(b) the details of the research work undertaken during the last three years and the success achieved in this regard; and

(c) the steps being taken by the Government for more improvement in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) The Department of Defence Research and Development has spent Rs. 10321.84 Cr during the last three years on research and development work in defence sector.

(b) Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has developed a number of products and technologies during the last three years. These include missiles; Unmanned Aerial Vehicle; electronic warfare systems; avionics upgrades; radars and sonars; combat vehicles; gyroscope; imaging infrared seeker; sensors; NBC decontamination suites; parachutes; propellants and explosives; detonators, composite materials; powder metallurgy; fuel cells; paints; data processing; antennas; artificial intelligence; encryptions; communication systems; signal processing; guidance and control systems, etc. DRDO with these efforts and achievements has equipped Services with the state-of-the-art technologies in different areas.

(c) Services, industry and academic are being synergetically involved in the design and development activities right from the beginning to a greater extent.

[English]

Land Purchase by CWC

4844. SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Central Warehousing Corporation (CWC) proposes to purchase land in various States to increase its storage capacity;

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

(c) the details of the expenditure likely to be incurred by CWC on such purchases;

(d) the extent to which storage capacity is likely to be increased as a result thereof; State-wise;

(e) the details of the assistance given to State Governments for enhancing storage capacity under State Warehousing Corporations during 2006-07 and 2007-08, State-wise; and

(f) the criteria for allocation of such assistance?

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. Central Warehousing Corporation (CWC) has proposed to purchase the land during 2008-09 as shown as under:

Sl. No.	Name of the Center	State	Area	Amount (Rs. in Lakh)
1.	Tuticorin (Additional land adjoining to CWC's existing godown)	Tamil Nadu	2.16 Acres	23.00
2.	Simla	Himachal Pradesh	100 Acres	20.00
3.	Kannur	Kerala	5 Acres	10,00

(d) By purchasing the lands on the above locations, CWC will be in a position to increase storage capacity as proposed and shown as under:

Sl.No.	State	Capacity (in MT)
1.	Tamil Nadu	10,000
2.	Himachal Pradesh	5,000
3.	Kerala	10,000 (Covered) 3700 Sq. mtr. (Open yard)

(e) and (f) The CWC has not provided any assistance to the State Governments for enhancing storage capacity under State Warehousing Corporations during 2006-07 and 2007-08.

Mirage in IAF

4845. SHRIMATI JHANSI LAKSHMI BOTCHA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether France has agreed to upgrade the 51 Mirage 2000 in the IAF combat fleet;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the extent to which France has agreed to provide assistance in the Defence preparedness of India?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (c) The French Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) have agreed to upgrade the Indian Air Force Mirage 2000 fleet. A Request for Proposal (RFP) has been issued on 9.4.2008 to the French OEM.

Public-Private Partnership in Agriculture

4846. SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL:
SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any research project/scheme initiated by Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) under Public-Private Partnership;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the amount earmarked for each scheme;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether mechanization of farm operations is essential to bring about the next stage of agricultural transformation; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and 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) Yes, Sir.

(b) The ICAR has initiated 'National Agricultural Innovation Project' in July 2006 for a period of six years with the credit assistance from the World Bank at the total outlay of Rs.1189.99 crore. The project mainly envisages researches on production to consumption systems; sustainable rural livelihood security and; basic & strategic research in frontier areas of agricultural sciences. Aforesaid research components are operated in a consortium mode involving partners from both private and public intuition/ agencies.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) and (e) Yes, Sir. Mechanization of farm operations is essential to bring about next stage of agricultural transformation. Farm mechanization will improve efficiency, complete the farm operations timely, make available the field for planting next crop on time and reduce the cost of cultivation. The Department through its institutes and All India Coordinated Research Project on Farm Implements and Machinery has developed about 250 farm equipments to carry out different farm operations. It is also endeavoring to popularize the recently developed implements and machinery such as laser land leveler, rotavator, zero-till drill, multi-crop drill, raised bed planter, pre-germinated paddy seeder, mat-type paddy transplanter, sugarcane set cutter planter, automatic potato planter, coconut harvester, coconut climber etc., through its outreach programmes.

Default in payment of ESI dues

4847. SHRI GURUDAS DASGUPTA: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of employers, establishments and contractors who default in payment of Employees State Insurance dues in the country, State-wise;

(b) the cumulative defaulted dues outstandings as on date and the period of default;

(c) the quantum of amount of the arrears recovered so far from the defaulters; and

(d) the number of cases filed, the conviction made and the cases pending for action so far, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) Total number of employers, establishments and contractors who default in payment of ESI dues was 1,23,217 as on 31.3.2007. The State-wise position of dues outstanding is given in the enclosed statement-II.

(b) The cumulative defaulted dues outstanding upto 31.3.2007 was Rs. 1150.98 crores.

(c) The dues of Rs. 1369 crpres have been recovered from the defaulters upto 31.3.2008.

(d) The number of cases filed and conviction made during the last three years i.e. 2005-06, 2006-07 and 2007-08 and the number of cases pending as on 31.12.2007 is furnished in the statement-I enclosed.

Statement-I

Sl.No.	Name of the State	State-wise no. of defaulter/cases	Recoverable dues Rs. in crores	Presently* non-recoverable dues (Rs. in crore)	Total amount of dues (Rs. in crores)
1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Andhra Pradesh	8232	31.38	42.33	73.71
2	Assam	844	2.82	2.23	5.05
3	Bihar	581	1.81	4.26	6.07
4	Jharkhand	811	9.57	1.82	11.39
5	Delhi	7061	23.64	21.69	45.33
6	Goa	880	1.86	2.86	4.72
7	Gujarat	3903	10.49	71.94	82.43
8	Haryana	6253	11.34	72.18	83.52
9	Karnataka	6970	26.41	20.65	47.06
10	Kerala	5648	24.09	14.22	38.31
11	Madhya Pradesh	4856	21.03	10.45	31.48
12	Chhattisgarh	261	2.56	7.09	9.65
13	Maharashtra	21860	71.07	53.92	124.99
14	Orissa	2023	7.02	20.15	27.17
15	Punjab	5387	6.83	11.54	18.37
16	Himachal Pradesh	496	1.2	0.07	1.27
17	Jammu and Kashmir	1363	1.8	5.66	7.46
18	Rajasthan	4627	8.62	13.83	22.45
19	Tamil Nadu	25080	72.42	176	248.42
20	Puducherry	295	0.64	6.47	7.11

1	2	3	4	5	6
21	Uttar Pradesh	6787	31.64	44.46	76.1
22	Uttarakhand	284	2.24	2.95	5.19
23	West Bengal	8715	27.22	146.51	173.73
	Total	123217	397.7	753.28	1150.98

* Dues presently non-recoverable due to Court cases, factories gone in liquidation, cases before BIFR and units closed and where abouts are not known.

Statement-II

Sl.No.	Name of the State	2005-06		2006-07		2007-08		Cases pending as on 31-12-2007
		Cases Filed	Conviction made	Cases Filed	Conviction made	Cases Filed	Conviction made	
1	Andhra Pradesh	161	36	41	3	39	18	329
2	Assam	9	37	3	5	3	5	102
3	Bihar	27	10	6	2	2	Nil	454
4	Jharkhand	3	Nil	1	Nil	Nil	Nil	33
5	Delhi	138	37	153	56	71	24	565
6	Goa	135	32	40	22	49	121	534
7	Gujarat	30	45	17	87	52	180	3262
8	Haryana	79	55	56	80	45	26	720
9	Karnataka	236	201	80	171	139	128	301
10	Kerala	128	31	62	7	58	3	520
11	Madhya Pradesh	2	166	1	20	21	34	433
12	Chhattiagrh	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	3
13	Maharashtra	563	72	79	104	109	53	3445
14	Orissa	116	Nil	18	Nil	20	'Nil	890
15	Punjab	197	64	21	188	28	47	1264
16	Himachal Pradesh	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	39
17	Jammu and Kashmir	2	13	1	35	6	9	123
18	Rajasthan	24	18	32	7	81	2	277
19	Tamil Nadu	363	181	236	76	214	75	1471
20	Puducherry	18	4	70	1	Nil	Nil	86
21	Uttar Pradesh	90	6	23	8	13	4	1182
22	Uttarakhand	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	59
23	West Bengal	140	43	41	34	172	17	1236
	Total	2461	1051	981	906	1122	746	17328

Strategic Buffer Stock of Foodgrains

4848. SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL:
SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO:
SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA:
SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN:

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

(a) whether the Union Government has decided to form a strategic reserve of five million tones of foodgrains in addition to the present buffer stock to meet emergency situations;

(b) if so, the details thereof indicating the manner in which this additional stock is proposed to be created and maintained;

(c) whether the Union Government has also decided to bear the entire expenditure incurred thereon;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken by the Union 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 (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) to (e) Yes, Sir. Pending revision of buffer norms and in order to ensure food security in the country, Government has decided that a strategic reserve of 50 lakh tonnes of foodgrains would be maintained by Food Corporation of India (FCI). The strategic reserve would be built up over a period of time starting from 2008-09.

The cost of maintaining the strategic reserve would be borne by the Government of India.

Facilities to Senior Citizen

4849. SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has any proposal to provide facilities to the senior citizens holding telephone connections in the country; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) Sir, the Senior Citizens holding telephone connections of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd. (BSNL) are already eligible to get all the facilities on their telephones as are available to other telephone subscribers of BSNL.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

Complaints against Private Telecom Operators

4850. SHRI MADHU GOUD YASKHI:
SHRI ANIRUDH PRASAD ALIAS
SADHU YADAV:
SHRI EKNATH MAHADEO GAIKWAD:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Monopolistic and Restrictive Trade Practice (MRTP) has received number of complaints against telecom companies such as Bharti, Airtel, Vodafone and Idea Cellular in the country;

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

(c) whether the MRTP has directed any enquiry against these companies;

(d) if so, the outcome of such enquiry; and

(e) the action taken/being taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) to (e) On the basis of the newspaper reports alleging simultaneous increase in prices by M/s Bharti Airtel Limited, M/s Vodafone Essar Limited and M/s Idea Cellular Limited, the Monopolistic and Restrictive Trade Practice (MRTP) Commission directed the Director General (I & R) to investigate. The DG (I & R) filed the Preliminary Investigation Report (PIR) stating that these three companies have indulged in unfair trade practices within the meaning of section 36-A of the MRTP Act and restrictive trade practices of cartelization under Section 33(1) 9d) read with Section 2(o) of the MRTP Act. The Commission considered the PIR and the matter is listed for framing of issues on 31.07.2008.

Rise in Prices

4851. SHRI ANIRUDH PRASAD ALIAS
SADHU YADAV:
SHRI EKNATH MAHADEO GAIKWAD:
SHRI MADHU GOUD YASKHI:

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

(a) whether a recent study by the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) has indicated that the major cause of price rise in the country

is excessive profiteering by Middlemen as reported in Hindustan Times dated April 14, 2008;

(b) if so, the details of the major findings and recommendations of the said study alongwith the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(c) the remedial steps 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 TASLIMUDDIN): (a) and (b) The Government is not aware of any survey conducted by the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM).

(c) The Government is aware of some differences in wholesale and retail prices of essential commodities. This matter comes under the purview of State Governments. In this connection letters have been written to States/Uts Governments to look into the issue and take necessary corrective steps in this regard. This issue was also discussed in the Conference of Chief Secretaries held on 22.4.2008, in which the State Governments were requested to take appropriate steps like market intervention to reduce the gaps between mandi wholesale prices and retail prices when such gaps are abnormal.

[Translation]

PDS Information on Internet

4852. SHRI MANSUKHBHAI D. VASAVA:
SHRI KASHIRAM RANA:
SHRI DALPAT SINGH PARSTE:
SHRI CHANDRA DEV PRASAD RAJBHAR:

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

(a) whether there is any proposal to provide information regarding beneficiaries of Public Distribution System (PDS) and ration cards on Internet to check ghost cards; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and other remedial steps taken to check bogus ration cards?

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) Under 9-Point Action Plan, under implementation by State and UT Governments for strengthening of TPDS, State and UT Governments have been requested to (1) continuously review the list of ration cards, and (2) display lists of BPL and AAY beneficiaries at Fair Price Shops. As per the information provided by States/UTs, 30 States/UTs have conducted review of BPL/AAY lists and in 28 States/UTs, PDS shops are displaying their BPL/AAY lists at the respective FPS. Instructions have also been issued to all the States/UTs to take action against persons found in possession of bogus/fake ration cards and those issuing such cards. The State and UT Governments have also been directed to display the monthly allocations issued to districts and FPS on websites of the State and UT Department of food and Civil Supplies to facilitate their public scrutiny.

Centralized control over river and ground water

4853. SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATEL:
SHRI SUGRIB SINGH:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Administrative Reforms Commission has suggested in its report for centralised control over river and ground water in order to address any conflicts among various States;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) The Chapter 5 of the Seventh Report of the Second Administrative Reforms Commission containing water related issues does not mention any specific suggestion about "centralized control over river and ground water in order to address any conflicts among various states".

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

[English]

Agreement with Blackberry and Indian Telecom Operators

4854. SHRI J. M. AARON RASHID: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been agreement alliance between Blackberry with some Indian telecom operators that allow to offer services providers to use the brand name " Blackberry" in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government has proposed to allow Virtual Mobile Network Operators (VMNO) to telecom operators in alliance with foreign based companies; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) and (b) The Service Providers namely, M/s BPL Mobile Communications Limited, M/s Bharti Airtel Limited, M/s Bharti Hexacom Limited, Vodafone Group Companies (except M/s Vodafone Essar Spacetel Limited) and M/s Reliance Communications Limited & M/s Reliance Telecom limited have reported that they have entered into agreement with Research In Motion (RIM) to provide "BlackBerry Services" to their customers. Under the agreement, main services offered are voice, data and internet. The customers can use devices / handsets manufactured by RIM or any other compatible handsets from Nokia, Motoralla, Sony Ericsson, etc.

(c) Department of Telecommunications has sought the recommendations of Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) under section 11(1)(a) (i) & (ii) on need and timing for introduction of Virtual Mobile Network Operators (VMNO) as well as terms and conditions of the License to be granted to such operators.

(d) The decision will be taken after considering the recommendations of TRAI on the subject.

Offer to Fishermen to Work in Foreign Countries

4855. SHRI JIVABHAI A. PATEL:
SHRI MANSUKHBHAI D. VASAVA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the large number of unemployed fishermen in the country have received offers to work in the fishing sector in foreign countries;

(b) if so, the details thereof along with the number of persons granted permission to work in the said sector abroad during the last three years and the reasons therefore; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to provide employment to unemployed fishermen in the country along with the success achieved 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 TASLIMUDDIN): (a) to (c) The information in this regard is being obtained from State Governments and other organizations and the same will be laid on the Table of the House.

[Translation]

Licensing for Sugar Mills

4856. SHRI TUKARAM GANPAT RAO RENGE PATIL: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has banned the issuance of licences for new sugar mills in some States including Maharashtra;

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

(c) whether the Government has received any representations for the removal of the ban; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and 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) and (b) The Government has delicensed the sugar industry vide Press Note dated 31.08.1998 and the entrepreneurs are now free to set up sugar mills in any part of the country subject to maintaining the distance of 15 Kms from an existing as well new sugar mill and fulfilling the conditions as laid down in the Sugarcane (Control) (Amendment) Order, 2006. Therefore, the question of banning issuing of license for new sugar mills does not arise.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

Antyodaya Anna Yojana

4857. SHRI HARIKEWAL PRASAD: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) is being implemented by the Government in all the States particularly Uttar Pradesh;

(b) if so, the total quantum and value of foodgrains allocated under the said scheme during each of the last three years, State-wise;

(c) the number of families being benefited under the said scheme, State-wise; and

(d) the efforts made by the Government to ensure that the benefits of the scheme reach the targeted persons?

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) Details showing Allocation and Offtake of Rice & Wheat for the year 2005-06, 2006-07 and 2007-08 are given at Statement-I. These allocations have been issued at central issue price of Rs.3/- per kg of rice and Rs. 2/- per kg of wheat.

(c) Details showing the number of families under AAY State-wise are given at Statement-II.

(d) To strengthen TPDS and to curb leakages and diversion of foodgrains meant for TPDS, the Department in consultation with State and UT Governments, has evolved a 9-Point Action Plan in 2006. The Action Plan is under implementation in States and UTs. In addition to implementation of 9-Point Action Plan, the Government has taken a series of measures to strengthen TPDS. A revised Citizen Charter has been issued for adoption and implementation by State/UT Governments for facilitating use by citizens of provision of Right to Information (RTI) Act, 2005 in relation to functioning of TPDS. Furthermore, to ensure that TPDS foodgrains reach the targeted families and to minimize scope for their diversion, APL allocations have been rationalized. Training Programmes for TPDS functionaries and awareness campaign for TPDS beneficiaries are being taken up. Computerization of TPDS has been initiated. Use of new technology such as Global Positioning System is being piloted. Revised policy on distribution of wheat flour has been issued.

Statement-I

State-wise and year wise allocation and offtake of foodgrain under

State/UT	05-06		06-07		07-08	
	Allocation	Offtake	Allocation	Offtake	Allocation	Offtake
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A&N Islands	1.8	0.53	1.8	0,82	1.800	1.295
Andhra Pradesh	620.247	608.56	654.288	656.771	654.288	698.399
Arunachal Pradesh	12.936	12.4	15.972	9.069	15.972	10.857
Assam	175.104	181.09	294.216	272.045	295.446	298.027
Bihar	472.533	421.06	662.091	566.332	1019.99	872.397
Chandigarh	0.888	0	0.888	0.07	0.888	1.213
Chattisgarh	254.82	229.189	295.25	313.059	301.944	308.14
D&N Haveli	1.528	0.72	1.772	0.38	2.196	0.243
Daman and Diu	0.444	0.22	0.636	0.37	0.636	0.177
Delhi	23.316	22.15	23.316	22.884	45.906	39.361
Goa	5.739	2.447	6.108	3.94	6.108	5.037
Gujarat	258.785	192.34	310.848	259.993	332.180	293.573
Haryana	86.056	76.89	109.394	102.921	122.820	116.987
Himachal Pradesh	62.284	55.6	76.806	77.244	82.740	80.022
Jammu and Kashmir	88.749	73.09	104.007	98.433	107.388	107.711
Jharkhand	305.268	282.63	305.268	299.266	352.091	323.037
Karnataka	407.752	378.35	491.35	465.2	503.892	484.189

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Kerala	207.088	200.722	248.331	249.313	250.260	250.886
Lakshadweep	0.168	0.33	0.161	0.16	0.464	0.632
Madhya Pradesh	534.141	509.58	650.16	603.987	652.662	629.096
Maharashtra	829.836	736.41	833.22	698.753	1021.67	866.0
Manipur	21.864	13.96	21.18	18.411	22.566	21.447
Meghalaya	23.292	22.72	23.352	23.352	29.484	28.978
Mizoram	10.401	10.01	10.92	11.246	10.920	11.62
Nagaland	16.263	16.44	19.968	22.976	19.968	21.434
Orissa	434.785	450.493	530.716	433.288	531.120	457.078
Pondicherry	12.25	7.91	13.548	7.14	13.548	6.54
Punjab	32.469	18.24	58.308	33.563	65.413	37.805
Rajasthan	304.018	300.57	385.714	348.024	391.488	367.385
Sikkim	4.164	4.32	6.474	6.474	6.936	6.94
Tamil Nadu	644.679	657.63	783.144	775.366	783.144	794.61
Tripura	28.536	28.53	28.536	25.458	45.938	41.252
Uttar Pradesh	1539.686	1438.289	1720.014	1692.331	1719.48	1667.59
Uttarakhand	46.759	34.615	59.661	47.404	63.516	55.633
West Bengal	562.571	454.3	621.684	515.641	621.684	531.52

(figures in '000)

Statement-II

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

(Fig. in lakh)

S. No.	States/UTs	No. of BPL families as on	No. of AAY families					AAY families identified & RC issued				
			Normal	1st exp.	2nd exp.	3rd exp.	Total					
		1.3.2000	25.12.00	05.06.03	03.08.04	12.05.05		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	1.465	7.040

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
4	Bihar	65.23	10.000	5.003	4.802	5.205	25.010	10.000	5.003	4.802	4.480	24.285
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	0.626	0.315	0.301	0.26	1.502
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	1.911	9.179
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	1.240	5.958
15	Madhya Pradesh	41.25	6.324	3.164	3.037	3.291	15.816	6.324	3.164	3.037	3.291	15.816
16	Maharashtra	65.34	10.017	5.011	4.810	5.215	25.053	10.017	5.011	4.810	4.801	24.639
17	Manipur	1.66	0.255	0.127	0.122	0.132	0.636	0.255	0.127	0.122	0.132	0.636
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	0.345	0.373	1.794
23	Rajasthan	24.31	3.726	1.865	1.790	1.940	9.321	3.726	1.865	1.790	1.940	9.321
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
26	Tripura	2.95	0.452	0.227	0.217	0.235	1.131	0.452	0.227	0.217	0.235	1.131
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	Uttarakhand	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 Islands	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	D and N Haveli	0.18	0.028	0.013	0.013	0.015	0.069	0.028	0.013	0.011		0.052
33	Daman & Diu	0.04	0.006	0.003	0.003	0.003	0.015	0.006	0.003	0.003	0.003	0.015

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
34	Lakshadweep	0.03	0.004	0.003	0.002	0.003	0.012	0.004	0.003	0.002	0.003	0.012
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	99.932	49.982	47.035	45.806	242.755

[English]

Competition to Indian Software Companies from European Countries

4858. SHRI REWATI RAMAN SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether European countries are becoming a major threat to Indian Software companies in the near future;

(b) if so, the details thereof specially software market developed by Bulgaria; and

(c) the steps taken/being taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) No, Sir. As per National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM) European countries are not seen as a major threat to Indian IT-BPO companies. Europe is viewed as a growing market opportunity by the industry with share of revenues earned from the region steadily increasing.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

[Translation]

Complaints regarding Delivery of Speed Post Service

4859. SHRI RAGHUVEER SINGH KOSHAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether a number of complaints received regarding failure to deliver speed post in time during the last three years, as on date;

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

(c) the steps taken/being taken by the Government to solve the problem?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) and (b) The number of complaints received regarding Speed Post in the last three years is as below:

Year	No. of complaints
2005-06	31116
2006-07	26204
2007-08	23173

The details of complaints State- wise and year-wise are given in the enclosed statement.

(c) The Department of Posts has taken the following steps to improve the delivery of Speed Post and enhance customer's satisfaction:

i. On-line Track and Trace of Speed Post articles is provided in Speed Net. The customers can track their articles through the Speed Net.

ii. The delivery of Speed Post articles is constantly monitored by Speed Post centres and inspecting Officers.

iii. Computerized Customer Care Centres have been set up for Speedy redressal of Public Complaints.

iv. To ensure timely delivery of articles, mopeds have been supplied to delivery staff in selected Post Offices.

Statement

Number of Speed Post complaints State-wise and year wise

Circle	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
1	2	3	4
Andhra Pradesh	1041	539	731
Assam	1386	1165	1236
Bihar	580	1514	417
Chhattisgarh	1611	1128	603
Delhi	14878	6175	1572
Gujarat	15	18	17
Daman, Diu and Dadra Nagar Haveli	Nil	Nil	Nil
Haryana	1861	2383	3289

1	2	3	4
Himachal Pradesh	67	66	83
Jammu and Kashmir	137	201	207
Jharkhand	92	107	132
Karnataka	1841	2741	2542
Kerala	1554	1663	2007
Madhya Pradesh	225	234	259
Maharashtra	1506	1555	2374
Goa	Nil	04	03
Meghalaya	35	28	55
Manipur	81	106	93
Mizoram	108	123	156
Nagaland	29	38	47
Tripura	206	59	109
Arunachal Pradesh	Nil	Nil	Nil
Orissa	962	963	977
Punjab	44	28	62
Chandigarh	9	11	13
Rajasthan	1223	3298	3378
Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry	999	1408	1984
Uttar Pradesh	180	143	102
Uttarakhand	263	341	418
West Bengal	72	27	107
Sikkim	8	19	17
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	34	39	91
APS	69	80	92
Total	31116	26204	23173

[English]

Expansion of BSNL and MTNL Services

4860. SHRI K.S. RAO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to allow both MTNL and BSNL to expand their operations nationwide with identical tariff plans based on economy of scale and prepare for ultimate merger to become single company for giving stiff competition to private telecom operators in the field and benefiting the telecom subscribers;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of the rural expansion programme of the BSNL and its achievements in the area in meeting laid down targets, year-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) Sir, BSNL and MTNL are expanding their network in their respective area of operation to provide quality service at affordable rates to their subscribers in order to remain competitive.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) The details of the rural expansion programme and achievements of BSNL during the last four years are as under:

Year	Net addition of telephone exchanges (Nos.)	Net addition in capacity (in Lakh) in Lines $	Net addition in telephone connections (in Lakh Nos.)
2004-05	179	7.59	12.97*
2005-06	(-) 50	12.30	49.08
2006-07	172	13.21	40.80
2007-8	253	13.98	29.26

$ Excluding GSM capacity

* Excluding GSM connections

Labour Cards

4861. SHRI JASUBHAI DHANABHAI BARAD: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of labourers engaged in different sectors particularly agriculture sector having labour-cards at present in the country, State-wise and sector-wise;

(b) whether the labourers are entitled to benefits of child education, pension, medical assistances, housing facilities etc.; and

(c) if so, the details thereof alongwith the steps taken to cover all labourers under the scheme to provide certain benefits?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) The Ministry of Labour and Employment is not operating any such scheme to provide labour cards to labours/agricultural labours.

(b) and (c) Do not arise. However, the Government formally launched the 'Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana' on 01.10.2008 which provides for smart card based cashless health insurance cover of Rs. 30,000/- to the BPL workers and their families (a unit of five).

Under the "Aam Admi Bima Yojana", Rural Landless households between the age group of the 18 to 59 years are eligible for death and disability cover under the scheme. The scheme has component of awarding scholarship to two children of the beneficiaries studying in 9th to 12th standard @ Rs. 300/- per quarter per child.

Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme provides for old age pension to all citizens above the age of 65 years and living below the poverty line. The State Governments have been asked to top up Central Government per capita grant of Rs. 200/-.

Difficulty in Getting Postal Loan

4862. SHRI E.G. SUGAVANAM: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the problems being faced by the people living in small towns and villages for getting loans against their postal deposits in the country;

(b) if so, whether the Postal Department has proposed to extend loan facilities for holders of postal savings securities;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) to (d) Sir, Post Office Small Savings Schemes are operated by the Department of Posts on behalf of Ministry of Finance which frames rules under Government Savings Bank Act 1873 and Government Savings Certificate Act 1959. There is no provision in the rules for grant of loans against postal deposits.

[Translation]

Commodities under PDS

4863. SHRI MAHAVIR BHAGORA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to distribute some other items including postage stamps in addition to the commodities being presently distributed through Public Distribution System (PDS); and

(b) 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) and (b) Strengthening of Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) by streamlining its functioning is a continuous process. The Government has been taking a series of measures to streamline functioning of TPDS.

There is no proposal to distribute items like postage stamps through the TPDS. However, in view of the rise in prices of essential commodities witnessed during the recent past, Government has decided to import about one million tons of edible oils to allocate them to State/UT Governments at subsidized prices. These edible oils are to be distributed to BPL including AAY families. The State/UT Governments may organize this distribution through the network of fair price shops or other distribution channels.

[English]

Defaulter Contractors

4864. SHRI G.M. SIDDESWARA: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of contractors do not deposit regularly/properly the employers share of Employees Provided Fund (EPF) contribution;

(b) if so, the details thereof including the number of defaulting contractors and the number of the affected contract workers in each State;

(c) whether the Government has taken any steps to recover the such amount; and

(d) if so, the details thereof alongwith the amount recovered from them during each of the last three years and thereafter till date, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) to (d) As the Schemes framed under the Employees' Provident Funds & Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952 do not distinguish an employee employed by an employer either directly or by or through a contractor, no separate record in respect of contractors is maintained by

the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation. However, compliance of the covered establishments including contractors, is monitored regularly by the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation and on detection of default appropriate action is taken against them. The total outstanding dues of all the establishments as on 31-03-2007 are Rs. 2607.47 crore.

Wherever default in respect of such employees is noticed, actions in accordance with the provisions of the Act are taken. This includes assessment of dues under section 7A of the Act and recovery thereof by way of attachment of movable/immovable property, arrest of defaulters, etc.

Introduction of Zonal Tender System

4865. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether MTNL, Delhi has suffered huge losses due to the introduction of Zonal Tender System;

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

(c) the details of the tenders invited by MTNL, Delhi since November, 2007;

(d) the number of tenders received during the said period, work-wise;

(e) whether the manual of CPWD was violated in awarding contracts for works where only single tender was received;

(f) if so, the details thereof and reasons therefor alongwith the number of works where only single bid was received; and

(g) the remedial steps proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) No, Sir. MTNL, Delhi has not suffered any loss due to the introduction of Zonal Tender System.

(b) Not applicable in view of (a) above.

(c) and (d) As per enclosed Statement.

(e) No, Sir. There has been no violation as there is no bar in accepting single tender as per CPWD Manual.

(f) and (g) Do not arise view of (e) above.

Statement

Tenders invited by MTNL Delhi since Nov. 2007 during 1st Call

Sl.No.	Name of work	No. of tenders received
1	2	3
1	Annual Term contracts of building maintenance & misc. civil Capital works of T.E. Bldg, Sector-8, Sector-16C & Sector-19 Dwarka, RLU Bldg Sector-20 Dwarka & T.E. Bldg, Najafgarh.	2
2	Annual Term contracts of building maintenance & misc. civil capital works of RLU Bldg, TE Bldg. at Paschim Vihar, Nangloi-1 & 2 MTNL staff Qrts. at GH-17.	4
3	Annual Term contracts of building maintenance & misc. civil capital works at TE Bldg. Janakpuri, New NCR hall, RLU Pankha Road, GM (W-1) Office Mayapuri, CSD Pankha Road, New Delhi.	4
4	Annual Term contracts of building maintenance & misc. civil capital works at TE Bldg. Hari Nagar, New Delhi.	5
5	Annual Term contracts of building maintenance & misc. civil capital works at Admn. Bldg., Rajouri Garden, Shop No. 1, 2, 3, 36, 37, 38, DET office & EE (O&M) C-1.	1
6	Annual Term contracts of building maintenance & misc. civil capital works for T.E. Bldg, Rajouri Garden, New Delhi.	2
7	Annual Term contracts of building maintenance & misc. civil capital works of TE Bldg. Dwarka Pkt.-20 D, RLU, Cable store Sector-6, CSD cable store Sector-20, Dwarka, New Delhi.	3

1	2	3
8	Annual Term contracts of building maintenance & misc. civil capital works of P&T staff qrts. At Pankha Road, Janakpuri, New Delhi.	4
9	Annual Term contracts of building maintenance & misc. civil capital works at K.L. Bhawan, New Delhi.	3
10	Annual Term contracts of building maintenance & misc. civil capital works for MTNL Staff Qtrs. Under Sub-Dn. At Eastern Court, New Delhi.	3
11	Annual Term contracts of building maintenance & misc. civil capital works MTNL, TE Bldg, Minto Road, New Delhi.	5
12	Annual Term contracts of building maintenance & misc. civil capital works for MTNL Eastern Court including Tax Bldg. New Delhi.	2
13	Annual Term contracts of building maintenance & misc. civil capital works for MTNL Corporate office New Delhi.	0
14	Annual Term contracts of building maintenance & misc. civil capital works for MTNL TE Bldg. Connaught Place, New Delhi.	3
15	Annual Term contracts of building maintenance & misc. civil capital works for MTNL TE Bldg. Kidwai Bhawan (Technical Block), New Delhi.	2
16	Annual Term contracts of building maintenance & misc. civil capital works for MTNL TE Bldg. Kidwai Bhawan (Admn. Block) New Delhi.	4
17	Annual Term contracts of building maintenance & misc. civil capital works for TE Bldg (New) at Pusa Road, Karol Bagh New Delhi.	2
18	Annual Term contracts of building maintenance & misc. civil capital works for TE Bldg. (Old) at Pusa Road, Karol Bagh, New Delhi.	4
19	Annual Term contracts of building maintenance & misc. civil capital works for Staff Qtrs.at Pusa Road, Karol Bagh, New Delhi.	1
20	Annual Term contracts of building maintenance & misc. civil capital works for TE Bldg. Delhi Cantt, New Delhi.	4
21	Annual Term contracts of building maintenance & misc. civil capital works for TE Bldg. Shadipur, New Delhi.	3
22	Annual Term contracts of building maintenance & misc. civil capital works for TE Bldg. Shakti Nagar, New Delhi.	1
23	Annual Term contracts of building maintenance & misc. civil capital works for Keshav Puram & Other RLU under civil sub-division.	1
24	Annual Term contracts of building maintenance & misc. civil capital works for TE Bldg Sector-3, Rohini.	2
25	Annual Term contracts of building maintenance & misc. civil capital works for TE Bldg. Badli, Sector-6, Sector-XI Extn., DE office, Tele Mart Sector-6 & Cable store at Sector- V, VI, XI Extn. Rohini.	2

1	2	3
26	Annual Term contracts of building maintenance & misc. civil capital works for TE Bldg. Saraswati Vihar, DE office & Tele Mart Bldg., SWR.	3
27	Annual Term contracts of building maintenance & misc. civil capital works for TE Bldg. Sector-9, RLU, Sector-9 Rohini.	3
28	Annual Term contracts of building maintenance & misc. civil capital works for TE Bldg. Narela, RLU Narela & Other RSU in rented Bldgs. Delhi.	2
29	Annual Term contracts of building maintenance & misc. civil capital works for Staff Qtrs. at Plot No. 4 Sector-3, Rohini.	3
30	Annual Term contracts of building maintenance & misc. civil capital works for Staff Qtrs. at Plot No. 31 Sector-3, Rohini.	5
31	Term contract for building maintenance and misc. civil capital works T.E. Building, CGO Complex (Admn. Block) New Delhi.	1
32	Term contract for building maintenance and misc. civil capital works for T.E. Building, CGO Complex (Technical) New Delhi.	1
33	Term contract for building maintenance and misc. civil capital works at T.E. Building, Chanakyapuri and RSU's, New Delhi.	2
34	Term contract for building maintenance and misc. civil capital works at T.E. Building, Jorbagh, RSU's and staff Qrs. Lodhi Road, New Delhi.	1
35	Term contract for building maintenance and misc. civil capital works at T.E. Building, Delhi Gate, Lothian Road, RSU Gulabi Bagh, RSU Minto Road etc.	1
36	Term contract for building maintenance and misc. civil capital works at T.E. Building, Tis Hazari, New Delhi.	1
37	Term contract for building maintenance and misc. civil capital works at T.E. Building, Idgah, New Delhi.	2
38	Term contract for building maintenance and misc. civil capital works at T.E. Building, BCP & Netaji Nagar, New Delhi.	1
39	Term contract for building maintenance and misc. civil capital works at T.E. Building, Hauz Khas all RLC Deptt. & rented bldg. under AM (HK) & S/Qtrs. Hauz Khas Asiad Village, New Delhi.	2
40	Term contract for building maintenance and misc. civil capital works at T.E. Building, Nehru Place & S/Qtrs., New Delhi.	2
41	Term contract for building maintenance and misc. civil capital works at T.E. Building, Tuglakabad RLC TKD Asiad Village, Sadiq Nagar, Khel Gaon & All rented Bldg. & Deptt. Bldg. under AM (NP) & S/Qtrs.at New Friends Colony, Jangpura, New Delhi.	1

1	2	3
42	Term contract for building maintenance and misc. civil capital works at T.E. Building, Okhla & S/Qtrs. New Delhi.	3
43	Term contract for building maintenance and misc. civil capital works at T.E. Building, Tehkhand RLU, Sarita Vihar, Sun Light Colony, J - Block, M - Block & all Deptt. & rented bldg. under AM (Okhla) & (SVR) New Delhi.	2
44	Term contract for building maintenance and misc. civil capital works at S/Qtrs. Sector-6, R.K. Puram from 1 to 500, New Delhi.	3
45	Term contract for building maintenance and misc. civil capital works at S/Qtrs. Sector-6, R.K. Puram from 501 to 1002 & at Moti Bagh, New Delhi.	1
46	Term contract for building maintenance and misc. civil capital works at T.E. Building, Luxmi Nagar, Delhi.	1
47	Term contract for building maintenance and misc. civil capital works at T.E. Building at KKD Takshila, CBD, SHD, Preet Vihar, Madhu Vihar, Delhi.	2
48	Term contract for building maintenance and misc. civil capital works at T.E. Building, Mayur Vihar, Patparganj & rented bldg. in Laxmi Nagar area, Delhi.	1
49	Term contract for building maintenance and misc. civil capital works at T.E. Building, Dilshad Garden, Delhi.	2
50	Term contract for building maintenance and misc. civil capital works at T.E. Building at SHD, Loni Road H - Block 7 rented bldgs. in SHD area, Delhi.	2
51	Term contract for building maintenance and misc. civil capital works at T.E. Building at Yamuna Vihar & Zafrabad, Delhi.	3
52	Term contract for building maintenance and misc. civil capital works at S/Qtrs. NOIDA, UP.	1

Tenders invited by MTNL, Delhi since Nov. 2007 during 2nd Call

Sl.No.	Name of work	No. of tenders received
1	2	3
1	Annual Term contracts of building maintenance & misc. civil capital works at K.L. Bhawan, New Delhi	4
2	Annual Term contracts of building maintenance & misc. civil capital works for MTNL Corporate office New Delhi.	0
3	Annual Term contracts of building maintenance & misc. civil capital works for TE Bldg. Shakti Nagar New Delhi.	0
4	Annual Term contracts of building maintenance & misc. civil capital works for Keshav Puram & Other RLU under civil sub-division.	1

1	2	3
5	Annual Term contracts of building maintenance & misc. civil capital works for Staff Qtrs. at Plot No. 31 Sector-3, Rohini.	2
6	Term contract for building maintenance and misc. civil capital works T.E. Building, CGO Complex (Admn. Block) New Delhi.	3
7	Term contract for building maintenance and misc. civil capital works for T.E. Building, CGO Complex (Technical) New Delhi.	2
8	Term contract for building maintenance and misc. civil capital works at T.E. Building, Jorbagh, RSU's and staff Qrs. Lodhi Road, New Delhi.	4
9	Term contract for building maintenance and misc. civil capital works at T.E. Building, Delhi Gate, Lothian Road, RSU Gulabi Bagh, RSU Minto Road etc.	3
10	Term contract for bldg. Mtce. & M (C) capital works at S/Qtrs. at Sec.-VI, R.K. Puram from 501 to 1002 and at Moti Bagh, New Delhi.	2
11	Term contract for bldg. Mtce. & M (C) capital works at T.E. Bldg. Tughlakabad RLC TKD Asiad Village, Sadiq Nagar, Khel Gaon & all rented bldg. & Deptt. Bldg. under AM (NP) & S/Qtrs. At New Friends Colony, Jangpura, New Delhi.	1
12	Term contract for building maintenance and misc. civil capital works T.E. Building at KKD Taxila, CBD, SHD, Preet Vihar, Madhu Vihar, Delhi.	2
13	Term contract for building maintenance and misc. civil capital works at T.E. Building at Mayur Vihar, Patparganj & rented bldg. in Laxmi Nagar Area, Delhi.	1
14	Term contract for building maintenance and misc. civil capital works Staff Quarters at NOIDA (UP).	1

Tenders invited by MTNL, Delhi since Nov. 2007 during 3rd Call

Sl.No.	Name of work	No. of tenders received
1	Annual Term contracts of building maintenance & misc. civil capital works for MTNL Corporate office New Delhi.	0
2	Annual Term contracts of building maintenance & misc. civil capital works for TE Bldg. Shakti Nagar New Delhi.	1
3	Term contract for building maintenance and misc. civil capital works at T.E. Building at Mayur Vihar, Patparganj & rented bldg. in Laxmi Nagar Area, Delhi.	0
4	Term contract for building maintenance and misc. civil capital works Staff Quarters at NOIDA (UP).	0

Spread of Anthrax Disease in Animals

4866. SHRI P.C. THOMAS: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the anthrax disease has been noticed in animals in various parts of the country, particularly in Kerala;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the steps taken to check the spread of disease;

(c) where the disease which was noticed in some parts has been contained successfully; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the names of states where it has been spreading in spite of the measures adopted for the control of disease?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) and (b) During 2007-08 sporadic occurrence of anthrax in animals have been noticed in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Jammu and Kashmir, Karnataka, Orissa, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Pondicherry and Kerala.

As per information received from Government of Kerala, 8 numbers of anthrax cases in animals have been reported during 2007-08 of which 7 animals died.

The steps taken by the Government for control and contain the disease are:

- Scientific disposal and burial of carcass.
- Disinfection of the cattle shed and premises where outbreak has been confirmed.
- Ring vaccination of all susceptible animals in surrounding areas using anthrax spore vaccine.
- Awareness camps were organized with audio visuals on anthrax disease in animals and its symptoms, prevention, disposal of carcass and disinfection of the premises.
- As the disease is of Zoonotic importance, awareness is also created about Anthrax Disease in human beings about symptoms, prevention and treatment measures.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) (i) the disease in animals have been successfully controlled and contained in all the States mentioned above

(ii) Question does not arise.

[Translation]

Sprinkler Irrigation

4867. SHRI SUBHASH MAHARIA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is running any scheme of sprinkler irrigation from solar energy for water efficient cultivation in canal area;

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

(c) whether the Government has recently taken steps to develop this system; 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 Government of implementing a Centrally Sponsored Scheme on Micro Irrigation which includes sprinkler irrigation system for promotion of better water use efficiency in the country. The scheme does not envisage use of solar energy for this propose. The Government of Rajasthan has taken initiative for demonstration of micro irrigation system using solar energy in the canal area of Rajasthan and has proposed to establish 14 such units out of the assistance provided under the State Plan Scheme of Rashtria Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY).

[English]

STD/ISD/PCO Booths

4868. SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of STD/ISD/PCO Booths set up by the Union Government in the country, particularly in Andhra Pradesh during the last three years and till date, State-wise;

(b) the number of such booths proposed to be set up in the country especially in Andhra Pradesh during the year 2008-09; and

(c) the funds likely to be spent in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) The data of Public Telephone Booths [Public Call Offices (PCOs)] excluding Village Panchayat Telephones is maintained Circle-wise and not State-wise by BSNL/MTNL. The number of PCOs functioning in all the Circles including Andhra Pradesh during the last three years i.e. 2005-06, 2006-07 and 2007-08 (upto 31.03.2008) are given in the enclosed Statement.

(b) The target fixed by BSNL for provision of PCOs during 2008-09 in the country except Delhi and Mumbai is 4 lakh net addition of PCOs. The target for Andhra Pradesh has been fixed as 5,000 net addition of PCOs. MTNL has not fixed any target for Delhi and Mumbai as the PCOs are available on demand in these cities.

(c) No separate fund is earmarked for this purpose by the BSNL/MTNL as the expenditure on PCO forms part of normal Direct Exchange Lines (DELs).

Statement

Circle-wise Gross number of PCOs provided during last three years i.e. 2005-06, 2006-07 & 2007-08 (upto 31-3-2008)

S.No.	Name of Circle	Gross No. of PCOs provided during		
		2005-06	2006-07	2007-08 (upto 31-3-08)
1	Andaman and Nicobar	410	11	60
2	Andhra Pradesh	130902	65552	53298
3	Assam	3838	2431	1087
4	Bihar	11225	10672	'3385
5	Chhattisgarh	7524	90	2543
6	Gujarat	20169	5629	5406
7	Haryana	3538	1706	3530
8	Himachal Pradesh	1753	1216	852
9	Jammu and Kashmir	1456	1804	1251
10	Jharkhand	62398	1196	318
11	Karnataka	29371	40823	196114
12	Kerala	6567	20944	11015
13	Madhya Pradesh	2078	5379	20255
14	Maharashtra	52002	112096	46852
15	North East-I	1170	644	2136
16	North East-II	1970	746	497
17	Orissa	3284	3383	2022
18	Punjab	4001	2354	2932
19	Rajasthan	11832	6086	4388
20	Tamil Nadu	62257	38146	62956
21	U.P. (East)	13503	19303	28003
22	U.P. (West)	4355	1612	1860
23	Uttaranchal	1523	515	478
24	West Bengal	18122	9026	6120
25	Calcutta	1055	2952	6400
26	Chennai	13222	9377	2442
27	MTNL Delhi	7597	6826	10803
28	MTNL Mumbai	13464	4035	4940
	Total	490586	374554	481943

Virus Attach Warning System

4869. SHRI EKNATH MAHADEO GAIKWAD:
SHRI RAYAPATI SAMBASIVA RAO:
SHRI MADHU GOUD YASKHI:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether some studies by web security agencies have indicated widespread prevalence of computer virus in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof indicating the major virus attacks encountered during the last three years and till date;

(c) the remedial action taken/proposed to be taken in this regard;

(d) whether there is any proposal to set up virus attack warning system in the country; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and the time by which it is likely to be set up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) and (b) The vendors of Antivirus and security systems generally bring out reports regarding various types of viruses, worms, Trojans and Bots prevalent in cyber space in the country and elsewhere in the world.

The widely spread viruses in cyber space in the country during last three years are Worms named MyDoom, Nyxem Ae/Blackmal, Beagle, Mytob; Trojans named Banker, Nethell, BZub and Bots named Storm, Rbot and Spamthru.

(c) to (e) Government of India has setup Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) to help users in the country to respond to and mitigate cyber security incidents and enhance security by promoting Security Best Practices. The important remedial and proactive measures taken by CERT-In to prevent virus attacks are:

i) Regular issue of virus alerts, security alerts and advisories to prevent occurrence of cyber incidents and strengthen the security of computer networks and systems

ii) Publishing of guidelines on Antivirus Policy and securing various types of computer systems

iii) Conducting security workshops and training programs on regular basis to enhance user awareness

iv) Dissemination of information through website regarding disinfection and prevention from viruses

v) Collaborating with Antivirus vendors to share information on latest virus threats and issue early warning to users to protect their systems from viruses. In cases of major virus outbreak, CERT-In provides disinfection tools with the help of Antivirus vendors.

Further, the Information Technology Act, 2000 provides legal framework to prevent creation and spread of viruses.

Global Shortage of Foodgrains

4870. SHRI BALASHOWRY VALLABHANENI:
SHRI N. JANARDHANA REDDY:
SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU:

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

(a) whether reports by some reputed agencies have indicated a major global shortage of foodgrains during 2008-09;

(b) if so, whether any assessment has been made regarding its impact on food security in the country;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps taken to maintain adequate stock of foodgrains 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 (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) to (d) Though India is not listed as one of the 37 countries facing food crisis as per FAO's Report No.2 (April 2008) as also by International Grains Council - Grain Market Report (GMR 376 dated 28.3.2008), the Government after due assessment, have in all initiated various remedial steps to ensure adequate availability of food stocks in the country and ensure that food security in the country remain sacrosanct. These steps, inter alia, broadly are (i) Fiscal Measures – reduction of tariffs to zero for rice, wheat, pulses, edible oils and maize, to 7.5% on hydrogenated oils and vegetable oils, to 30% on butter and ghee and withdrawing 4% additional CVD on edible oils, (ii) Administrative Measures like banning of exports of non-basmati rice, wheat, major edible oils, major pulses, imposition of stock limits on rice, wheat, edible oils and oil seeds, periodic enhancements in MSP for rice (Rs.645 per quintal for common rice and Rs.675 per quintal for grade A rice) and wheat (Rs. 1000 per quintal), using MEP to regulate exports of onion (currently $ 180 PMT) and basmati rice (currently $1200 PMT), maintaining CIP for rice and wheat and measures taken by Forward Markets Commission, and (iii) Medium Term Strategy initiative to increase production through investment of Rs.30,000 crores for improving productivity in agriculture and allied sectors through (a) National Food Security Mission (Rs.4883 crores - prov.) targeted to increase production of rice, wheat and pulses by 10 million tons, 8 million tons and 2 million tons, respectively, by the end of Eleventh Five Year Plan and (b) Rastriya Krishi Vikas Yojana(Rs.25000 crores).

Technology Mission for Technical Textiles

4871. SHRI NAND KUMAR SAI:
SHRI SUGRIB SINGH:

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the textile industry has sought a major policy change for promotion and development of Technical Textiles through Technology Mission in the country as reported in the Hindustan dated March 19, 2008;

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

(c) the time by which such mission for technology textiles is likely to be launched?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) and (b) Considering that the technical textiles is an emerging area and has immense potential, which needs to be tapped, the Government has set up a Technology Mission on Technical Textiles to take coherent policy initiatives and to encourage new investment. The Textile Commissioner has been nominated as the Mission Director of Technology Mission on Technical Textiles to direct the growth of such products in desired measure. The Mission will provide support for the development of the technical textile industry in the country in terms of capacity building of manufacturers; standardization, product development, common testing facilities; domestic and export market development; and skill development.

(c) No time frame can be indicated at this stage.

Urban Haats

4872. DR. DHIRENDRA AGARWAL:
SHRI TUKARAM GANPAT RAO RENGE PATIL:

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of Urban Haats sanctioned by the Government in the country during each year of the Tenth Plan alongwith the proposals for the Eleventh Plan period, State-wise;

(b) whether all the sanctioned Haats have become operational;

(c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government to make them operational at the earliest?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) The total number of Urban Haats sanctioned by the Government in the country during each year of the Tenth Plan alongwith the.proposals for the Eleventh Plan period State-wise is as per Statement attached.

(b) and (c) No, Sir. Out of 27 sanctioned haats 5 Urban Haats have become Operational at Srinagar (J&K), Bhuj (Gujarat), Mysore (Karnataka), Konark (Orissa) & Pitampura (Delhi). The remaining Urban Haats are at various stages of progress. Urban Haats at Surat (Gujarat), Thiruvanathapuram (Kerala) and Patiala (Punjab) have been cancelled by the High Level Screening Committee on Urban Haats.

(d) The steps taken by the Government to make the Urban haats operational at the earliest, include: monitoring the progress made at various stages by the implementing agency; periodic site visit / inspection by the officers of field offices to assess the progress of the work; and periodical review meetings on Urban Haats by the High Level Screening Committee etc.

Statement

Sl.No.	Year	No. of Urban Haats sanctioned	Location of Urban Haat
1	2	3	4
		10th Plan	
1.	2002-03	8	1. Srinagar (J&K)
			2. Lucknow (U.P)
			3. Bhuj (Gujarat)
			4. Hazari Bagh (Jharkhand)
			5. Varansi (U.P)
			6. Thiruvanathapuram (Kerala)
			7. Surat (Gujarat)
			8. Patiala (Punjab)
2.	2003-04	5	1. Mysore (Karnataka)
			2. Dimapur (Nagaland)
			3. Puri(Orissa)
			4. Konark (Orissa)
			5. Pune (Maharashtra)
3.	2004-05	4	1. Delhi (Pitampura)
			2. Indore (Madhya Pradesh)
			3. Mumbai (Maharashtra)
			4. Pondicherry (UT)
4.	2005-06	4	1. Rampur (UP)
			2. Barilely (UP)
			3. Panaji (Goa)
			4. Ajmer (Rajasthan)
5.	2006-07	6	1. Patna (Bihar)
			2. Chennai (Tamil Nadu)
			3. Kanyakumari (Tamil Nadu)
			4. Dilli Haat Part-II (Delhi)
			5. Jhansi (UP)
			6. Meerut (UP)
			11th Plan
6.	2007-08	-	Nil
	2008-09 (4/08)	-	Nil

Price Risk Mitigation Fund

4873. SHRI CHANDRA BHUSHAN SINGH:
SHRI K.J.S.P. REDDY:
SHRI SURAJ SINGH:
SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN:
DR. BABU RAO MEDIYAM:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to set up a Price Risk Mitigation Fund to compensate farmers in extreme situations of price collapse; and

(b) 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) To provide price guarantee to the farmers for their produce the mechanism of Minimum Support Prices (MSP) is implemen-

ted for 25 crops. For other perishable commodities, like fruits and vegetables, Market Intervention Scheme (MIS) is also implemented as and when required. There is no proposal to set up a Price Stabilization Fund.

Opening of New Post Offices

4874. SHRI ABU AYES MONDAL:
SHRI CHANDRA DEV PRASAD RAJBHAR:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of post offices/sub-post offices opened during the last three years, State-wise;

(b) whether the Government has any proposal to open new post offices in the country during 2008-09;

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

(d) whether the courier services have affected the income of post offices in the country;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to reconcile the losses, if any, as a result of the courier services?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) During the last 3 years, 2 new Extra Departmental Branch Post Offices (EDBOs) and 14 Departmental Sub Post Offices (DSOs) were opened in different Circles. State/Circle wise details are given in the enclosed Statement.

(b) and (c) It is proposed to open 500 new Extra Departmental Branch Post Offices (EDBOs) and 375 new Departmental Sub Post Offices (DSOs) during the year 2008-09. State-wise details for opening of the above Post Offices have not been firmed up as yet.

(d) to (f) In order to meet the market challenges from competition, the Department has introduced a number of business products like Speed Post, Express Parcel Post, Logistics Post, Business Post etc. The revenue from Speed Post etc. is consistently increasing in the past five years.

Statement

Number of new Post Offices opened during 2005-06, 2006-07 and 2007-2008

S.No.	Circles	2006-2007		2007-2008			
		Departmental Sub Post Offices		Extra Deptt. Branch Post Offices		Departmental Sub Post Offices/ Upgradation of Extra Deptt. Post Offices	
		T	A	T	A	T	A
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	Andhra Pradesh						
2	Assam	1	1				
3	Bihar	1	1				
4	Chhattisgarh						
5	Delhi						
6	Gujarat						
7	Haryana	1	1				
8	Himachal Pradesh	1	1				
9	Jammu and Kashmir	1	1				
10	Ladakh			2	2	3	3
10	Jharkhand						
11	Karnataka						
12	Kerala						
	Lakshdweep					1	1

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
13	Madhya Pradesh	2	2				
14	Maharashtra						
15	North East	1	1				
16	Orissa						
17	Punjab						
18	Rajasthan						
19	Tamil Nadu						
20	Utttar Pradesh						
21	Uttaranchal	2	2				
22	West Bengal						
	Sikkim						
	Total	10	10	2	2	4	4

T- Target A - Achievement

Note: No target were allotted during the year 2005-2006

Social Security to Labourers/Workers of Unorganised Sector

4875. SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the provisions made to provide social security to labourers/workers of the unorganised sector during the Eleventh Plan period;

(b) the action plan/strategy chalked out for implementing the social security programmes and proper utilisation of the allocated fund;

(c) whether some organisations/individuals have made representations to the Government regarding the proposed insufficient quantum of funds to be allocated for the purpose; and

(d) 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) and (b) The Government is implementing various social security schemes/programmes for workers in the unorganised sector like Swarnjayanti Gram Swarojgar Yojana; Sampoorna Grameen Rojgar Yojana; Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yajana; Handloom Weavers' Comprehensive Welfare Schemes, Handicraft Artisans' Comprehensive Welfare Schemes, Janshree Bima Yojana etc. through different Ministries/Departments. The allocation is made separately for the respective schemes under respective Ministries/Departments. There is no consolidated allocation of funds for social security schemes for unorganised sector workers. During 2007-08, the Government announced three more schemes which are as under:

The 'Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana', formally launched on 01.10.2008, provides for smart card based cashless health insurance cover of Rs. 30.000/- to the BPL workers and their families (a unit of five). The benefits under the scheme would accrue during 2008-09. The proposals prepared by the State Governments are sent to the Central Government approval.

Under the "Aam Admi Bima Yojana", Rural Landless households between the age group of the 18 to 59 years are eligible for death and disability cover under the scheme. The scheme has component of awarding scholarship to two children of the beneficiaries studying in 9th to 12th standard @ Rs. 300/- per quarter per child.

Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme provides for old age pension to all citizens above the age of 65 years and living below the poverty line. The States Governments have been asked to top up Central Government per capita grant of Rs. 200/-.

(c) and (d) The funds are allocated for different social security schemes keeping in view the target and availability of resources.

Pests Management System

4876. SHRI L. RAJAGOPAL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the details regarding the loss of agricultural produce caused due to the use of pests during the last three years, State-wise;

(b) whether the Government proposes to strengthen and modernise the pests management system in the country; and

(c) 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) It is estimated that crop losses due to pests including diseases, rodents and weeds generally range between 10 to 30% every year depending on climatic and environmental conditions. State-wise information on crop losses due to pests is not maintained by the Central Government.

(b) and (c) Government of India has adopted Integrated Pest Management (IPM) as the main strategy for plant protection. Government has established 31 Central Integrated Pest Management Centres in 28 States and one Union Territory under the scheme "Strengthening and Modernization of Pest Management Approach in India" to impart training to farmers in IPM by organizing Farmers Field Schools (FFSs). The mandate of these Centres is for pest/ disease monitoring, production, release and conservation of bio-control agents and human resource development in IPM by imparting training to agriculture/ horticulture extension officers and farmers at grass root level.

Government of India also provides grants-in-aid to States/UTs/NGOs for setting up of production facilities of biocontrol agents.

Import of Wheat Flour

4877. SHRI NARAHARI MAHATO:
SHRI RANEN BARMAN:

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

(a) whether the Government has recently decided to import wheat flour particularly from America and other European countries;

(b) if so, the details thereof and reasons therefor indicating the quantum proposed to be imported, country-wise;

(c) whether the customs duty on the import of the wheat flour has been abolished; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and 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 (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Question does not arise.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) In order to augment the availability of wheat flour in the open market and to keep the prices of wheat flour under check, the Government has decided to allow import of wheat flour at zero duty w.e.f. 26th December, 2007.

Hoarding of Foodgrains

4878. SHRI AJOY CHAKRABORTY:
SHRI N. JANARDHANA REDDY:
SHRI SUBRATA BOSE:
SHRI RANEN BARMAN:
SHRI DEVIDAS PINGLE:
SHRI SHISHUPAL N. PATLE:

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

(a) whether raids were conducted by State Authorities under Essential Commodities Act, 1955 and Prevention of Black-marketing and Maintenance of Essential Commodities Act, 1980 in Delhi in view of the shortage and rising prices of Essential Commodities;

(b) if so, the details and outcome thereof indicating the quantum and value of the said commodities recovered;

(c) whether similar raids were conducted in other parts of the country recently;

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

(e) the action taken/proposed to be taken against the hoarders;

(f) whether there is any proposal to engage Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and/or other agencies to check hoarding and black-marketing; and

(g) if so, the details thereof and other steps proposed to be taken to check hoarding and black-marketing?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) and (b) Yes Sir, Government of NCT of Delhi have reported , conducting of raids under Essential Commodities Act, 1955 in the month of April, 2008. Details are given in the enclosed Statement-I.

(c) and (d) Yes Sir, some States and Union Territories have reported conducting raids under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955. Details of raids conducted in these States/UTs during the current year are given in the enclosed Statement-II.

(e) to (g) Powers have been vested with State Governments for taking action under the provisions of Essential Commodities Act, 1955 and the Prevention of Blackmarketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act, 1980. There is no proposal at present to engage Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) to check hoarding and black-marketing.

Statement-I

Sl.No.	Name of the Commercial Establishment/ Gas Agency	Details of seized items	Status of Action
1	2	3	4
1.	M/s.Uttam Sudh Ghee Bhandar, A/5/5, Krishna Nagar, Delhi	Edible Oil of One Truck	FIR Lodged
2.	M/s. Radhey Trading Co., Parwana Road, East Preet Vihar, Delhi	Godown of Edible Oil & Kiryana Items	FIR Lodged
3.	M/s. Amar Gas Agency, Opp. Shyam Lal Collage, Shahdara, Delhi	10 Domestic LPG Cylinders	FIR Lodged
4.	M/s. Dayal Singh Inderjit Singh, Shahdara Chowk, Delhi	Godown of Edible Oil	FIR Lodged
5.	M/s. Ramdas Pritam Singh, 124, Chhota Bazar, Shahdara, Delhi	Godown of Edible Oils stock	FIR Lodged
6.	M/s. Om Ji Om Caterer, Ajmal Khan Road, Netaji Subhash Market, Karol Bagh	2 domestic LPG cylinders seized	FIR Lodged
7.	M/s. Pal Ji Corner, WZ-274/A-1, Main Market, Inderpuri, Delhi	01 domestic LPG cylinders seized	FIR Lodged
8.	M/s. K.R. Enterprises, Siddipuri, Karol Bagh	Excess stock of filled cylinders	FIR Lodged
9.	M/s. Jain Corner, Shop No. 1, Dikshikha Tower, Rajendra Place, Delhi	03 domestic LPG cylinders seized	FIR Lodged
10.	M/s.Sardarji Corner, Shop No. 1 Dikshikha Tower, Rajendra Place, Delhi	04 domestic LPG cylinders seized	FIR Lodged
11.	M/s. Jindal Enterprises, DSIDC Complex, Narela, Delhi	Rate List/Stock Board of flour (Atta) not displayed	FIR Lodged
12.	M/s. Naresh Kumar Sunil Kumar, DSIDC Industrial Area, Narela, Delhi	Rate List/Stock Board of flour (Atta) not displayed	FIR Lodged

1	2	3	4
13.	Godown of Hariom Brand Renola Village Delhi	Seized 20,000 Ltrs. Edible Oils and 225 bags of raw mustard	FIR Lodged
14.	M/s. Arora Veg. Corner, AC Block, Shalimar Bagh, Delhi	1 domestic LPG cylinder	FIR Lodged
15.	M/s. Shakti Bhog Food Ltd., 24, SSI, GTK Industrial Area, Delhi	Wheat 1745 Qtls & Atta 965 Qtls. seized	FIR Lodged
16.	M/s. Pundir Restaurant & Carters, Majlish Park, Delhi	1 domestic LPG cylinder	FIR Lodged
17.	M/s. Javed Sweet Corner, Gopalpur, Timarpur, Delhi	1 domestic LPG cylinder	FIR Lodged
18.	M/s. Yadav Sweet Corner, Wazirabad, Timarpur, Delhi	1 domestic LPG cylinder	FIR Lodged
19.	M/s. Aneja Gen. Store, Navada Bazar, Najafgarh, Delhi	Rate List/Stock Board not displayed	FIR Lodged
20.	M/s. Goyal Trading Co., Navada Bazar, Najafgarh, Delhi	Rate List/Stock Board not displayed	FIR Lodged
21.	M/s. Ganga Industries 1668.C/2, Thana Road, Najafgarh, Delhi	Rate List/Stock Board not displayed	FIR Lodged
22.	M/s. Vaishno Dhaba, RZ-31-32, Main Road, Sagarpur, Delhi	3 domestic LPG cylinder seized	FIR Lodged
23.	M/s. Guru Hotel, WZ-63, Gandhi Market, Vashisht Park, Sagarpur, Delhi	4 domestic LPG cylinders seized	FIR Lodged
24.	M/s. Kake Da Dhaba, Shop No-30-31, Main Najafgarh Road, Rajouri Garden, Delhi	2 domestic LPG cylinders seized	FIR Lodged
25.	M/s. Punjabi Rasoi, Shop No.24, Main Najafgarh Road, Rajouri Garden, Delhi	Misuse of domestic LPG cylinders	FIR Lodged
26.	M/s. Ganesh Trading Co., Navada Bazar, Najafgarh, Delhi	Rate List/Stock Board not displayed	FIR Lodged
27.	M/s. Garg Trading Co., 200A, Navada Bazar, Najafgarh, Delhi	Rate List/Stock Board not displayed	FIR Lodged
28.	M/s. Parshuram, 160 Majudpur, Vasant Kunj	4 domestic LPG cylinders seized	FIR Lodged
29.	M/s. Eat-N- Joy, New Friends Colony Community Centre, Delhi	5 domestic LPG cylinders seized	FIR Lodged
30.	M/s. Chawla Restaurant, NFC,	1 domestic LPG Cylinders	FIR Lodged
31.	M/s. S.K. Chicken, Shop No. 13, NFC	1 domestic LPG cylinder seized	FIR Lodged

1	2	3	4
32.	M/s. J.K. Chicken Corner, Shop No. 10, NFC	1 domestic LPG cylinder seized	FIR Lodged
33.	M/s. Muglai Food, NFC	1 domestic LPG cylinder seized	FIR Lodged
34.	M/s. Bake, 23 FNC	2 domestic LPG cylinder seized	FIR Lodged
35.	M/s. New Delhi Food Corner	3 domestic LPG cylinder seized	FIR Lodged
36.	M/s. Anand Restarurant	5 domestic LPG cylinder seized	FIR Lodged
37.	M/s. Ramher Singhal, T-266-67, Tuglakabad Extn., Delhi	33,000 Edible Oil, appx. 40,000 Vanaspati Ghee	FIR Lodged
38.	Balaji Udyog, Najafgarh	11000 Ltrs. Sathi Brand Mustard Oil	FIR Lodged
39.	GMD Oil Mill, 86/11-20, Mundka Ind. Area.	1,45,000 Ltrs. Edible Oil	FIR Lodged
40.	Goel Trading Co., Sani Bazar, Hasthal Road, Uttam Nagar.	12,500 Ltrs. Refined Oil.	FIR Lodged
41.	M/s. Gurudayal Oil and General Mill, Bawana Road, Narela, Delhi	Mustard Oil (160 loose bottles of 1 ltr each, 250 loose bottle of ½ ltr each, 23 tins of 15 ltr. each, 24 pkd. boxes consisting of 15 bottle of 1 ltr. each)	FIR Lodged
42.	M/s. Jindal Super Dal Mill, C-29, Lawrance Road, Delhi	6871 Qtls. (Urad, Chana Dal)	FIR Lodged
43.	M/s. Jagat Agro Commodities Pvt. Ltd, Sindhu Border, Narela, Delhi	2,51,670 Qtls. Rice stock (Stock of 09/04/08)	FIR Lodged
44.	M/s, Janki Mangal Udyog, F-1740, DSIDC Ind. Area Ltd.	50800 Kgm. Edible Oil	FIR Lodged
45.	M/s. Sunil Kr Sanjay Kumar, C-45/5,Lawrance Road.	--	FIR Lodged
46.	M/s. Yogesh Oil & Flour Mill, C-36/1 Lawrance Road Industrial Area.	--	FIR Lodged
47.	Nafed, Lawrance Road.	--	FIR Lodged

Statement-II

Action Taken under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 for the year, 2008 – Information received from States/UTs upto 31.3.2008

Sl.No.	State/UTs	No. of raids	No. of persons arrested	No. of persons prosecuted	No. of persons convicted	Value of goods confiscated in Rs. Lakh	Reported upto
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	Arunachal Pradesh	6	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	January
2	Delhi	68	61	41		49.5	March
3	Gujarat	7251		20	Nil	28.94	February

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
4	Goa	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	March
5	Haryana	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	March
6	Himachal Pradesh	2518	Nil	15	Nil	0.47	January
7	Karnataka	419	3	Nil	Nil	0.87	January
8	Kerala	20831	Nil	Nil	Nil	0.045	February
9	Madhya Pradesh	9449		70		3.38	February
10	Maharashtra	4611	533	480		8710.29	March
11	Manipur	17	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	February
12	Meghalaya	26	1	2	1	0.05	March
13	Orissa	134		6		0.35	January
14	Punjab	4347	Nil	Nil	Nil	0.27	January
15	Tamil Nadu	2546	339	211	750	110.56	February
16	Uttar Pradesh	6655	197	286	Nil	273.13	February
17	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	90	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	March
18	Lakshadweep	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	March
19	Pondicherry	109	5	5	Nil	0.13	February
	Total	59077	1139	1136	751	9177.985	

Augmenting of Mobile Line Capacity

4879. SHRI UDAY SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has proposed to augment the mobile lines capacity of BSNL to check call rates of other mobile service providers in the country; and

(b) if so, the corrective steps taken/being taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) and (b) Sir, Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) has planned to add 33.5 million lines capacity in next one year. As per the existing provisions of Telecommunications Tariff Orders (TTO), tariff for telecom services are under forbearance, except with regard to Fixed Line service in rural Areas, National Roaming Service in Cellular Mobile Service and Leased Line Service.

[Translation]

Provision of Mobile Connections

4880. SHRI AJIT JOGI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of mobile telephone connections provided by BSNL in the country especially in the State of Chhattisgarh, as on date;

(b) whether all the districts and tehsil headquarter are connected with mobile telephone services in Chhattisgarh;

(c) if not, the names of the district and tehsil headquarters still not connected with mobile services in the State;

(d) the plan formulated for the proliferation of the mobile services in Chhattisgarh;

(e) whether the mobile connections in Chhattisgarh are made available on demand; and

(f) if not, the time by which it is likely to be available on demand?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited has provided 36687251 numbers of mobile telephone connections (GSM) in the country in its area of operation including 614405 numbers of mobile connections in Chhattisgarh as on 20.4.2008.

(b) Yes. Sir.

(c) Does not arise in view of (b) above.

(d) Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited has planned to install 1131 numbers of Mobile Base Station with capacity of 10.5 lakh lines in Chhattisgarh for the year 2008-09. The installation work of 290 Mobile base Stations is also in progress.

(e) and (f) Yes, Sir. Mobile connections are available on demand in Chhattisgarh.

[English]

Setting up of Electronic Telephone Exchanges

4881. SHRI VIKRAMBHAI ARJANBHAI MADAM:
SHRI L. RAJAGOPAL:
SHRI JASUBHAI DHANABHAI BARAD:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Electronic Telephone Exchanges/ telephone exchanges set up in the country, as on date, State-wise, Secondary Switching Areas (SSA)-wise;

(b) whether the Government has any proposal to open more electronic telephone exchanges in the country;

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

(d) the total number of manual, analogue and electro mechanical telephone exchanges are functioning in the country especially in Andhra Pradesh;

(e) the number of telephone exchanges that have been converted into digital electronic exchanges in the country as on date;

(f) whether Rural Telephone Exchanges in Andhra Pradesh are functioning either manually or through analogue mode;

(g) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(h) the time by which is likely to be covered into digital exchange?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) The total number of Electronic Telephone Exchanges set up by BSNL in the country are 38,158 out of which 8,702 are in urban area and 29,456 in rural area. The State-wise (Circle-wise) and SSA-wise list of above noted exchanges are given in the enclosed Statement-I and II.

As on 31.03.2008, the number of Electronic Telephone Exchanges setup by MTNL in Delhi and Mumbai are 335 and 202 respectively.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. The details of telephone exchanges proposed to be set up BSNL State-wise (circle-wise) and Secondary Switching Area (SSA) wise is given in Statement-III. Details of telephone exchanges proposed to be set up by MTNL is given in Statement-IV.

(d) to (h) All the telephone exchanges working in MTNL and BSNL network (including Andhra Pradesh) are electronic and digital in nature.

Statement-I

Circle-wise Status of BSNL Teleohone Exchanges as on 31.3.2008

Sl. No.	Name of Circle	Urban	Rural	Total
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Andaman and Nicobar	5	45	50
2.	Andhra Pradesh	666	3337	4003
3.	Assam	171	426	597
4.	Bihar	218	1005	1223
5.	Chhattisgarh	180	445	625
6.	Gujarat	543	2675	3218
7.	Haryana	351	923	1274
8.	Himachal Pradesh	98	964	1062
9.	Jammu and Kashmir	117	255	372
10.	Jharkhand	187	292	479
11.	Karnataka	499	2228	2727
12.	Kerala	246	995	1241
13.	Madhya Pradesh	576	2110	2686

1	2	3	4	5
14.	Maharashtra	640	4302	4942
15.	North East-I	72	258	330
16.	North East-II	57	166	223
17.	Orissa	221	938	1159
18.	Punjab	326	1216	1542
19.	Rajasthan	382	1953	2335
20.	Tamil Nadu	867	1219	2086
21.	Uttar Pradesh (E)	660	1636	2296
22.	Uttar Pradesh (W)	484	493	977
23.	Uttaranchal	112	343	455
24.	West Bengal	239	1146	1385
25.	Kolkatta	550	0	550
26.	Chennai	235	86	321
	Total	8702	29456	38158

Statement-II

SSA-wise list of Telephone Exchanges (As on 31.3.2008)

Circle: Andhra Pradesh

S.No.	SSA Name	Tele Exges.		
		Urban	Rural	Total
1	2	3	4	5
1	Adilabad	11	124	135
2	Ananthpur	24	166	190
3	Chittor	25	199	224
4	Cuddapah	14	127	141
5	East Godavari	31	160	191
6	Guntur	39	182	221
7	Hyderabad	196	129	325
8	Karimnagar	14	159	173
9	Khammam	15	151	166
10	Krishna	27	206	233
11	Kurnool	20	211	231
12	Mahaboobnagar	18	183	201
13	Medak	18	122	140
14	Nalgonda	13	189	202
15	Nellore	19	168	187
16	Nizamabad	6	129	135
17	Ongole	24	163	187
18	Srikakulam	25	88	113
19	Vishakhapatnam	53	85	138
20	Vizianagaram	27	92	119
21	Warangal	24	127	151
22	West Godavari	23	177	200
	Circle Total	666	3337	4003
Circle: Andaman Nicobar				
1	Port Blair	5	45	50
	Circle Total	5	45	50
Circle: Assam				
1	Bongaigaon	27	71	98
2	Dibrugarh	24	44	68
3	Jorhat	32	66	98
4	Kamrup	28	26	54
5	Nagaon	18	83	101
6	Silchar	18	80	98
7	Tezpur	24	56	80
	Circle Total	171	426	597
Circle: Bihar				
1	Ara	13	48	61
2	Begusarai	7	32	39
3	Betia	5	32	37
4	Bhagalpur	12	57	69
5	Chhapra	17	77	94
6	Darbhanga	4	56	60

1	2	3	4	5
7	Gaya	18	107	125
8	Hajipur	5	40	45
9	Katihar	10	56	66
10	Khagaria	2	20	22
11	Kishanganj	5	16	21
12	Madhubani	5	48	53
13	Motihari	5	51	56
14	Munger	16	58	74
15	Muzaffarpur	15	72	87
16	Patna	56	66	122
17	Saharsa	8	69	77
18	Samstipur	6	47	53
19	Sasaram	9	53	62
	Circle Total	218	1005	1223
Circle: Chhattisgarh				
1	Bastar	18	55	73
2	Bilaspur	45	110	155
3	Durg	50	94	144
4	Raigarh	12	59	71
5	Raipur	41	91	132
6	Surguja	14	36	50
	Circle Total	186	446	625
Circle: Gujarat				
1	Ahmedabad	136	132	268
2	Amreli	13	149	162
3	Bharuch	18	119	137
4	Bhavnagar	25	112	137
5	Bhuj	25	213	238
6	Godhra	13	126	139
7	Himmatnagar	31	186	217
8	Jamnagar	24	135	159
9	Junagadh	22	181	203
10	Mehsana	23	260	283
11	Nadiad	29	176	205
12	Palanpur	13	246	259
13	Rajkot	29	211	240
14	Surat	52	65	117
15	Surendranagar	10	149	159
16	Vadodara	45	120	165
17	Valsad	35	95	130
	Circle Total	543	2675	3218
Circle: Haryana				
1	Ambala	63	136	199
2	Faridabad	28	37	65
3	Gurgaon	45	42	87
4	Hisar	53	180	233
5	Jind	15	77	92
6	Karnal	56	136	192
7	Rewari	25	80	105
8	Rohtak	49	163	212
9	Sonipat	17	72	89
	Circle Total	351	923	1274
Circle: Himachal Pradesh				
1	Dharamshala	21	190	211
2	Hamirpur	20	151	171
3	Kullu	5	80	85
4	Mandi	10	156	166
5	Shimla	22	208	230
6	Solan	20	179	199
	Circle Total	98	964	1062
Circle: Jammu Kashmir				
1	Jammu	39	65	104
2	Leh	3	47	50
3	Rajouri	6	48	54
4	Srinagar	54	45	99
5	Udhampur	15	50	65
	Circle Total	117	255	372

1	2	3	4	5
Circle: Jharkhand				
1	Daltonganj	8	35	43
2	Dhanbad	52	26	78
3	Dumka	20	61	81
4	Hazaribagh	21	74	95
5	Jamshedpur	48	35	83
6	Ranchi	38	61	99
	Circle Total	187	292	479
Circle: Karnataka				
1	Bangalore	138	102	240
2	Belgaum	29	160	189
3	Bellary	20	96	116
4	Bidar	11	69	80
5	Bijapur	25	167	192
6	Chikmangalore	13	135	148
7	Chitradurga	16	113	129
8	Dharwad	44	125	169
9	Gulbarga	15	145	160
10	Hassan	12	91	103
11	Karwar	21	131	152
12	Kodagu	6	70	76
13	Kolar	17	127	144
14	Mandya	8	57	65
15	Mangalore	45	206	251
16	Mysore	34	104	138
17	Raichur	13	109	122
18	Shimoga	17	124	141
19	Tumukur	15	97	112
	Circle Total	499	2228	2727
Circle: Kerala				
1	Alappuzha	20	52	72
2	Calicut	33	89	122
3	Ernakulam	57	158	215
4	Kannur	34	137	171
5	Kollam	9	76	85
6	Kottayam	17	84	101
7	Malapuram	6	88	94
8	Palakkad	16	99	115
9	Pathanamthitta	7	77	84
10	Thiruvananthapuram	26	70	96
11	Thrissur	21	65	86
	Circle Total	246	995	1241
Circle: Madhya Pradesh				
1	Balaghat	9	53	62
2	Betul	14	67	81
3	Bhopal	49	85	134
4	Chhatarpur	36	52	88
5	Chhindwara	16	90	106
6	Damoh	8	35	43
7	Dewas	15	73	88
8	Dhar	12	104	116
9	Guna	14	49	63
10	Gwalior	27	61	88
11	Indore	36	48	84
12	Itarsi	22	110	132
13	Jabalpur	40	74	114
14	Jhabua	8	37	45
15	Khandwa	12	77	89
16	Khargone	17	115	132
17	Mandla	6	42	48
18	Mandsaur	22	148	170
19	Morena	27	93	120
20	Narsinghpur	6	64	70
21	Panna	6	15	21
22	Raisen	7	39	46
23	Rajgarh	14	40	54
24	Ratlam	13	65	78

1	2	3	4	5
25	Rewa	16	21	37
26	Sagar	19	59	78
27	Satna	17	44	61
28	Seoni	5	52	57
29	Shahdol	27	32	59
30	Shajapur	14	66	80
31	Shivpuri	11	43	54
32	Sidhi	8	22	30
33	Ujjain	16	88	104
34	Vidisha	7	47	54
	Circle Total	576	2110	2686
Circle: Maharashtra				
1	Ahmednagar	22	311	333
2	Akola	13	125	138
3	Amaravati	18	116	134
4	Aurangabad	17	138	155
5	Beed	6	128	134
6	Bhandara	7	101	108
7	Buldhana	11	108	119
8	Chandrapur	17	84	101
9	Dhule	12	125	137
10	Gadchiroli	3	42	45
11	Goa	56	79	135
12	Jalgaon	23	193	216
13	Jalna	8	89	97
14	Kalyan	72	109	181
15	Kolhapur	29	280	309
16	Latur	8	138	146
17	Nagpur	34	102	136
18	Nanded	20	113	133
19	Nashik	31	211	242
20	Osmanabad	9	82	91
21	Parbhani	14	101	115
22	Pune	97	211	308
23	Raigad	20	134	154
24	Ratnagiri	12	162	174
25	Sangli	21	307	328
26	Satara	17	207	224
27	Sindhudurg	6	101	107
28	Solapur	20	235	255
29	Wardha	8	71	79
30	Yeotmal	9	99	108
	Circle Total	640	4302	4942
Circle: North East-I				
1	Meghalaya	22	96	118
2	Mizoram	31	57	88
3	Tripura	19	105	124
	Circle Total	72	258	330
Circle: North East-II				
1	Arunachal Pradesh	15	90	105
2	Manipur	25	31	56
3	Nagaland	17	45	62
	Circle Total	57	166	223
Circle: Orissa				
1	Balasore	15	75	90
2	Bolangir	8	44	52
3	Cuttack	30	146	176
4	Dhenkanal	25	101	126
5	Ganjam	26	101	127
6	Kalahandi	6	55	61
7	Koraput	22	86	108
8	Mayurbhanj	7	49	56
9	Phulbani	3	44	47
10	Puri	43	90	133

1	2	3	4	5
11	Sambalpur	21	93	114
12	Sundergarh	15	54	69
	Circle Total	221	938	1159
Circle: Punjab				
1	Amritsar	31	122	153
2	Bhatinda	25	108	133
3	Chandigarh	47	15	62
4	Ferozepur	24	242	266
5	Hoshiarpur	15	87	102
6	Jalandhar	57	158	215
7	Ludhiana	45	91	136
8	Pathankot	21	104	125
9	Patiala	31	121	152
10	Ropar	7	49	56
11	Sangrur	23	119	142
	Circle Total	326	1216	1542
Circle: Rajasthan				
1	Ajmer	23	72	95
2	Alwar	16	99	115
3	Banswara	11	68	79
4	Barmer	3	81	84
5	Bharatpur	17	65	82
6	Bhilwara	18	69	87
7	Bikaner	9	74	83
8	Bundi	6	35	41
9	Chittorgrah	8	54	62
10	Churu	12	90	102
11	Jaipur	73	132	205
12	Jaisalmer	2	34	36
13	Jhalawar	5	30	35
14	Jhunjhunu	13	63	76
15	Jodhpur	19	105	124
16	Kota	27	68	95
17	Nagaur	12	97	109
18	Pali	22	124	146
19	Sawaimadhopur	7	63	70
20	Sikar	14	96	110
21	Sirohi	9	122	131
22	Sriganganagar	25	160	185
23	Tonk	8	40	48
24	Udaipur	23	112	135
	Circle Total	382	1953	2335
Circle: Tamil Nadu				
1	Coimbatore	118	54	172
2	Cuddalore	61	105	166
3	Dharmapuri	32	94	126
4	Erode	53	68	121
5	Karaikudi	30	92	122
6	Kumbakonam	34	43	77
7	Madurai	92	78	170
8	Nagercoil	41	6	47
9	Nilgiris	23	23	46
10	Pondicherry	13	19	32
11	Salem	81	148	229
12	Tanjore	41	80	121
13	Tirunelveli	43	38	81
14	Trichy	95	195	290
15	Tuticorin	27	43	70
16	Vellore	58	95	153
17	Virudhunagar	25	38	63
	Circle Total	867	1219	2086
Circle: Uttaranchal				
1	Almora	14	92	106
2	Dehradun	27	34	61
3	Haridwar	18	13	31
4	Kotdwar	17	102	119
5	Nainital	29	49	78
6	Uttarkashi	7	53	60
	Circle Total	112	343	455

1	2	3	4	5
Circle: Uttar Pradesh(E)				
1	Allahabad	44	65	109
2	Azamgarh	16	60	76
3	Bahraich	11	53	64
4	Ballia	11	38	49
5	Banda	17	82	99
6	Barabanki	14	60	74
7	Basti	14	63	77
8	Deoria	19	55	74
9	Etawah	19	26	45
10	Faizabad	17	57	74
11	Farrukhabad	16	39	55
12	Fatehpur	8	41	49
13	Ghazipur	13	33	46
14	Gonda	11	56	67
15	Gorakhpur	27	55	82
16	Hamirpur	15	32	47
17	Hardoi	15	30	45
18	Jaunpur	12	57	69
19	Jhansi	27	43	70
20	Kanpur	70	66	136
21	Lakhimpur Kheri	11	72	83
22	Lucknow	58	41	99
23	Mainpuri	13	28	41
24	Mau	10	32	42
25	Mirzapur	37	41	78
26	Orai	12	32	44
27	Pratapgarh	18	46	64
28	Raebareilly	7	57	64
29	Shahjahanpur	19	24	43
30	Sitapur	15	52	67
31	Sultanpur	9	76	85
32	Unnao	24	45	69
33	Varanasi	31	79	110
	Circle Total	660	1636	2296
Circle: Uttar Pradesh (W)				
1	Agra	51	46	97
2	Aligarh	30	41	71
3	Bareilly	47	31	78
4	Bijnor	21	47	68
5	Budaun	31	15	46
6	Bulandshahar	22	25	47
7	Etah	20	23	43
8	Ghaziabad	62	30	92
9	Mathura	28	33	61
10	Meerut	42	30	72
11	Moradabad	39	43	82
12	Muzaffarnagar	24	44	68
13	Noida	28	11	39
14	Pilibhit	9	26	35
15	Rampur	11	21	32
16	Saharanpur	19	27	46
	Circle Total	484	493	977
Circle: West Bengal				
1	Asansol	42	147	189
2	Bankura	6	67	73
3	Berhampore	14	82	96
4	Coochbehar	10	32	42
5	Gangtok	13	34	47
6	Jalpaiguri	17	41	58
7	Kharagpur	35	149	184
8	Kolkata	20	239	259
9	Krishnanagar	13	79	92
10	Malda	5	55	60
11	Purulia	5	32	37
12	Raiganj	11	65	76

1	2	3	4	5
13	Siliguri	40	41	81
14	Suri	8	83	91
	Circle Total	239	1146	1385
Circle: Metro Calcutta				
1	Calcutta	550	0	550
	Circle Total	550	0	550
Circle: Metro Chennai				
1	Chennai	235	86	321
	Circle Total	235	86	321

Statement-III

State-wise (Circle-wise) & SSA-wise list of New Telephone Exchanges proposed to be set up in the BSNL's Network during 2008-09

S.No.	Name of Circle	Name of SSA	No. of Telephone Exchanges Planned
1.	Andhra Pradesh	Visakhapatnam	3
		Warangal	1
		Hyderabad	7
2.	Chhattisgarh	Bilaspur	1
		Durg	1
		Raipur	6
3.	Haryana	Faridabad	2
4.	Jammu and Kashmir	Srinagar	3
		Udhampur	1
		Leh	1
5.	Karnataka	Bangalore	15
6.	Madhya Pradesh	Khandwa	1
		Rewa	1
7.	North East-I	Meghalaya	3
		Mizoram	3
		Tripura	1
8.	North East-II	Arunachal Pradesh	1
9.	Uttar Pradesh (West)	Noida	18
		Ghaziabad	5
		Meerut	1
10	Uttaranchal	Dehradun	1
		Haridwar	2
		Nainital	2
		New Tehri	4
11.	Chennai	Chennai	5
		Chengalpetu	3

Statement-IV

The details of the Telephone Exchanges proposed to be set up in MTNL, Delhi during 2008-09

S.No.	Name of the Exchange	Technology	Capacity
1.	Kalibari (RSU)	OCB	5K
2.	South Block (Main Exchange)	OCB	3K
3.	Amar Colony (RSU)	AXE-10	7K
4.	Tughlakabad Extension (RSU)	OCB	5K
5.	Vasundra Enclave (RSU)	OCB	6K
6.	Mayur Vihar Ph-II (RSU)	OCB	29K
7.	Saraswati Vihar (RSU)	5ESS	24K
8.	Rohini Sec.24-25 (RSU)	EWSD	3K
9.	Karam Pura (RSU)	OCB	8K
10.	Chanakya Place (RSU)	OCB	5K
11.	Rajokri (RSU)	5ESS	2K
12.	Common Wealth (RSU)	OCB	5K
13.	Bawana - I (RSU)	OCB	5K
14.	Burari (RSU)	OCB	10K

The details of the Telephone Exchanges proposed to be set up in MTNL, Mumbai during 2008-09

Sl.No.	Name	Capacity	Eqpt
1	Sanpada	5K	New
2	Devidas Lane	5K	Recovered
3	Vanashree	2K	Recovered
4	Govind Udhyog	4K	New
5	Oberoi Mall	2K	New
6	Pahadi Goregaon	6K	New
7	Raheja Excotica	2K	Recovered
8	Airoli Railway Station	9K	New
9	Neptune	3K	New
10	Mhape Stores	3K	Recovered

Import of Foodgrains

4882. SHRI SUBRATA BOSE:
SHRI GURUDAS DASGUPTA:
SHRI SHISHUPAL N. PATLE:
SHRI HITEN BARMAN:
SHRI NARAHARI MAHATO:
DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA:
SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA:
SHRI DEVIDAS PINGLE:

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

(a) whether the Food Corporation of India (FCI) failed to achieve the targets fixed for procurement of foodgrains during 2007-08;

(b) if so, the details thereof indicating the targets fixed and achieved during the said period;

(c) the details regarding bids received and accepted and quantum and price of foodgrains imported during the said period;

(d) the estimated production and requirement of foodgrains in the country during 2008-09;

(e) whether the Government has entered into new agreements for import of foodgrains with some other countries to meet the shortfall in production/ procurement of foodgrains during 2008-09;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) the other steps taken to ensure availability of foodgrains at reasonable rates during the said period?

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) Since procurement of foodgrains by Government agencies is open ended, no targets are fixed. The quantity of rice and wheat procured in the Central Pool by FCI and State agencies in Kharif and Rabi Marketing Season 2007-08 is as under:

(in lakh tonnes)

Marketing Season	Rice	Wheat
2007-08	225.37 (as on 21.4.08)	111.28

(c) The details of tenders invited and orders placed for import of wheat during 2007-08 are given in the enclosed Statement-I.

(d) No production estimates for the year 2008-09 is available as the agriculture year 2008-09 has not yet commenced. The demand for foodgrains (rice, wheat and coarsegrains), based on behaviourist approach in the country during 2008-09 is 201.49 million tonnes.

(e) No, Sir.

(f) Does not arise.

(g) Steps taken to ensure availability of sufficient quantity of rice and wheat for its distribution under TPDS and other welfare scheme are given in the Statement-II.

Statement-I

Details of tenders invited and orders placed for 2007-08

1. Tenders Floated

Tender(s) - 2007-08

	Floated on	Closed/ Opened on	Qty.(Lakh MTs.) Offered	Decided and conveyed to STC/MMTC/ PEC on	Weighted Average Price (US $)	Exchange Rate	Weighted Average Price in Indian Rupees
First*	30.04.07	21.05.07	3.06**	30.05.07	263.00	40.64	10688.32
Second	26.06.07	04.07.07	5.11**	10.07.07	325.59	40.41	13157.09
Third	23.08.07	29.08.07	7.95	03.09.07	389.45	40.88	15920.72
Fourth	12.11.07	19.11.07	3.425	22.11.07	400.19	39.41	15771.49
Fifth	26.11.07	03.12.07	1.5	07.12.07	396.91	39.41	15642.22
Sixth*	10.12.07	17.12.07		Discharged			

* All bids rejected

** Tender floated was for one million tons. Recommended quantity was purchased in the 2nd and 3rd tenders.

2. Order Placed (Second Tender)

S.No.	Port	Supplier Name	Qty in lakh MTs (+/-5%)	Price (US $ PMT) C&F (FO)	Arrival Period
1.	Mundra	CARGILL International S.A, Switzerland	0.65	324.10	Sept '07
2.	Mundra	RIAS Trading S.A, Switzerland	1.25	329.95	Sept/Oct '07
3.	Mundra	CARGILL International S.A, Switzerland	0.65	327.10	Oct '07
4.	Mundra	TOEPFER International Asia Pte.Ltd, Singapore	1.28	328.95	Oct/Nov '07
5.	Mundra	TOEPFER International Asia Pte.Ltd, Singapore	1.28	317.95	Oct/Nov'07
	Total		5.11	325.59*	

3. Order Placed (Third Tender)

S.No.	Port	Supplier	Qty. (Lakh MTs.)	Delivery month-wise quantities-2007 (lakh MTs.)		Price (US $ PMT) C&F (FO)
1.	Mundra	GLENCORE Grain BV, Netherlands	5.2	October November December	0.65 1.30 3.25	385.00 387.00 390.00
2.	Kandla	GLENCORE Grain BV, Netherlands	2.2	October November	1.10 1.10	388.00 391.00
3.	Chennai	TOEPFER International Asia Pte.Ltd, Singapore	0.5	December		397.45
4.	Mumbai	STARCOM Resources Pte. Ltd. Singapore	0.05 (CNTR)	November December	0.01 0.04	393.00 393.00
	Total		7.95			389.45*

4. Orders Placed (Fourth Tender - Floated by MMTC)

S.No.	Port	Supplier	Qty (Lakh Mts)	Price (US$) PMT) C&F (FO)	Arrival Period	Origin
1.	Mundra	GLENCORE Grain BV, Netherlands	0.65 to 0.70 (+/- 10%)	397.03	By 10th February, 2008	Argentina

S.No.	Port	Supplier	Qty (Lakh Mts)	Price (US $) PMT C&F (FO)	Arrival Period	Origin
2.	Kandla	GLENCORE Grain BV, Netherlands	0.90 to 1.00 (+/- 10%)	408.43	By 10th February, 2008	Brazil
3.	Mundra	CARGILL International SA, Switzerland	1.80 (+/- 5%)	397.03	By 10th February, 2008	Argentina
	Total		3.425	400.19*		

5. Orders Placed (Fifth Tender - Floated by PEC Ltd.)

S. No.	Port	Supplier	Qty. (Lakh MTs.) (+/- 10%)	Price (US $ PMT) C&F (FO)	Arrival Period	Origin
1.	Mundra	J.K. International Pvt. Ltd. Australia	1.0	395.88	By 10th March, 2008	Argentina
2.	Kandla	J.K. International Pvt. Ltd. Australia	0.5	398.97	By 10th March, 2008	Argentina
	Total		1.5	396.91*		

* Weighted Average Price

6. Grand Total of all the Tenders

Grand Total Quantity (Lakh MTs)	Weighted Average Price (US $ PMT)	Exchange Rate	Weighted Average Price in Indian Rupees
17.985	373.97	40.00	14,958.80

7. Grand Total of Quantitiy received in all the tenders and the Weighted Average Price

Grand Total Quantity (Lakh MTs)	Weighted Average Price (US $ PMT)	Exchange Rate	Weighted Average Price in Indian Rupees
17.69	372.818	39.578	14,755.32

Statement-II

Steps taken by the Government to ensure availability of foodgrains

Wheat (RMS) 2008-09

i) The MSP for wheat has been fixed at Rs. 1000 per quintal for RMS 2008-09, an increase of Rs. 250 per quintal over RMS 2007-08 in order to encourage farmers to grow more wheat.

(ii) Import of 18 lakh tonnes of wheat was done in 2007-08 which improved the stock position of wheat in the Central Pool and the wheat stocks (as on 1.4.2008) were 58 lakh tonnes i.e. 18 lakh tonnes more than the buffer norms of 40 lakh tonnes at the start of RMS 2008-09.

(iii) Wheat exports on private account have been banned till further orders. Wheat exports from Central Pool are also banned.

iv) A notification titled "Wheat (Stock Declaration by Companies or Firms or Individuals) Order 2008 has been issued under the Essential Commodities Act 1955 on 11.2.2008. The order provides that any Company

or Firm or individual which purchases wheat beyond 10,000 tonnes during 2008-09 shall furnish return to Secretary, Food of the State from where maximum quantity has been purchased. While a return for purchase of wheat beyond 25,000 tonnes is required to be furnished to the Central Government.

v) Department of Consumer Affairs has extended upto 31st August, 2008 notification under the EC Act enabling State Governments to impose stock limit on wheat.

vi) Import of wheat on private account at zero duty has been permitted till further orders.

vii) NAFED has been permitted to procure wheat on behalf of FCI in M.P. Gujarat and Bihar.

viii) Commission to Societies/ Sub-agent @ 2.5% of MSP has been permitted for U.P, Bihar, M P. etc. on the lines of arthiya Commission in Punjab and Haryana.

Rice (KMS) 2007-08

(i) The MSP for paddy was fixed at Rs. 645 and Rs 675 per quintal for Common and Grade 'A' variety respectively for KMS 2007-08, giving an increase of Rs. 65 per quintal over the MSP of KMS 2006-07, in order to encourage farmers to grow more rice.

(ii) The Commission to Societies and Self-Help Groups undertaking procurement of paddy on behalf of the FCI/State Agencies, etc. has been allowed at a maximum of 1.5% of MSP.

(iii) The Government has announced a bonus of Rs. 100 per quintal over and above the MSP of paddy in KMS 2007-08.

(iv) Export of non-basmati rice has been banned.

(v) Import of rice at zero duty has been permitted.

(vi) A notification titled "Rice (Stock Declaration by Companies or Firms or Individuals) Order 2007 has been issued under the Essential Commodities Act 1955 on 27.11.2007. The order provides that any Company or Firm or individual which purchases paddy (in terms of rice) or rice beyond 10,000 tonnes during Kharif Marketing Season 2007-08 (October-September) shall furnish a return to the Secretary, Department of Food of the State from where maximum quantity has been purchased. In case the purchase of paddy (in terms of rice) or rice exceeds 25,000 tonnes (throughout the country) the return in the prescribed proforma to Department of Food & Public Distribution of Central Government.

Allocation of Additional Spectrum

4883. SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has conveyed to the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) and the law makers separately that they have not allocated additional spectrum to any GSM operator and dismissed allegations that the operators were hoarding spectrum;

(b) if so, whether it has also been pointed out that GSM operators have been maintaining that they were entitled upto a maximum of 15 MHZ and have deny excess of locations to any operator;

(c) if so, whether the DoT also communicated to the CVC that policy announcements in March, 2006 and Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI's) recommendations in August, 2007 both entitled GSM operators to get upto 15 MHZ of second generation per circle;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the additional spectrum was required to meet the growth; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) to (f) Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) had raised some queries on spectrum related issues and necessary information was provided to them.

The initial spectrum is allotted to the mobile telecom services in accordance with the relevant provisions of Unified Access Service License (UASL), subject to availability of spectrum. With growth of service and increased subscriber base, additional spectrum is allotted subject to availability as per eligibility criteria, which is based on the no. of active subscribers, peak traffic of the operator's network, demographic features of the service area.

The subscriber based eligibility criteria for allotment of additional spectrum to meet the growth requirements were revised in March 2006. Subsequently, during August 2007, Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) recommended stiffer subscriber based eligibility criteria for allotment of additional spectrum taking into account the latest technology developments etc. The latest orders issued in January 2008 in this regard are based on TRAI recommendations. These orders of 2006 and 2008 provide criteria for GSM spectrum allotment upto 15 MHz.

Non-effective Fertilizers

4884. SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the fertilizers used to enhance production are not as effective as they were in the beginning of green revolution; and

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the details regarding use of new technology to meet 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 (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) Imbalanced and indiscriminate use of fertilizers coupled with low addition of organic matter over years have resulted into multinutrient deficiencies and deterioration of soil health in the country. These factors lower the overall fertilizer response and crop productivity.

The Government is promoting adoption of soil test based site specific integrated nutrient management envisaging conjunctive use of both inorganic and organic sources of plant nutrients to restore higher crop response to added fertilizer.

[Translation]

Piling of Old Equipments

4885. CH. MUNAWAR HASSAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether a huge stock of old equipments, vehicles and obsolete items is piling at various exchanges/ offices of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) and Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL) in the country;

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

(c) the average price of the said obsolete stores/ items; and

(d) the time by which auction of the obsolete stores/ items of both the corporations is likely to take place in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) to (d) Sir, in BSNL and MTNL any equipment/vehicle is declared unserviceable/ obsolete when it exceeds its lifetime or it is not able to meet the new technical features as per the market requirement or the supplier/vendor is not able to meet the maintenance requirements due to technological obsolescence. The disposal of such unserviceable/obsolete items is a continuous process and it is done in a regular manner as per the prescribed guidelines by BSNL and MTNL.

[English]

Rent free BSNL Landline Connections

4886. SHRI G. KARUNAKARA REDDY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) has provided all the landline connections rent free in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the same facility is proposed to be provided by Mahanagar Nigam Limited (MTNL) in Delhi and Mumbai also;

(d) if so, the time by which a final decision in this regard is likely to be taken; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) to (e) MTNL has no proposal to provide all the landline connections on rent free basis. However, under certain promotional schemes, an 'add on' rent free landline connection or Fixed Wireless Telephone (FWT) over the existing landline for customers who have MTNL's landline for more than six months are offered.

MTNL has been reviewing the tariffs and its services from time to time, keeping in view of competition etc.

[Translation]

Special Group for Elimination of Child Labour

4887. SHRI HEMLAL MURMU: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether a special group has been constituted under the Ministry to carry out inspections and raids for elimination of child labour; and

(b) if so, the details and composition thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) While there is no special group constituted under the Ministry of Labour & Employment to carry out inspections and raids for elimination of child labour. However, a special campaign is launched all over the country. State Governments are the appropriate authority for enforcing the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986 for the areas comes under their jurisdiction. Therefore, the inspections and raids are conducted from time to time by the State Labour departments. For the areas under the Central jurisdiction, the office of the Chief Labour Commissioner (Central) conducts the inspections and raids for the Implementation of Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986.

(b) Does not arise.

[English]

Unsold Jute Stock

4888. SHRI PRABODH PANDA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Jute Corporation of India (JCI) has suffered huge loss by devastating fire at Polerhat godown in South 24 Parganas of West Bengal recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the JCI is facing problem of unsold old Jute stocks procured through commercial purchases during each of the last three years; and

(d) if so, the details thereof alongwith the remedial steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) and (b) There was damage by fire at Polerbat Godown in south 24-Parganas of West Bengal on 21.01.2008 which was covered by the Insurance Co. Jute Corporation of India Ltd. (JCI) lodged the Insurance claim valued Rs.29.52 lakh which is being settled by the Insurance Co.

(c) Yes, Sir. Due to downward trend in jute prices, JCI is having unsold jute stock (Commercial) for the last three years (in lakh quintals) as under:-

2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
0.74	4.88	3.20

(d) The Government has allowed JCI to sell the commercially procured jute under B. Twill linkage scheme at MSP Kolkata landed price off 2006-07 to liquidate the stock.

Setting up of Centres by STPI

4889. SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Software Technology Parks of India (STPI) has proposed to set up more centers in tier-II and tier-III cities in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the locations likely to be selected for setting up more centers in the country particularly in Maharashtra and Gujarat;

(d) the criteria likely to be adopted for the selection of the cities; and

(e) the investments likely to be made for setting up these centers in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Software Technology Parks of India (STPI) has setup 51 centers across the country, out of which 44 centers are in Tier-II and Tier-III cities. The location of new centres being set up are given in the Statement enclosed.

(d) and (e) As per current policy for setting up a new STPI Centre, the State Government has to provide 3 acres of land, 10,000 sq.ft. of built up space and a grant-in-aid of Rs. 1 Crore to STPI. The Department of Information Technology, Government of India provides a seed capital of Rs. 50 lakhs to STPI for setting up of New STPI Centres. A feasibility study has to be conducted by STPI jointly with the State Government to evaluate the export potential and commercial viability of the proposal.

Statement

List of new centers being setup

Sl. No.	Name of Centres (State)
1	Surat (Gujarat)
2	Bhopal, Gwalior (Madhya Pradesh)
3	Jamshedpur and Dhanbad (Jharkhand)
4	Agartala (Tripura)
5	Gurgaon (Haryana)
6	Gulberga (Karnataka)
7	Varanasi & Agra (Uttar Pradesh)

[Translation]

Agricultural Infrastructure

4890. SHRI RAJNARAYAN BUDHOLIA:
SHRI VIJOY KRISHNA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to enter into partnership with the private sector to strengthen agricultural infrastructure;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the progress made so far 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 Government has proposed to enter into partnership with the private sector to strengthen agricultural infrastructure. Partnership with private sector is also encouraged to strengthen Agriculture Extension. The areas identified for partnership with private sector include' Agriculture Marketing and Horticulture. In addition, under the Scheme of Development and Strengthening of Infrastructure Facilities for Production and Distribution of Quality Seed, private companies, individual entrepreneurs, self help groups etc. are also given credit-linked back ended capital subsidy. So far an amount of Rs.7 crore has been sanctioned to the National Seeds Corporation under this component.

[English]

Research and Development Programmes

4891. SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has recently reviewed the Research and Development (R&D) programmes of Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL);

(b) if so, the details and outcome thereof indicating the projects that got delayed alongwith the time since then they are pending and the cost overruns;

(c) whether a number of such projects have become infructuous in view of the investment made therein;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) whether the Government has taken decision to focus and invest only in result oriented Research and Development activities and to complete them in time-bound programme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government has recently reviewed Advanced Light Helicopter – WSI, Light Combat Helicopter and Intermediate Jet Trainer (IJT) Projects. There are no cost overruns in respect of these Projects.

There is a delay of about a year in Design & Development of the Engine of IJT programme which is under close monitoring.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) In respect of Design & Development programmes of HAL like ALH, ALH-WSI, IJT & LCH, these are result oriented and time bound.

[Translation]

Telephone Facility in Gram Panchayats

4892. SHRI MITRASEN YADAV: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Gram Panchayats in the country especially in Uttar Pradesh which have not been provided telephone facility so far, location-wise;

(b) whether the Government has set out any target for providing telephone facility to all the gram panchayats in the country during 2008-09;

(c) if so, the number of gram panchayats in Uttar Pradesh to be provided the said facility; and

(d) the time by which facility is likely to be provided to all the gram panchayats in Uttar Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) and (b) This department maintains data in respect of villages covered by Rural Telephony. However, all the Gram Panchayats in Uttar Pradesh are covered by telephone facility.

Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) has entered into an agreement with Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) in November, 2004 for provision of Village Public Telephones (VPTs) in 66,822 unconnected villages in the country. This excludes villages having population less than 100, lying in thick forest areas/naxalite infested areas etc. As on 29.2.2008, out of this, 53,073 villages have been provided with VPTs and the remaining 13,749 villages will

be provided with VPT facility by December 2008. Details indicating State-wise number of uncovered villages, provided with telephone connections and the number of villages which are yet to be provided with telephone connections are given in the Statement.

(c) and (d) Do not arise in view of (a) & (b) above.

Statement

Circle-wise Status of villages as on 29.2.2008 covered under Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) agreement

Sl. No.	Name of Circle	Total number of uncovered villages	Total number of villages covered	Total number of villages yet to be covered
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Andaman and Nicobar	0	0	0
2	Andhra Pradesh	1,074	657	417
3	Assam	8,931	8,638	293
4	Bihar	0	0	0
5	Jharkhand	1,694	1,092	602
6	Gujarat	4,144	4,041	103
7	Haryana	0	0	0
8	Himachal Pradesh	1,002	867	135
9	Jammu & Kashmir	1,755	1,274	481
10	Karnataka	0	0	0
11	Kerala	0	0	0
12	Madhya Pradesh	11,894	11,801	93
13	Chhattisgarh	5,043	3,317	1,726
14	Maharashtra	6,441	5,882	559
15	Meghalaya	1,957	207	1,750
16	Mizoram	96	28	68
17	Tripura	75	69	6
18	Arunachal Pradesh	646	210	436
19	Manipur	876	456	420
20	Nagaland	28	19	9
21	Orissa	4,899	1,334	3,565
22	Punjab	0	0	0
23	Rajasthan	12,386	11,083	1,303
24	Tamil Nadu	0	0	0
25	Uttar Pradesh (East)	0	0	0
26	Uttar Pradesh (West)	0	0	0
27	Uttaranchal	3,881	2,098	1,783
28	West Bengal	0	0	0
	Total	66,822	53,073	13,749

[English]

Rural Post Boxes

4893. SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of post boxes in the rural areas of the country especially in Andaman and Nicobar Islands are poorly maintained;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) There is a regular programme for painting and overhauling of Post Boxes/Letter Boxes. However, as and when any specific cases are pointed out, these are attended to promptly.

Technology Development through DRDO

4894. SHRIMATI JHANSI LAKSHMI BOTCHA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has entrusted the Defence Research Development Organisation (DRDO) which leading the country in self-reliance of technology development; and

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith plan, time-frame and delivery in hypersonic propulsion, unmanned land and under-way water vehicles, etc.?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) Achieving self-reliance in defence technology is the

responsibility that has to be met through national effort by Ministry of Defence, Defence Public Sector Undertakings, Ordnance Factories, Private Industries and DRDO.

(b) DRDO has undertaken technology initiative projects in the areas of hypersonic propulsion, unmanned land and under water vehicles.

Changes in Child Labour Law

4895. SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL:
SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO:
SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA:

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

(a) whether the various State Governments have sought changes in law dealing with child labourers in view of its future to control the same after nearby two years of implementation;

(b) if so, the details thereof indicating the changes sought by the States; and

(c) the response of the Union Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) to (c) The Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986 had come into effect way back in 1986. Suggestions for amendments/changes in the Act are received form time to time from various quarters including State Governments. Some of these suggestions include increasing of penalty, power for search and seizure under the Act, inclusion of agriculture as hazardous work and giving power to Executive Magistrates to adjudicate offences under the Child Labour Act. Accordingly Government has set up a Working Group to examine these suggestions.

Paddy Board

4896. DR. K.S. MANOJ: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to establish a Paddy Board in view of the reported food security crisis in the country;

(b) whether certain States have established their own Paddy Board in the States; and

(c) if so, the details thereof alongwith the details regarding financial support given to such boards particularly in Kerala?

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 proposal to establish Paddy Board by the Government of India.

(b) and (c) The Kerala is the only State in the country which has established Paddy Board on 12th February, 2008. No financial support has been given to the board during financial year 2007-08.

Indo-Israel Cooperation

4897. SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO:
SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA:
SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Israel have signed any agreement for cooperation in agriculture particularly irrigation, horticulture, agro tech and dairy sectors;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to boost agriculture production in cooperation with Israel?

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) An Agreement was signed between the Government of Republic of India and the Government of Israel for cooperation in the field of agriculture on December, 24th 1993.

Under the above Agreement, a Work Plan has been signed on 10th May, 2006 for cooperation in the field of agriculture for years 2006-2008. The Work Plan provides for collaboration research in fertigation and soil-less culture for growing high value horticulture crops, development of techniques and facilities in energy efficient green house structures for semi arid tropical climate, studies in recycling of waste water for irrigation, input delivery and extension service system, post harvest management and value addition for fruits, vegetables and dairy products and dairy development through genetic improvement.

(c) An Action Plan for the period 2008-10 has been formulated to implement key activities within a definite time frame for producing tangible output. The Action Plan involves, Central Government, State Governments and Private Institutions. The core activities identified under the Action Plan are Water Resource Development, Horticulture Development and High value crops and technologies for Rural Households.

Training to Artisans

4898. SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY:
SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR:

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has organised various training programmes for artisans, master crafts persons and designers working in the field of handicrafts in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of persons trained during each year of Tenth Plan and thereafter till date, State-wise;

(d) the funds allocated, released and spent thereon during the said period, State-wise;

(e) the number of exchange programmes organised by the Government during the said period;

(f) the details of funds allocated and utilised during the said period for the purpose;

(g) whether the Government has prepared any concrete action plan regarding increase in capacity and skills of artisans and handicraftsmen; and

(h) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. The Government organizes various training programmes for artisans and mastercraftspersons working in the filed of handicrafts in the entire country under various schemes, which include – Special Handicrafts Training Project(SHTP); Training to artisans through Ambedkar Hastashilp Vikas Yojna scheme(AHVY); Training to trainers under Design and Technology Upgradation Scheme and capacity building under Human Resource Development Scheme and training through Departmental Training scheme in Cane & Bamboo and Carpet Crafts etc.

(c) and (d) As funds under the schemes are not allocated State-wise, data on the same is not maintained. However, the funds are released directly to implementing agencies who implement the programmes across the country. The details of number of persons trained and funds released to various implementing agencies during each year of Tenth plan and thereafter till date is as per Statement enclosed.

(e) and (f) Under the Craft exchange programme component of the Export Promotion Scheme, five programmes have been organized during the said period and a total of Rs.65.83 lakhs was sanctioned and Rs.62.03 lakhs was released for the purpose.

(g) and (h) Yes Sir, During the 11th Plan period a new initiative titled "Training through Established Institution" has been launched under HRD scheme to increase the capacity and skills of handicraft artisans. The existing institutions like IITs, Polytechnics etc. are eligible under this scheme. So far 7 institutions have been assigned the task of capacity building and a sum Rs.100.20 lakhs has been released during 2007-08.

Statement

(Rs. in lakhs)

Sl. No.	Year	Number of Trainees Trained	Amount Released
1.	2002-03	6498	202.96
2.	2003-04	6623	331.85
3.	2004-05	10935	554.40
4.	2005-06	17629	798.65
5.	2006-07	12639	1061.84
6.	2007-08	11566	1034.91
7.	2008-09 (till date)	-	-
	Total	65890	3984.61

[Translation]

Utilisation of Water for Diverse Purposes

4899. SHRI HANSRAJ G. AHIR: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether certain industries are permitted to 'draw water from dams and canals for their use;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the list of such companies;

(c) whether the Government proposes to formulate a regulation for encouraging major industries to construct dams and canals for harnessing water resources for their use;

(d) if so, the details thereof and reaction of the industries thereto;

(e) whether proposals have been received from the industries in this regard; and

(f) if so, the details thereof alongwith the current status thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) to (d) The National Water Policy (NWP) envisages that there should be an integrated and multi-disciplinary approach to the planning, formulation and implementation of projects. The NWP further states that water resource development projects should as far as possible be planned and developed as multipurpose projects. While planning the projects, the requirements for various purposes are duly taken into consideration which inter-alia include the industrial water requirement. The release of water from reservoir for various purposes is made by the respective project authorities as per the policies of the State Government and the guidelines for regulation of such projects.

(e) No specific proposal has been received from any industry in this regard in the Ministry of Water Resources.

(f) Does not arise.

Deep Sea Fishing

4900. SHRI MANSUKHBHAI D. VASAVA:
SHRIMATI SANGEETA KUMARI SINGH DEO:
ADV. SURESH KURUP:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the quantity of fish being procured at the Indian ports has been declining alarmingly;

(b) if so, whether the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute has carried out any study in this regard;

(c) if so, the outcome thereof;

(d) the State-wise details and assistance provided by the Union Government to the State Governments for pisciculture in deep seas during the last three years; and

(e) the success achieved in improving fish catching as a result of the said assistance provided to the States 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 TASLIMUDDIN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

(d) and (e) Pisciculture is undertaken in the Inland and Coastal waters and not in deep seas in the country and the question for providing assistance for pisciculture in deep seas does not arise. As a result of pisciculture in Inland and Coastal waters, the fish production in the country has been registering a regular increase besides generating additional employment.

[English]

Delhi Milk Scheme

4901. SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the extent of profit/loss of Delhi Milk Scheme (DMS) recorded during each of the last three years and the current year;

(b) the current status of the proposal for corporatisation of DMS; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to safeguard the interests of the employees of DMS affected by the said coporatisation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) The losses of Delhi Milk Scheme recorded during each of the last three years are given below:-

Year	Net loss in Rs./Crores
2004-05	17.78
2005-06	12.22
2006-07	28.28

The profit/loss account for 2007-08 has not been finalized yet.

(b) Expression of Interest was invited from reputed agencies to prepare the feasibility report, etc. The response to the expression of Interest was not sufficient to call for technical and financial bids. The Expression of Interest has been invited again. The responses that have been received are under evaluation.

(c) Employee issues are a part of the corporatisation process.

[Translation]

Turnover of MTNL/BSNL

4902. SHRI RAGHUVEER SINGH KOSHAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the annual turnover of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) and Mahanagar Nigam Limited (MTNL) separately during the last three years alongwith the current year;

(b) the details of profit and loss of the said companies during the said period company-wise and year-wise;

(c) the details with regard to the BSNL Circles during the said period in this regard, Circle-wise and year-wise; and

(d) the steps taken/being taken by the Government for increasing the income in those Circles where income/ profits have been less?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) The turnover of BSNL and MTNL for the last three financial year are as follows:-

(Rs. in Crores)

Particulars	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Annual Turnover of BSNL	36090.09	40176.58	39715.11
Annual Turnover of MTNL	6084.10	6091.00	5582.85

The annual turnover for the financial year 2007-08 of BSNL and MTNL is not yet finalized.

(b) The details of profit & Loss of BSNL for the last three financial year are as follows:-

(Rs. in crores)

Particulars	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Annual Net profit of BSNL	10183.29	8939.69	7805.87
Annual Net profit of MTNL	938.98	580.29	682.07

The annual net profit for the financial year 2007-08 of BSNL and MTNL is not yet finalized.

(c) The details of Profit & Loss of the Circles for the last three financial years are furnished in the Statement-I, II and III.

(d) The steps taken/being taken by the Government for increasing the income in those Circles where income/ profits have been less are as follows.

(i) Aggressive rollout of CMTS and WLL network and introduction of customer friendly tariff schemes/policies for addition of large number of subscribers.

(ii) Introductions of various schemes to attract new landline subscribers and sustaining existing landline base.

(iii) Special emphasis on expansion of Broadband network and customer acquisition by rolling out the services in new cities and towns.

(iv) BSNL has introduced various new value added services to increase the income.

(v) Introduction of modern cost-effective technology so that capital and operational expenditure are reduced thereby profit can be increased.

Statement-I

BSNL Circle Wise Profit and Loss for 2004-05

(Amount in Crores)

Circle	Income from Services	Other Income	Total	Expenditure Exculding Dep.	Depreciation	Total Exp.	Profit before Taxes and Prior Period Items
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Assam	447.32	16.52	463.84	261.84	131.65	393.49	70.35
Calcutta PH.	1443.23	8.16	1451.39	716.03	211.33	927.36	524.03
Chennai PH.	1318.78	10.44	1329.22	640.43	223.74	864.17	465.05
Andhra Pradesh	2835.99	55.44	2891.43	1595.51	807.3	2402.81	488.62
Bihar	658.58	55.55	714.13	382.56	266.74	649.3	64.83

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Gujarat	2234.07	38.06	2272.13	1269.87	633.6	1903.47	368.66
Jammu and Kashmir	356.82	3.4	360.22	139.67	81.48	221.15	139.07
Karnataka	2698.37	79.65	2778.02	1359.92	709.61	2069.53	708.49
Kerala	2554.4	22.41	2576.81	1129.48	727.89	1857.37	719.44
Madhya Pradesh	1063.02	24.53	1087.55	613.37	375.03	988.4	99.15
Maharashtra	3495.14	96.85	3591.99	1765.96	1065.04	2831	760.99
N.E.-I	134.85	14.18	149.03	82.01	71.3	153.31	-4.28
Punjab	1658.8	21.74	1680.54	687.77	424.08	1111.85	568.69
Orissa	601.06	37.22	638.28	288.47	210.09	498.56	139.72
Rajasthan	1395.29	18.64	1413.93	638.93	462.12	1101.05	312.88
Tamil Nadu	2562.19	50.95	2613.14	1447.17	708.21	2155.38	457.76
UP (East)	1499.67	26.48	1526.15	841.5	502.48	1343.98	182.17
UP (West)	1213.32	21.13	1234.45	570.57	299.17	869.74	364.71
West Bengal	795.27	34.01	829.28	473.04	290.16	763.2	66.08
Haryana	950.11	11.81	961.92	378.6	244.36	622.96	338.96
Himachal Pradesh	273.28	10.14	283.42	137.03	137.14	274.17	9.25
Andaman & Nicobar	27.93	0.22	28.15	33.03	12.36	45.39	-17.24
Chhattisgarh	221.11	14.65	235.76	120.79	101.54	222.33	13.43
Jharkhand	383.82	11.88	395.7	181.95	134.19	316.14	79.56
Uttaranchal	263.35	10.56	273.91	135.84	91.37	227.21	46.7
N.E.-II	123.58	3.36	126.94	96.44	57.4	153.84	-26.9
Others	2240.69	1942.07	4182.76	3788.89	645.49	4434.38	-251.62
Grand Total	33450.04	2640.05	36090.09	19776.67	9624.86	29401.53	6688.56

Statement-II

BSNL Circle Wise Profit and Loss for 2005-06

(Amount in Crores)

Circle	Income from Services	Other Income	Total	Expenditure Exculding Dep.	Depreciation	Total Exp.	Profit before Taxes and Prior Period Items
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Assam	558.01	52.35	610.36	325.41	135.85	461.26	149.1
Calcutta PH.	1347.11	41.91	1389.02	709.07	209.09	918.16	470.86
Chennai PH.	1428.97	10.79	1439.76	751.46	260.44	1011.9	427.86
Andhra Pradesh	2880.94	268.92	3149.86	1759.59	748.33	2507.92	641.94

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Bihar	710.2	50.64	760.84	437.5	254.22	691.72	69.12
Gujarat	2235.02	213.56	2448.58	1296.17	583.39	1879.56	569.02
Jammu and Kashmir	520.41	28.93	549.34	201.79	87.74	289.53	259.81
Karnataka	2836.37	129.17	2965.54	1492.18	656.23	2148.41	817.13
Kerala	2849.85	122.67	2972.52	1342.42	730.97	2073.39	899.13
Madhya Pradesh	1083.2	195.22	1278.42	701.74	351.62	1053.36	225.06
Maharashtra	3619.82	260.62	3880.44	2114.01	992.52	3106.53	773.91
N.E.-I	179.02	5.41	184.43	109.46	67.59	177.05	7.38
Punjab	1426.52	56.66	1483.18	731.71	464.69	1196.4	286.78
Orissa	655.55	105.28	760.83	337.83	201.79	539.62	221.21
Rajasthan	1544.9	185.85	1730.75	741.36	437.19	1178.55	552.2
Tamil Nadu	2783.43	81.43	2864.86	1603.46	642.01	2245.47	619.39
UP (East)	1654.82	91.03	1745.85	978.96	515.06	1494.02	251.83
UP (West)	1217.91	18.02	1235.93	626.84	307.28	934.12	301.81
West Bengal	917.41	14.2	931.61	572.1	314.61	886.71	44.9
Haryana	1000.97	31.62	1032.59	423.12	237.36	660.48	372.11
Himachal Pradesh	328.35	89.84	418.19	174.46	131.42	305.88	112.31
Andaman	31.7	12.35	44.05	21.79	11.61	33.4	10.65
Chhattisgarh	219.27	50.09	269.36	132.66	92.34	225	44.36
Jharkhand	432.18	30.56	462.74	206.18	135.76	341.94	120.8
Uttaranchal	263.32	43.04	306.36	153.39	88.48	241.87	64.49
N.E.-II	178.86	32.89	211.75	109.18	59.53	168.71	43.04
Other	3234.83	1814.59	5049.42	4476.53	659.57	5136.1	-86.68
Grand Total	36138.94	4037.64	40176.58	22530.37	9376.69	31907.06	8269.52

Statement-III

BSNL Circle Wise Profit and Loss for 2006-07

(Amount in Crores)

Circle	Income from Services	Other Income	Total	Expenditure Exculding Dep.	Depreciation	Total Exp.	Profit before Taxes and Prior Period Items
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Assam	625.11	73.11	698.22	354.72	153.33	508.06	190.17
Calcutta PH.	1140.3	8.05	1148.35	749.51	213.66	963.17	185.18

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Chennai PH.	1362.01	11.31	1373.32	756.28	236.1	992.39	380.93
Andhra Pradesh	2511.82	115.86	2627.68	1716.15	696.21	2412.35	215.32
Bihar	764.99	77.87	842.86	499.28	260.93	760.21	82.65
Gujarat	1810.16	234.84	2045	1255.03	520.82	1775.85	269.15
Jammu and Kashmir	626.8	33.17	659.97	273.78	94.22	368	291.97
Karnataka	2715.92	132.59	2848.51	1520.38	617.38	2137.76	710.75
Kerala	3012.06	28.64	3040.7	1594.66	721.61	2316.27	724.43
Madhya Pradesh	1062.52	300.84	1363.36	754.75	360.61	1115.37	248
Maharashtra	3555.78	318.43	3874.21	2197.39	912.19	3109.57	764.63
N.E.-I	225.9	43.49	269.39	123.06	68.03	191.09	78.3
Punjab	1250.98	42.46	1293.44	736.15	450.55	1186.7	106.74
Orissa	684.48	89.41	773.89	372.96	203.85	576.82	197.08
Rajasthan	1609.59	122.11	1731.7	785.58	427.13	1212.71	518.99
Tamil Nadu	2812.18	79.19	2891.37	1708.03	612.41	2320.44	570.93
UP (East)	1586.23	116.8	1703.03	1019.01	515.88	1534.89	168.13
UP (West)	1045.53	27.52	1073.05	622.9	300.96	923.86	149.19
W. Bengal	970.84	30.72	1001.56	623.73	321.16	944.89	56.67
Haryana	873.79	18.94	892.73	441.34	240.15	681.49	211.25
Himachal Pradesh	359.59	35.23	394.82	205.21	129.04	334.25	60.57
Andaman	43.26	1.24	44.5	20.97	11.36	32.33	12.47
Chhattisgarh	288.98	70.28	359.26	157.74	97.3	255.05	104.21
Jharkhand	423.67	53.17	476.84	225.57	138.3	363.87	112.97
Uttaranchal	368.36	87.37	455.73	182.66	98.39	281.05	174.68
N.E.-II	229.63	15.15	244.78	126.84	59.89	186.73	58.05
Others	2655.73	2931.11	5586.84	3292.67	687.85	3980.52	1606.32
Grand Total	34616.21	5098.90	39715.11	22316.35	9149.31	31465.66	8249.45

[English]

Research and Development in Textile Sector

4903. SHRI E.G. SUGAVANAM: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to encourage public and private partnership model for Research and Development in the textile sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to promote and to boost the production of textiles in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) to (c) Government provides project related grants to Textile Research Associations (TRAs) in the country to undertake Research

and Development projects. These TRAs are textile industry promoted private bodies, societies registered under the Societies Act 1860 set up and promoted by the respective textile industry of the region for carrying out research and providing them various services including consultancy, testing, training and research etc. The Government provides for grants to these TRAs to meet the partial administrative expenditure as well as sponsors the specific research projects for common cause through TRAs.

[Translation]

Cancellation of GSM Tender

4904. SHRI TUKARAM GANPAT RAO RENGE PATIL: SHRI V.K, THUMMAR:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) has cancelled the issue of GSM tender in the country;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto;

(d) whether the Government has conducted any inquiry regarding the cancellation of this tender;

(e) if so, the outcome thereof; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (f) Does not arise in view of a above.

[English]

Outsource of Network by GSM Operators

4905. SHRI J.M. AARON RASHID: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether some GSM operators having pan - India license have outsourced their network and services to foreign companies;

(b) if so, the names of such GSM operators with the dates and nature of agreement signed with foreign telecom operators with licence rules under which these agreements were signed;

(c) whether payments of outsourced elements made by Indian licence holders to foreign companies are based on total traffic generated on erlang basis;

(d) if so, whether such arrangements amounts to complete outsourcing of active infrastructure to foreign companies; and

(e) if so, the details thereof alongwith the rules under which such arrangements of giving access to active infrastructure/ network to foreign companies on erlang basis is permitted in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) As per the reports received from the GSM operators having pan-India license, there is no outsourcing of network, billing and any other related activities/services to outsourcing to foreign companies. However, the license agreement inter alia provides that the Licensee can always employ or appoint agents and employees for provision of the service. Under such agreements/ arrangements, some of the telecom operators are only taking the support of the specialized reputed global companies.

(b) to (e) Do not arise in view of (a) above.

[Translation]

Stock of Ethanol

4906. SHRI MAHAVIR BHAGORA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the production capacity, production and stock of Ethanol in the country as on date; and

(b) the details of the sale depots of Ethanol 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 (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) It has been estimated from the sugar industry source that the total production capacity of, alcohol is about 3500 million litres per annum out of which the production capacity of ethanol is about 1500 million litres per annum. During 2007-08 sugar season, for an estimated production of 262 lakh tons of sugar, the estimated production of alcohol / ethanol would be 2800 million litres. The Oil Manufacturing Companies procured 272 million litres of ethanol in 2007-08 and is expected to procure about 595 million litres of ethanol in 2008-09.

(b) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Vacant posts in ESI Hospitals and Dispensaries

4907. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE:

SHRI B. MAHTAB:

SHRI VIKRAMBHAI ARJANBHAI MADAM:

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

(a) the number of posts of doctors, nurses, paramedical and other categories of employees sanctioned, filled and lying vacant during each of last three years in the Employees State Insurance (ESI) hospitals and dispensaries, State-wise;

(b) the time by which the vacant posts are likely to be filled up;

(c) the procedure followed for recruitment of the above staff in ESI hospitals and dispensaries;

(d) whether the services by Employees State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) are not being provided properly due to dual control of both the State and Union Government; and

(e) if so, the details thereof alongwith the remedial steps proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) The State-wise number of posts sanctioned, filled and lying vacant in respect of doctors, nurses and paramedical and other categories of employees during each of the three years i.e., 2004-05, 2005-06 and 2006-07 in ESI Hospitals and dispensaries is given in Statement-I, II and III.

(b) Filling up of vacancies in ESI Hospitals in the States is to be done by the State Government. Hence, the Chief Ministers/Chief Secretaries of the respective States have been requested to fill up the vacancies of all categories of staff expeditiously. Regarding filling up of vacancies in Hospitals and Dispensaries run by ESI Corporation the recruitment rules for the entry level in various medical posts have been amended to facilitate State-wise local recruitment with knowledge in local language. The vacancies are likely to be filled up by 30.9.2008.

(c) The recruitment of staff in ESI Hospitals and Dispensaries run by the State Government is done as per the recruitment rules of the State Government for various categories of the staff. The recruitment of medical staff in Hospitals and Dispensaries run by ESI Corporation is done directly by the ESI Corporation by holding tests/interview as per the Recruitment Regulations. The powers for recruitment of Group C & D staff by following the laid down procedure have been delegated to the respective Medical Superintendents/Director (Medical) Delhi. They have been asked to complete the entire recruitment process by 31.5.2008.

(d) and (e) Medical care is provided to the insured persons and their family members through State Government run hospitals and hospitals run directly by ESI Corporation. The ESIC share of expenditure is to the extent of 87.5% of the ceiling prescribed by the Corporation from time to time. The rest of the expenditure is to be borne by the State Government. For smooth implementation of the Scheme, ESI Corporation has taken the following steps:-

(i) The State Governments have been advised to take measures to improve delivery of medical care services.

(ii) ESI Corporation has taken over one hospital in a State to be run as Model Hospital. As on date, there are 21 model hospitals in the country. The total expenditure on Model Hospitals is borne by the ESI Corporation.

(iii) ESI Corporation has taken in principle decision to take over ESI Scheme in those states where State Government makes a specific request, subject to fulfilling the criteria of modalities, feasibility and economic viability.

(iv) Scheme of Revolving Corpus Fund has been started where the funds are kept with the Regional Director on the request of the State Government and the payment is made directly by State Medical Commissioner and Regional Director Office in respect of super speciality treatment, drugs and dressings.

Statement-I

Vacancy Position for the year 2004-05

Sl. No.	State/ UT	Medical			Para Medical including Nurses			Others		
		S	P	V	S	P	V	S	P	V
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1	Andhra Pradesh	719	434	285	1727	1313	414	1914	1484	430
2	Assam	102	85	17	191	164	27	241	237	4

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
3	Bihar	120	61	59	284	113	171	330	162	178
4	Chandigarh Admn.	55	48	7	117	91	26	72	56	16
5	Chhattisgarh	41	31	10	74	60	14	105	89	16
6	Delhi	1038	625	413	2458	1735	723	1666	1289	377
7	Goa	37	34	03	86	83	3	89	84	5
8	Gujarat	827	611	216	1540	933	607	2149	1748	401
9	Haryana	284	252	32	663	534	129	916	709	207
10	Himachal Pradesh	25	25	-	45	37	8	59	42	17
11	Karnataka	662	518	144	1141	859	282	1174	914	260
12	Kerala	637	447	190	1331	1028	303	1392	1244	148
13	Madhya Pradesh	388	339	49	705	545	160	1095	1004	91
14	Maharashtra	472	345	127	1625	1161	464	3728	2819	909
15	Meghalaya	2	2		8	3	5	15	11	4
16	Orissa	200	147	53	402	356	46	564	484	80
17	Pondicherry	47	37	10	220	204	16	64	63	1
18	Punjab	238	250	+12	565	582	17	1048	767	281
19	Rajsthan	316	258	58	659	525	134	772	707	65
20	Tamilnadu	748	632	116	2247	1622	625	2506	1727	779
21	Uttar Pradesh	541	434	107	1405	1126	279	1676	1418	158
22	Uttaranchal	10	4	6	18	12	6	43	41	2
23	West Bengal	797	582	215	2405	1472	933	3189	2099	1090
24	Jammu and Kashmir	12	9	3	32	26	6	38	28	10
25	Jharkhand	180	80	100	281	90	191	452	105	347
	Total	8498	6290	2208	20229	14674	5555	25297	19331	5966

S = Sanctioned Strength

P = In Position

V = Vacant

Statement-II

Details of the sanctioned posts of Doctors & other Categories of employees in ESI Medical Scheme State-wise during the year 2005-06

Sl. No.	State/ UT	Medical			Para Medical including Nurses			Others		
		S	P	V	S	P	V	S	P	V
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1	Andhra Pradesh	721	486	235	1727	1161	566	1914	1608	306
2	Assam	119	31	88	212	183	29	229	216	13

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
3	Bihar	122	68	54	302	116	186	327	152	175
4	Chandigarh Admn.	55	45	10	117	90	27	72	57	15
5	Chhattisgarh	38	28	10	70	60	10	84	70	14
6	Delhi	1040	577	463	2453	1740	713	1807	1264	543
7	Goa	37	31	06	86	83	03	89	84	05
8	Gujarat	772	526	246	1453	922	531	1733	1515	218
9	Haryana	284	248	36	663	552	111	916	720	196
10	Himachal Pradesh	22	27	+5	52	49	03	56	48	08
11	Karnataka	625	433	192	1141	859	282	1128	971	157
12	Kerala	633	463	170	1094	866	228	1649	1443	206
13	Madhya Pradesh	388	120	268	674	533	141	1101	991	110
14	Maharashtra	610	414	196	1854	1245	619	4111	3095	1016
15	Meghalaya	2	2	-	8	3	05	15	12	03
16	Orissa	239	157	82	432	347	85	596	492	104
17	Pondicherry	47	38	09	216	200	16	65	63	02
18	Punjab	304	255	49	799	630	169	1294	789	505
19	Rajasthan	317	268	49	654	514	140	801	711	90
20	Tamil Nadu	746	607	139	2053	1412	641	2412	1747	665
21	Uttar Pradesh	640	461	179	1571	1121	450	1623	1415	208
22	Uttaranchal	11	7	04	24	13	11	58	38	20
23	West Bengal	797	558	239	2405	1506	899	3189	2044	1145
24	Jammu and Kashmir	24	12	12	36	25	11	44	30	14
25	Jharkhand	180	178	02	308	90	218	419	102	317
	Total	8773	6040	2773	20414	14320	6094	25732	19677	6055

S = Sanctioned Strength
P = In Position
V = Vacant

Statement-III

Vacancy Position for the year 2006-07

Sl. No.	State/ UT	Medical			Para Medical including Nurses			Others		
		S	P	V	S	P	V	S	P	V
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1	Andhra Pradesh	717	460	257	1557	1266	291	1464	1322	142

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
2	Assam	115	93	22	212	188	24	248	224	24
3	Bihar	122	70	52	302	122	180	327	157	170
4	Chandigarh	57	50	07	116	88	28	70	55	15
5	Chhattisgarh	39	27	12	70	58	12	87	70	17
6	Delhi	1060	666	394	2482	2152	330	1757	1117	640
7	Goa	37	32	05	85	83	02	92	88	04
8	Gujarat	867	643	224	1732	1091	641	1966	1671	295
9	Haryana	284	248	36	663	468	195	916	628	288
10	Himachal Pradesh	24	22	02	21	09	12	26	20	06
11	Karnataka	632	416	216	967	724	243	1478	1145	333
12	Kerala	630	462	168	1070	850	220	1642	1376	266
13	Madhya Pradesh	353	284	69	618	486	132	1062	987	75
14	Maharashtra	563	377	186	1915	1292	623	4031	3030	1001
15	Meghalaya	01	01	–	08	03	05	16	12	04
16	Orissa	239	162	77	412	324	88	591	484	107
17	Pondicherry	47	33	14	216	186	30	65	60	05
18	Punjab	305	259	46	802	627	175	1243	834	409
19	Rajasthan	274	221	53	588	442	146	694	605	89
20	Tamil Nadu	762	685	77	2094	1500	594	2425	1605	820
21	Uttar Pradesh	462	402	60	1372	1105	267	1617	1599	18
22	Uttaranchal	18	07	11	27	18	09	61	56	05
23	West Bengal	797	558	239	2405	1496	909	3189	2044	1145
24	Jammu and Kashmir	51	20	31	30	10	20	36	13	23
25	Jharkhand	154	70	84	288	96	192	392	167	225
	Total	8610	6268	2342	20052	14684	5368	25495	19369	6126

S = Sanctioned Strength
P = In Position
V = Vacant

[English]

Irregularities in purchase of Telecom Equipment

4908. SHRI EKNATH MAHADEO GAIKWAD:
SHRI MADHU GOUD YASKHI:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether in its latest report on the Telecommunications Sector, the comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) has observed several irregularities in the purchase of telecom equipment of crores of rupees by phone firms Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) and Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL);

(b) if so, the details in this regard; and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) to (c) No, Sir. In the latest report on the telecom sector by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) there is no para on "irregularities in the purchase of telecom equipments" in respect of BSNL or MTNL.

Remunerative prices to farmers

4909. SHRI BALASHOWRY VALLABHANENI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Commission on Agricultural Cost and Prices (CACP) has made some recommendations to increase the Minimum Support Price (MSP) of certain crops to make it commensurate with the increase in the per capita income in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is imperative to eliminate the chain of middlemen in order to ensure remunerative prices to farmers; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the steps proposed 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) The Commission for Agricultural Costs & Prices (CACP) has submitted its Report on Price Policy for Kharif Crops of 2008-09 season to the Government. Final decision regarding the Minimum Support Prices (MSPs) for the Kharif crops of 2008-09 season will be taken by the Government after obtaining the views of State Governments/UTs and Central Ministries as well as such other relevant factors which are considered important for fixation of support prices.

(c) and (d) Appropriate procurement arrangements are made by the designated agencies to buy agricultural produce at MSP in different States. Further, with the amendment of the Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee (APMC) Act, the farmers now have more options to sell their produce to the prospective buyers. If the market price is more than the MSP fixed by the Government, farmers are free to sell their produce in the open market.

Improvement in Off-take

4910. SHRI NAND KUMAR SAI:
SHRI SUGRIB SINGH:

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

(a) whether the off-take under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) and Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) has shown improvement in the country during the period 2005-06 to 2007-08;

(b) if so, the details in this regard indicating the allocation and off-take under the said schemes during the said period, State-wise and year-wise;

(c) whether there is any proposal to further extend the coverage of the said schemes; 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 (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir. The offtake under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) and Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) in the country during the year 2005-06 was 43.4% which has increased to 84.7% during 2007-08.

(b) Statements-I to III indicating allocation and offtake of foodgrains under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) and Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) for the year 2005-06 to 2007-08 are enclosed.

(c) and (d) There is no proposal at present to further extend the coverage under this scheme.

Statement-I

Allocation and Offtake of Rice & Wheat for the year 2005-2006 under TPDS

(Thousand tons)

S.No.	States/UTs	Allotment				Offtake				%Offtake			
		BPL	APL	AAY	Total	BPL	APL	AAY	Total	BPL	APL	AAY	Total
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1	Andhra Pradesh	1,086.13	2,266.74	620.247	3973.116	1101.87	1507.07	608.56	3217.5	101.4	66.5	98.1	81.0
2	Arunachal Pradesh	28.56	69.75	12.936	111.246	25.52	43.25	12.4	81.17	89.4	62.0	95.9	73.0
3	Assam	625.416	955.14	175.104	1755.66	595.48	444.58	181.09	1221.15	95.2	46.5	103.4	69.6
4	Bihar	2,166.65	2,291.52	472.533	4930.704	672.01	25.55	421.06	1118.62	31.0	1.1	89.1	22.7
5	Chhattisgarh	532.812	1,045.80	254.82	1833.432	536.803	52.25	229.189	818.242	100.7	5.0	89.9	44.6
6	Delhi	148.464	996.516	23.316	1168.296	145.19	302.61	22.15	469.95	97.8	30.4	95.0	40.2
7	Goa	10.221	118.296	5.739	134.256	3.804	6.103	2.447	12.354	37.2	5.2	42.6	9.2
8	Gujarat	618.063	2,787.56	258.785	3664.412	471.11	178.29	192.34	841.74	76.2	6.4	74.3	23.0
9	Haryana	242.516	1,014.20	86.056	1342.776	195.25	18.07	76.89	290.21	80.5	1.8	89.3	21.6
10	Himachal Pradesh	116.648	348.9	62.284	527.832	95.56	179.07	55.6	330.23	81.9	51.3	89.3	62.6
11	Jammu & Kashmir	220.335	447.72	88.749	756.804	225.77	346.96	73.09	645.82	102.5	77.5	82.4	85.3
12	Jharkhand	700.224	216.3	305.268	1221.792	380.91	21.16	282.63	684.7	54.4	9.8	92.6	56.0
13	Karnataka	876.317	2,035.01	407.752	3319.083	875.69	877.57	378.35	2131.61	99.9	43.1	92.8	64.2
14	Kerala	445.56	1,808.94	207.088	2461.588	436.973	323.932	200.722	961.627	98.1	17.9	96.9	39.1
15	Madhya Pradesh	1,195.32	2,535.37	534.141	4264.828	1217.05	153.02	509.58	1879.65	101.8	6.0	95.4	44.1
16	Maharashtra	1,914.47	4,700.88	829.836	7445.184	1647.21	127.48	736.41	2511.1	86.0	2.7	88.7	33.7
17	Manipur	37.78	47.46	21.864	107.104	33.93	14.89	13.96	62.78	89.8	31.4	63.8	58.6
18	Meghalaya	53.568	45.024	23.292	121.884	54.7	22.61	22.72	100.03	102.1	50.2	97.5	82.1
19	Mizoram	8.279	72,02	10.401	100.7	17.65	55.89	10.01	83.55	96.6	77.6	96.2	83.0
20	Nagaland	35.817	102.4	16.263	154.48	35.61	94.66	16.44	146.71	99.4	92.4	101.1	95.0
21	Orissa	1,261.91	1,155.56	434.785	2852.256	797.408	109.77	450.493	1357.67	63.2	9.5	103.6	47.6
22	Punjab	164.067	1,473.24	32.469	1669.776	71.11	8.84	18.24	98.19	43.3	0.6	56.2	5.9
23	Rajasthan	593.382	2,763.76	340.018	3697.156	469.57	204.17	300.57	974.31	79.1	7.4	88.4	26.4

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
24	Sikkim	14.076	25.812	4.164	44.052	14.05	24.04	4.32	42.41	99.8	93.1	103.7	96.3
25	Tamilnadu	1,397.70	3,787.98	644.679	5830.356	1391.6	1663.8	657.63	3713.03	99.6	43.9	102.0	63.7
26	Tripura	95.364	179.232	28.536	303.132	92.77	66.96	28.53	188.26	97.3	37.4	100.0	62.1
27	Uttar Pradesh	2,945.11	6,494.46	1,539.69	10979.25	2560.26	40.166	1438.29	4038.72	86.9	0.6	93.4	36.8
28	Uttaranchal	162.413	333.552	46.759	542.724	166.282	53.316	34.615	254.213	102.4	16.0	74.0	46.8
29	West Bengal	1,447.97	4,089.18	562.571	6099.72	1294.46	1029.41	454.3	2778.17	89.4	25.2	80.8	45.6
30	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	7.428	36.36	1.8	45.588	1.81	15.79	0.53	18.13	24.4	43.4	29.4	39.8
31	Chandigarh	8.748	75.516	0.888	85.152	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
32	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	5.192	7.14	1.528	13.86	1.67	0.89	0.72	3.28	32.2	12.5	47.1	23.7
33	Daman & Diu	1.236	9.42	0.444	11.1	1.44	0.15	0.22	0.81	35.5	1.6	49.6	7.3
34	Lakshadweep	0.372	3.36	0.168	3.9	0.47	2.98	0.33	3.78	126.3	88.7	196.4	96.9
35	Pondicherry	22.862	13.2	12.25	48.312	12.53	5.2	7.91	25.64	54.8	39.4	64.6	53.1
	Total	19,200.96	44,353,33	8,067.22	71,621.51	15,642.52	8.020.49	7,442.34	31,105.35	81.5	18.1	92.3	43.4

Statement-II

Allocation and Offtake of Rice & Wheat for the year 2006-2007 under TPDS

(Thousand tons)

S.No.	States/UTs	Allotment				Offtake				%Offtake			
		BPL	APL	AAY	Total	BPL	APL	AAY	Total	BPL	APL	AAY	Total
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1	Andhra Pradesh	1,052.09	2,194.22	654.288	3900.596	1054.63	1497.672	656.771	3209.074	100.2	68.3	100.4	82.3
2	Arunachal Pradesh	25.524	62.148	15.972	103.644	16.264	35.045	9.069	60.378	63.7	56.4	56.8	58.3
3	Assam	476.7	943.83	294.216	1714.746	479.337	760.534	272.045	1511.916	100.6	80.6	92.5	88.2
4	Bihar	2019.01	1,307.24	662.091	3988.344	448.589	9.257	566.332	1024.178	22.2	0.7	85.5	25.7
5	Chhattisgarh	483.688	821.39	295.25	1600.328	521.047	33.377	313.059	867.483	107.7	4.1	106.0	54.2
6	Delhi	148.464	664.676	23.316	836.456	146.481	378.265	22.884	547.63	98.7	56.9	98.1	65.5
7	Goa	5.46	91.19	6.108	102.758	4.4	18.67	3.94	27.01	80.6	20.5	64.5	26.3
8	Gujarat	540.63	1,444.40	310.848	2295.882	493.911	108.286	259.993	862.19	91.4	7.5	83.6	37.6

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
9	Haryana	221.151	499.54	109.394	830.085	202.689	4.739	102.921	310.349	91.7	0.9	94.1	37.4
10	Himachal Pradesh	46.831	319.4	76.806	443.037	45.312	247.94	77.244	370.496	96.8	77.6	100.6	83.6
11	Jammu & Kashmir	205.077	482.72	104.007	791.804	209.473	351.349	98.433	659.255	102.1	72.8	94.6	83.3
12	Jharkhand	700.224	189.98	305.268	1195.472	427.972	13.912	299.266	741.15	61.1	7.3	98.0	62.0
13	Karnataka	768.116	1,594.22	491.35	2853.688	768.531	851.32	465.2	2085.051	100.1	53.4	94.7	73.1
14	Kerala	404.277	1,604.46	248.331	2257.068	401.026	375.769	249.313	1026.108	99.2	23.4	100.4	45.5
15	Madhya Pradesh	1,064.54	1,041.95	650.16	2756.644	1049.59	136.652	603.987	1790.229	98.6	13.1	92.9	64.9
16	Maharashtra	1,911.08	2,270.90	833.22	5015.204	1637.217	169.94	698.753	2505.91	85.7	7.5	83.9	50.0
17	Manipur	48.552	41.328	21.18	111.06	37.784	22.171	18.411	78.366	77.8	53.6	86.9	70.6
18	Meghalaya	53.508	44.944	23.352	121.804	53.435	38.895	23.352	115.682	99.9	86.5	100.0	95.0
19	Mizoram	17.64	43.662	10.92	72.222	17.64	40.158	11.246	69.044	100.0	92.0	103.0	95.6
20	Nagaland	32.112	77.004	19.968	129.084	37.656	87.041	22.976	147.673	117.3	113.0	115.1	114.4
21	Orissa	1,165.98	838.99	530.716	2535.682	676.998	137.985	433.288	1248.271	58.1	16.4	81.6	49.2
22	Punjab	138.228	672.41	58.308	868.946	62.856	53.848	33.563	150.267	45.5	8.0	57.6	17.3
23	Rajasthan	635.306	1,337.89	385.714	2358.91	516.875	160.975	348.024	1025.874	81.4	12.0	90.2	43.5
24	Sikkim	11.766	26.447	6.474	44.687	11.766	25.948	6.474	44.188	100.0	98.1	100,0	98.9
25	Tamil Nadu	1,259.23	3,763.56	783.144	5805.936	1159.002	1505.038	775.366	3439.406	92.0	40.0	99.0	59.2
26	Tripura	95.364	176.858	28.536	300.758	83.159	116.723	25.458	225.34	87.2	66.0	89.2	74.9
27	Uttar Pradesh	2,766.66	3,842.70	1,720.01	8329.377	2481.039	325.775	1692.331	4499.145	89.7	8.5	98.4	54.0
28	Uttaranchal	149.511	287.77	59.661	496.942	134.665	102.36	47.404	284.429	90.1	35.6	79.5	57.2
29	West Bengal	1,522.07	3,473.76	621.684	5617.51	1044.249	838.775	515.641	2398.665	68.6	24.1	82.9	42.7
30	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	5.04	22.07	1.8	28.91	2.64	13.67	0.82	17.13	52.4	61.9	45.6	59.3
31	Chandigarh	2.512	31.806	0.888	35.206	0.21	0	0.07	0.28	8.4	0.0	7.9	0.8
32	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	4.948	6.65	1.772	13.37	2.54	1.52	0.38	4.44	51.3	22.9	21.4	33.2
33	Daman & Diu	1.044	8.9	0.636	10.58	0.46	0.25	0.37	1.08	44.1	2.8	58.2	10.2
34	Lakshadweep	0.295	3.698	0.161	4.154	0.24	2.83	0.16	3.23	81.4	76.5	99.4	77.8
35	Pondicherry	21.564	50.05	13.548	85.162	9.59	1.81	7.14	18.54	44.5	3.6	52.7	21.8
	Total	18,004.19	30,282.76	9,369.10	57,656.06	14,239.27	8,468.50	8,661.68	31,369.46	79.1	28.0	92.4	54.4

Statement-III

Allocation and Offtake of Rice & Wheat for the year 2007-2008 under TPDS

(Thousand tons)

S.No.	States/UTs	Allotment				Offtake				%Offtake			
		BPL	APL	AAY	Total	BPL	APL	AAY	Total	BPL	APL	AAY	Total
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1.	Andhra Pradesh	1,052.09	2,178.45	654.288	3884.824	1104.534	1835.017	698.399	3637.95	105.0	84.2	106.7	93.7
2	Arunachal Pradesh	25.524	62.052	15.972	103.548	18.009	47.143	10.857	76.0	70.09	76.06	68.0	73.4
3	Assam	475.47	574.611	295.446	1345.527	480.797	616.97	298.027	1395.794	101.1	107.4	100.9	103.7
4	Bihar	1,719.80	28.239	1,019.99	2768.031	744.97	7.999	872.397	1625.366	43.3	28.3	85.5	58.7
5	Chhattisgarh	472.688	50.784	301.944	825.416	438.525	33.956	308.14	780.621	92.8	66.9	102.1	94.6
6	Delhi	125.874	576.401	45.906	748.181	128.706	533.522	39.361	701.589	102.3	92.6	85.7	93.8
7	Goa	5.46	20.614	6.108	32.182	5.431	19.392	5.037	29.86	99.5	94.1	82.5	92.8
8	Gujarat	524.486	273.387	332.18	1130.035	486.161	102.757	293.573	882.491	92.7	37.6	88.4	78.1
9	Haryana	208.572	120.525	122.82	451.917	197.852	1.333	116.987	316.172	94.9	1.1	95.3	70.0
10	Himachal Pradesh	133.138	261.618	82.74	477.496	123.533	252.51	80.022	456.065	92.3	96.5	96.7	95.5
11	Jammu & Kashmir	201.696	514.511	107.388	823.595	201.488	436.854	107.711	746.053	99.9	84.9	100.3	90.6
12	Jharkhand	653.401	52.244	352.091	1057.763	491.574	12.537	323.037	827.148	75.2	24.0	91.7	78.2
13	Karnataka	770.384	1,372.76	503.892	2647.031	762.887	658.628	484.189	1905.704	99.0	48.0	96.1	72.0
14	Kerala	402.348	531.999	250.26	1184.607	402.407	497.499	250.886	1150.792	100.0	93.5	100.3	97.2
15	Madhya Pradesh	1,028.81	125.55	652.662	1807.026	1024.311	101.325	629.096	1754.732	99.6	80.7	96.4	97.1

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
16	Maharashtra	1,682.63	176.379	1,021.67	2880.683	1412.696	120.662	866	2399.358	84.0	68.4	84.8	83.3
17	Manipur	47.166	37.925	22.566	107.657	45.265	34.433	21.447	101.145	96.0	90.8	95.0	94.0
18	Meghalaya	47.376	63.557	29.484	140.417	46.049	59.732	28.978	134.759	97.2	94.0	98.3	96.0
19	Mizoram	17.64	56.487	10.92	85.047	19.489	54.003	11.62	85.112	110.5	95.6	106.4	100.01
20	Nagaland	32.112	19.968	78.807	130.887	32.488	77.18	21.434	131.102	101.2	97.9	107.3	100.2
21	Orissa	1,165.57	203.375	531.12	1900.067	1004.95	165.491	457.078	1627.519	86.2	81.4	86.1	80.7
22	Punjab	131.123	83.489	65.413	280.025	70.511	50.865	37.805	159.181	53.8	60.9	57.8	56.9
23	Rajasthan	592.532	290.948	391.488	1274.968	536.069	239.832	367.385	1143.286	90.5	82.4	93.8	89.7
24	Sikkim	11.304	27.552	6.936	45.792	11.3	28.109	6.94	46.349	100.0	102.0	100.1	101.2
25	Tamil Nadu	1,259.23	2,805.51	783,144	4847.881	1265.54	1652.474	794.61	3712.624	100.5	58.9	101.5	76.6
26	Tripura	77.962	139.311	45.938	263.211	81.585	127.097	41.252	249.934	104.6	91.2	89.8	95.0
27	Uttar Pradesh	2,765.70	65.51	1,719.48	4550.69	2495.95	52.23	1667.59	4215.77	90.2	79.7	97.0	92.6
28	Uttaranchal	145.656	132.369	63.516	341.541	133.14	95.277	55.633	284.05	91.4	72.0	87.6	83.2
29	West Bengal	1,553.58	847.94	621.684	3023.204	1339.998	780.491	531.52	2652.009	86.3	92.0	85.5	87.7
30	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	5.04	22.404	1.8	29.244	3.327	13.444	1.295	18.066	66.0	60.0	71.9	61.8
31	Chandigarh	2.94	0.3	0.888	4.128	3.051	0.119	1.213	4.383	103.8	39.7	136.6	106.2
32	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	4.524	5.1	2.196	11.82	0.423	0.781	0.243	1.447	9.4	15.3	11.1	12.2
33	Daman & Diu	1.044	1.02	0.636	2.7	0.293	0.229	0.177	0.699	28.3	22.5	27.8	25.9
34	Lakshadweep	0.713	3.66	0.464	4.837	0.971	3.76	0.632	5.363	136.2	102.7	136.2	110.9
35	Pondicherry	21.564	30.69	13.548	65.802	10.612	5.524	6.54	22.676	49.2	18.0	48.3	34.5
	Total	17,365.14	11,816.07	10,096.55	39,277.75	15,124.89	8,719.18	9,437.11	33,281.18	87.1	73.8	93.5	84.7

Post Harvest Loss

4911. DR. DHIRENDRA AGARWAL:
SHRIMATI SANGEETA KUMARI SINGH DEO:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Council for Agricultural Research (ICAR) has developed certain techniques to minimise the post harvest loss of crops, especially fruits and vegetables; and

(b) 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. Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has developed techniques to minimize the post harvest loss of crops, especially fruits and vegetables.

(b) These techniques relate to proper harvesting, cleaning, grading, storage, drying and packaging. Some selected techniques to reduce post harvest losses in fruits and vegetables are given in the enclosed Statement.

Statement

Some Technologies to minimize the Post Harvest Losses in Fruits and Vegetables

- **Clipper for harvesting of strawberry and capsicum**

  Improved clippers for harvesting of strawberry and capsicum have been developed which reduce the damage to fruit during harvesting. It costs Rs. 200/- per piece.

- **Banana Comb Cutter**

  It is a useful tool to de-stem the comb from the banana bunch. It replaces the use of sickle, which was much labor and time consuming. It is safe for human and banana hands and can be used for faster work. The use of cutter leads to reduction in post harvest losses of banana.

- **Harvesters**

  Harvesters for mango, lime, sapota, guava and pome granate have been developed to reduce post harvest losses as well as to reduce drudgery. More than 5000 mango and sapota harvesters have been adopted by farmers.

- **Tomato grader**

  A mobile tomato size grader grades tomato into four categories i.e. 25-40 mm, 40-55 mm, 55-70 mm and > 70 mm. It has a capacity of 325kg/hr with individual grade efficiency ranged between 85-90%.

- **Fruit graders**

  A fruit grader of 10-12 tonne per day capacity has been developed to grade all spherical fruits on size basis. It costs Rs. 57,000.

- **Fruit and vegetable washing machine**

  A stainless steel portable mechanical washing machine (power 1 hp, cost Rs 25000-50,000 for 100-600 kg/h capacity) suitable for a wide range of fruits and vegetables (carrot, potato, radish, turnip, ginger, okra, tomato, spinach, kinnow and pears) is available.

- **On-farm storage structures of onion and garlic**

  Onion and garlic can be stored in hut type split bamboo structures with aerated brick floor for periods of 5-6 months. Losses due to rooting, germination and rotting are minimized in such structures.

- **Evaporatively cooled room for storage of fruits and vegetables**

  High capacity evaporatively cooled (EC) rooms have been developed for on-farm storage of fruits and vegetables. The maximum temperature inside the EC room is 5-8C lower than that inside the ordinary room in summer and the minimum temperature is 5-8 C higher than that inside the ordinary room in winters. The shelf life in the EC room is 34 days for early kinnow, 23 days for late kinnow, 11 days for cauliflower and 4 days for spinach. It was 21, 11,5 and 2 days respectively for these commodities stored in an ordinary room at the same time.

- **Porous bricks for evaporative cooling**

  The porous bricks are prepared from a mixture of 90% brick earth and 10% biomaterials. One brick weighs 2.34 kg with water absorption of 25.18% of its weight and evaporation rate of 2.14 g of water/h. This brick has properties comparable to conventional bricks with superior evaporation characteristics that improve the performance of EC chamber.

- **Mobile Cool Chamber**

  It has been developed for short duration storage and transportation of fish for retail marketing. The insulated box holds eight plastic crates of size 540x360x295 mm in two layer of four each for keeping fish. The total capacity of storage is 150 kg of fish with 80% filling of each plastic crates and 1:1 ratio of ice and fish. It costs around Rs. 18,000-20,000/- and can be used for fruits and vegetables also.

- **Solar fruit and vegetable dehydrators**

  A number of solar dehydrators for drying of fruits and vegetables have been designed capacities of 15-20 kg/batch to 300-400 kg/ batch.

- **Dehumidified air dryer**

  A prototype dehumidified air dryer based on heat pump principle (cost Rs. 100,000 and capacity 25 kg/batch) has been developed for drying of high value fruits, vegetables, spices and medicinal plants under low temperature and low humidity conditions to maintain excellent quality.

- **Dehydrated vegetables**

  Process has been standardized to cut/trim/shred cabbage, fenugreek and coriander leaves, spinach leaves and green chillies followed by dehydration using recirculatory tray dryer.

- **Agriculture wastes-fired dryer for Red Chillies**

  The machine is used to dry freshly harvested red chillies by using agricultural wastes as fuel. The traditional process takes about 20-22 days depending upon weather conditions where as this dryer takes about 20-24 hours. It costs Rs. 25,000.

- **Fluidized bed dryer for Mushroom**

  The fluidized bed dryer consists of a 3 hp centrifugal blower, holding bin, 500 watt heating coils, and motor and thermostat control. Its output capacity is 6 kg/batch and the unit costs Rs.40,000/-.

- **Preservation of milky mushroom**

  Process parameters for preserving milky mushrooms up to 18 months by canning in brine (3%) and tomato pulp (4° Brix) have been standardized.

- **Process for storage of ginger rhizomes in fresh form**

  A simple low cost process has been standardized to store fresh ginger up to 6 months. A bamboo rack structure with bamboo mat shelves are used to store the fresh rhizomes under specified conditions.

- **Post harvest diseases management of kinnow**

  Proper combination of harvesting, grading, cleaning, packaging and storage has been found to reduce the post harvest losses of kinnow

- **Packing of minimally processed tomato, cauliflower and spinach**

  The minimal processing of cauliflower and spinach is economically feasible as it reduces the problem of waste management in cities and allows the producer to bring 40-45% more volume of ready-to-cook food to the market.

- **Storage technology for peach**

  Lac based formulation's coating of peaches reduces PLW from 20% to 8-9% in 3 days of storage under ambient conditions. CFB boxes with 0.5% perforations and 1.0% in polyethylene bag (200 gauge) enhance shelf-life up to 35 and 32 days, respectively in cool chamber at 3 ± 1°C temperature and 85-90% RH. Individual shrink-wrapping of fruit with LLDP (25μ thickness) enhance shelf life by 10 and 42 days under ambient and cool chamber respectively.

- **Controlled modified atmosphere storage of mango**

  Mango cultivars, Alphonso and Chausa could be successfully stored up to 30 and 25 days, respectively, retaining prime quality attributes through controlled atmosphere exposure at 12-13 C.

- **Individual shrink-wrapping of Pomegranate and capsicum fruits**

  Individual Shrink wrapping reduces shrinkage with or without refrigeration or humidity control and it doubles the storage life of pomegranate and capsicum.

Amendment in Employees Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952

4912. SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the present membership of the Employees Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO), State-wise and office-wise;

(b) whether the various steps taken by the Government including the Compliance 2001 programme have failed to increase the membership of EPFO substantially;

(c) if so, the main reasons therefor;

(d) whether the Central Board of Trustees have constituted a sub-committee to look into the matter;

(e) if so, the details thereof;

(f) whether the Government proposes to amend the Employees Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952 to cover more organisations; and

(g) if so, the details thereof alongwith the time by which it is likely to be amended?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR

FERNANDES): (a) The region-wise details of membership of the Employees Provident Fund as on 31.03.2007 is given in the enclosed Statement.

(b) and (c) Membership of the Fund of the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation has continuously increased over the years.

(d) and (e) Yes, Sir. A Sub-Committee on strategic adjustments in the Compliance 2001 has been constituted. The composition of the Committee is as under:

1. Joint Secretary (Social Security), Ministry of Labour & Employment-Chairman
2. Sh. Sharad Patil, Secretary General, Employees' Federation of India-Member
3. Sh. V.P. Chopra, President, Federation of Association of Small Industries of India (FASII) - Member
4. Sh. Ashok Singh, Secretary, INTUC - Member
5. Sh. W.R. Varada Rajan, Secretary, CITU - Member
6. Additional Central Provident Fund Commissioner (Compliance), Head Office, Employees' Provident Fund Organisation - Convener

(f) and (g) Appropriate action is taken by the Government from time to time to bring more establishments under the purview of the Employees' Provident Funds & Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952. The following four new classes of establishments have recently been specified for the purpose of applicability of the Act:

1. Companies offering life insurance, annuities, etc. other than Life Insurance Corporation of India;
2. Private airports and joint venture airports;
3. Electronic media companies in private sector;
4. Lodging houses, service apartments and condominiums.

The Act is presently applicable to 186 industries/class of establishments.

Statement

Details of membership of the Employees Provident Fund as on 31.03.2007

Sl.No.	Region	Members
1	2	3
1	Andhra Pradesh	3209773
2	Bihar	240362
3	Chhattisgarh	342634
4	Delhi	2145496
5	Goa	415992
6	Gujarat	3690847
7	Haryana	2728013
8	Himachal Pradesh	247200
9	Jharkhand	752165
10	Karnataka	4493707
11	Kerala	1325106
12	Madhya Pradesh	1499409
13	Maharashtra	8019669
14	N.E. Region	239180
15	Orissa	736696
16	Punjab	2679185
17	Rajasthan	1573859
18	Tamil Nadu	5805101
19	Uttaranchal	192787
20	Uttar Pradesh	1571613
21	West Bengal	2495716
	Total	44404510

International Potato Year 2008

4913. SHRI AJOY CHAKRABORTY:

SHRI PRABODH PANDA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Food and Agriculture Organisation has declared 2008 as International Potato Year;

(b) if so, the details thereof indicating the steps envisaged during this year for development of potato in the country;

(c) whether the potato farmers have suffered huge losses due to bumper crop during the current year;

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

(e) whether the problems of potato farmers have been further aggravated due to the failure of the Union Government to release its share towards the insurance claims of such farmers;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) the steps taken to Mitigate the problems of the 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) Yes, Sir. 2008 has been declared as International Potato Year by Food & Agriculture Organisation (FAO), Rome, Italy.

(b) For enhancing horticulture production including potato, two Centrally Sponsored Schemes namely National Horticulture Mission and Horticulture Technology Mission for North Eastern and Himalayan States, are being implemented in the country. The schemes aimed at increasing production and productivity of horticultural crops including potatoes in the country to meet the growing demand in the domestic as well as export market. The assistance is provided to farmers for production and distribution by high yielding and export oriented varieties of potatoes to different agro climatic conditions for their wide coverage in the area expansion programme, integrated pest management, organic farming, transfer of technology programmes, training programmes etc. Central Potato Research Institute (ICAR) has chalked out various programmes such as kisan melas, potato school on All India Radio, Live Phone-in programmes on different aspects of scientific potato cultivation on Doordarshan for development of potatoes for the potato growers in the country.

(c) and (d) No, on the basis of prevailing prices in the market, there is no evidence to support that farmers have suffered huge losses.

(e) to (g) The share of Central Government for the year 2006-07 has already been released to the Agriculture Insurance Company of India which is the implementing agency of National Agriculture Insurance Scheme (NAIS).

Maritime Security

4914. SHRI UDAY SINGH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the maritime security apparatus of the country is sufficient to protect offshore oil and gas blocks and other maritime interests of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there is any proposal to raise the manpower strength of the offshore Defence Advisory Group of the Indian Navy; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (d) India's coastal waters are guarded by the Indian Coast Guard and the Indian Navy in coordination with the State Police. India's strategic and economic interests in Indian Ocean Region are well protected and the Indian Navy and the Coast Guard are geared into ensuring the safety of India's maritime interests. Adequate reconnaissance and surveillance of the sea areas of India's interest is also maintained by both shore-based and ship-borne surveillance aircraft. Indian Navy's ships and aircraft undertake regular patrols to ensure the safety of the country's off-shore oil exploration platforms, etc.

The security and surveillance apparatus in India's territorial waters and exclusive economic zone has been enhanced substantially over the years. The improvement of such an apparatus, based on felt needs, is an ongoing process.

Allocation of Spectrum

4915. SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government has submitted before telecom tribunal that it would allot spectrum to all telecom operators which have received letters of Internet for the starting telephone services in the country;

(b) if so, whether the Government has proposed to allot spectrum to everyone who have applied on that time; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) to (c) In the counter affidavits dated 24.4.2008 in respect of petition no. 20 of 2008 in the matter of Idea Cellular Ltd. Vs Union of India & Another and petition no. 23 of 2008 in the matter of Spice Communications Ltd. Vs Union of India before Telecom Dispute Settlement and Appellate Tribunal (TDSAT), the Government has, inter-alia, submitted that if there is adequate availability of Spectrum in the service area to which the applications of the petitioner are related to, there would be no difficulty and all the Letter of Intent (LOI) holders who have been awarded Unified Access Services (UAS) Licences will be allotted spectrum. In other service areas where there is no adequate availability of Spectrum for all operators, where the extent of adequate spectrum for all applicants is yet to be ascertained, the Government would consider suitable measures to protect the rights of the petitioners in the event of their ultimate success in the petition.

Further, as per terms and conditions of the UAS licence, the allocation of spectrum is subject to availability and as per Guidelines issued from time to time.

Implementation of Oil Packaging Order

4916. SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the implementation status of the Edible Oil Packaging (Regulation) Order, 1998, State-wise;

(b) the bottlenecks and impediments noticed in the effective implementation of the said order;

(c) the number of cases of violation of the mandated provisions of the order reported since its enforcement alongwith the action taken against the violators, year-wise;

(d) the remedial steps taken for the effective implementation of the orders in all the States; and

(e) the recommendations received from the States to make the regulation more effective?

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) Statement-I giving State-wise, implementation status of the Edible Oils Packaging (Regulation) Order, 1998 is enclosed.

(b) and (c) The powers for implementation of the said Order have been delegated to the State Governments. However, no State/UT where the said Order has been implemented, have indicated bottlenecks and impediments regarding the effective implementation of the said Order and no case of violation of the provisions of the Order has been reported by them as on date.

(d) Some of the State Govemments/UTs Administrations which have not implemented the Edible Oil Packaging (Regulation) Order, 1998 or have granted exemptions / extensions for varying period of time deferring the implementation of the Order have been reiterated time and again, the need to implement the Order in letter and spirit.

(e) Based on the recommendations received from the States to make the regulation more effective, the Packaging Order was amended vide Notification No. G.S.R.363(E) dated 16th June, 2004 with regard to clauses 4 (4), 10 (2), 13 and 14 of the Edible Oil Packaging (Regulation) Order, 1998 (copy as Statement-II).

Statement-I

States which have implemented the Packaging order	States which have not implemented the Packaging order	
	But implementation under consideration	Where no manufacturing / packaging units
22 States Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan, Orissa, Goa, Himachal Pradesh, Pondicherry, Mizoram, Punjab, Delhi, Gujarat, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Sikkim, Nagaland, Jammu & Kashmir, Chattisgarh, Andaman & Nicobar)	8 States Uttar Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chandigarh, Haryana, Jharkhand, Manipur and Uttaranchal	5 States Arunachal Pradesh, Daman & Diu, Lakshadweep, Meghalaya and Dadra & Nagar Haveli

Statement-II

2 The Gazette of India Extraordinary [Part II-Sec 3(i)]

MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION

(Department of Food and Public Distribution)

NOTIFICATION

New Delhi, the 16th June, 2004

G.S.R. 363(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 Edible Oils Packaging (Regulation) Order, 1998, namely:–

1. (1) This Order may be called the Edible Oils Packaging (Regulation) Amendment Order, 2004.

   (2) It shall come into force on the date of its publication in the Official Gazette.

2. In the Edible Oils Packaging (Regulation) Order, 1998–

   (a) in sub-clause (4) of clause 4, for the words "within ninety days", the words "within sixty days" shall be substituted;

(b) in sub-clause (2) of clause 10, for the words "The laboratory shall make a report", the words "The laboratory shall make a report within a period of forty days from the date of receipt of the samples for analysis" shall be substituted;

(c) in clause 13, the following shall be added at the end, namely:–

"The appeal so filed may be disposed of by the State Government within a period of ninety days from the receipt of the said appeal";

(d) in clause 14, the following shall be, added at the end, namely:–

"The review petition so filed, may be disposed of by the Edible Oils Commissioner within a period of sixty days from the date of receipt of the said petition."

[F.No.6-1(VP)/2000]

DR. SUNDEEP KHANNA, Jt. Secy.

Foot note: The principal Order was published in the Gazette of India *vide* G.S.R. 584(E), dated the 17thSeptember, 1998 and subsequently amended by G.S.R.. 710(E) dated the 30th November, 1998 and G.S.R. 97(E) dated the 4th February, 2000.

Survey to Identify Water Bodies and Sources of Water in the Country

4917. SHRI G. KARUNAKARA REDDY:
SHRI RAYAPATI SAMBASIVA RAO:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether any survey has been conducted to identify the water bodies and sources of water across the country;

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

(c) the steps being taken/proposed to be taken for their identification and proper utilisation in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) and (b) As per the assessment made by Central Water Commission, the average annual water availability in the country is estimated to be of the order of 1869 Billion Cubic Meter (BCM). The river basin wise average annual water availability is given in the Statement-I. The Ministry also conducts census of minor irrigation schemes. The State-wise details of the number of water bodies used for irrigating culrurable command area of 2000 hectares or less is given in the Statement-II, which is based on the 3rd Minor Irrigation Census.

(c) With a view to optimally utilize the available resources, 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 about 225 billion cubic metre (BCM) has been created so far. As per present assessment, the total estimated storage capacity of the various projects under construction is about 64 BCM. Further, the State Governments have identified various other schemes for investigation and planning and the estimated storage for such schemes is about 108 BCM. State Governments conceive, plan and implement major, medium and minor schemes (both surface and ground water) for utilisation of water resources, Government of India is providing central assistance to the State Governments through various schemes/programmes, such as Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme (AIBP); Command Area Development and Water Management (CADWM) Programme; National Project for Repair, Renovation and Restoration (RRR) of Water Bodies directly linked to agriculture etc. The Ministry of Water Resources encourages conservation of water including measures such as traditional water conservation practices, rainwater harvesting and recharge to ground water and adoption of better management practices.

Statement-I

River Basin wise Average Annual Water Availability

(Billion Cubic Metre (BCM)

Sl.No.	River Basin	Average Annual Water Availability
1	2	3
1.	Indus	73.31
2.	Ganga-Brahmaputra-Barak	
	a. Ganga sub-basin	525.02
	b. Brahmaputra & Barak sub-basin	585.60
3.	Godavari	110.54
4.	Krishna	78.12
5.	Cauvery	21.36
6.	Pennar	6.32
7.	East Flowing Rivers between Mahanadi and Pennar	22.52
8.	East Flowing Rivers between Pennar and Kanyakumari	16.46
9.	Mahanadi	66.88

1	2	3
10.	Brahmani and Baitarni	28.48
11.	Subarnrekha	12.37
12.	Sabarmati	3.81
13.	Mahi	11.02
14.	West Flowing Rivers of Kutchh Saurashtra including Luni	15.10
15.	Narmada	45.64
16.	Tapi	14.88
17.	West Flowing Rivers from Tapi to Tadri	87.41
18.	West Flowing Rivers from Tadri to Kanyakumari	113.53
19.	Area of Inland Drainage in Rajasthan Desert	Negl.
20.	Minor River Basins Draining into Bangladesh and Myanmar	31.00
	Total (National)	1869.37

Statement-II

Number of Irrigation Water Bodies (Tanks, Ponds and other Storages) in 2000-01

Sl. No.	Name of States/UTs	Total no. of Water Bodies for Irrigation		
		In use	Not in use	Total
1	2	3	4	5
1	Andhra Pradesh	51547	24014	75561
2	Arunachal Pradesh	174	125	299
3	Assam	755	265	1020
4	Bihar	11879	2676	14555
5	Chhattisgarh	36125	6592	42717
6	Goa	2779	98	2877
7	Gujarat	1990	2160	4150
8	Haryana	526	35	561
9	Himachal Pradesh	669	43	712
10	Jammu & Kashmir	693	88	781
11	Jharkhand	37839	4371	42210
13	Kerala	10963	678	11641
14	Madhya Pradesh	35129	4702	39831
15	Maharashtra	61413	8218	69631
16	Manipur	2	0	2
17	Meghalaya	194	76	270
18	Mizoram	440	170	610
19	Nagaland	136	25	161
20	Orissa	25082	5569	30651
21	Punjab	424	25	449
22	Rajasthan	1365	1448	2813
23	Sikkim	363	65	428
24	Tamil Nadu	31624	7119	38743
25	Tripura	419	49	468
26	Uttar Pradesh	3233	745	3978
27	Uttaranchal	6331	3359	9690
28	West Bengal	109421	8855	118276
29	Andaman and Nicobar Island	746	306	1052
30	Chandigarh	0	0	0
31	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	44	0	44
32	Daman and Diu	0	0	0
33	Delhi	54	0	54
34	Lakshadweep	0	0	0
35	Pondicherry	14753	3	14756
	Total	470794	85807	556601

Misleading by Private Telecom Operators

4918. SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the various private telecom operators have mislead their subscribers in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the complaints received by the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) in this regard during 2007-08, till date;

(c) the action taken/being taken by the TRAI against such operators; and

(d) the steps taken by the TRAI to check the recurrence of such incidents?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) to (d) Transparency in the provision of telecom services and marketing thereof by the companies has been an issue of high priority. A number of measures have been taken by Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) since its inception to promote transparency in the offer of services in the interest of protecting consumers. These include the issue of Regulations, Directions, Orders and Advisories from time to time and this is an ongoing process.

Some of the important measures mandated by TRAI to improve consumer transparency include the following:

(i) With a view, to remove confusion in respect of tariff plans marketed as having 'Lifetime Validity', TRAI issued regulatory guidelines vide Telecom Tariff Order 43rd Amendment notified on 21st March, 2006. Any tariff plan presented, marketed or offered as having lifetime or unlimited validity shall continue to be available to the subscriber as long as the service provider is permitted to provide such telecom service under the current license or renewed license. The service providers were told to inform the customers the current period of expiry of their license.

(ii) All publication/Advertisements of tariffs shall be in a specified format and shall provide certain essential information vide Direction dated 2nd May, 2005.

(iii) The websites of the service providers and the tariff brochures available in the retail outlet shall contain complete details of the tariff plans vide Direction dated 2nd May, 2005.

(iv) No chargeable value added service shall be provided to a customer without his explicit consent vide Direction dated 3rd May, 2005 and 30th October, 2007.

(v) The pulse rate/tariff for premium rate service shall be published in all communications/ advertisements vide Direction dated 3rd May, 2007.

(vi) Service providers shall inform customers in writing, within a week of activation of service, the complete details of his tariff plan. The changes in any item/aspect of tariff in the chosen package shall also be intimated to the customers, in writing vide Direction dated 29th June, 2005.

(vii) No tariff plan shall be offered, presented, marketed or advertised in a manner that is likely to mislead the subscribers vide Direction dated 16th September, 2005.

(viii) All monthly fixed recurring charges which are compulsory for a subscriber under any given plan shall be shown under one head vide Direction dated 16th September, 2005.

Compliance with the Regulations, Directions, Orders mandated by TRAI is closely monitored. TRAI has intervened in a large number of cases of telecom service providers. The service providers have promptly responded to these interventions of TRAI and have made necessary amends. Overall, the action taken by TRAI from time to time has resulted in enhancing the transparency in the service provision by the telecom service providers.

Rural Post Offices

4919. SHRI P.C. THOMAS: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has any proposal to set up more Post offices in rural areas of the country;

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

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. During the Eleventh Plan Period in the entire country, it is proposed to open:

(i) 3,000 Extra Departmental Branch Post Offices.

(ii) 2,000 Departmental Sub Post Offices.

3,000 Extra Departmental Branch Post Offices given in (i) above are proposed to be opened mainly in rural areas of the country. Some of the departmental sub post offices are also proposed to be opened in the rural areas. Circle/ State-wise details have not been firmed up due to pendency of approval of Standing Finance Committee.

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

[Translation]

Trial of New GSM Network

4920. SHRI SUBHASH MAHARIA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the subscribers are facing, great deal of inconvenience due to the trial of new Global system for Mobile (GSM) Network being carried out by the Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL);

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the facilities likely to be made available to the subscribers after GSM network becoming operational;

(d) whether the Government proposes to carry out similar tests by Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) also in the country;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the time by which it is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) to (c) Sir, there was some temporary congestion in the cellular mobile network of MTNL Delhi due to upgradation and capacity expansion of 750K lines. This has now been commissioned and network is working satisfactorily. The new network will provide better coverage and more capacity.

(d) to (f) Global System for Mobile (GSM) Network of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) is already operational. Necessary tests are being carried out as and when required.

[English]

Funds for Telecom Infrastructure

4921. SHRI JASUBHAI DHANABHAI BARAD: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state;

(a) whether the Government proposes to provide funds to private telecom operators to create telecom infrastructure in rural areas of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any target has been fixed for those private telecom operators to provide telephone facilities in rural areas of the country;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A scheme has recently been launched by Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) to provide subsidy support for setting up and managing 7871 number of infrastructure sites (towers) in 500 districts spread over 27 States for provision of mobile services in the specified rural and remote areas, where there is no existing fixed wireless or mobile coverage. The infrastructure so created shall be shared by three Service Providers for provision of mobile services including other Wireless Access Services like Wireless on Local Loop (WLL). The infrastructure in form of towers and provision of mobile services shall be created by both Private and Public Sector Companies. As per the Representative Rates arrived as on outcome of the bidding process, total subsidy outgo from USO Fund under this scheme would be about Rs. 587.88 Crore over a period of 5 years.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The agreements effective from 01.06.2007 have been signed by USOF with the successful infrastructure Providers and Service Providers for these 7871 towers in May, 2007. Mobile Srvices from some of these towers have already been started and services from the remaining towers are likely to be available in a phased manner by October, 2008.

(e) Does not arise in view of (d) above.

Rice Research Centre

4922. DR. K. S. MANOJ: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to set up rice research centres in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise particularly in Kerala; 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) Department of Agricultural Research and Education (DARE)/ Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) is not contemplating to establish new rice research centre(s) in the country including Kerala. The rice research in the country is being carried out by a central Institue i.e. Central Rice Research Institute, at Cuttack alongwith its two regional centres at Hazaribagh (Jharkhand) and Gerua, (Assam), one Directorate of Rice Research at Hyderabad. Besides above, Rice research is also being carried out at Indian Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi and also at Vivekanand Krishi Anusandhan Sansthan, Almora.

The Directorate of Rice Research also coordinates rice research in the country through the All India Coordinated Rice Improvement Project (AICRIP) with 46 funded centres established under the State Agricultural Universities/State Departments.

In Kerala, under AICRIP, two centres i.e. one at Pattambi and the other at Moncompu under the Kerala Agricultural University are already functioning for the development of location specific varieties and technologies for enhancing the production and productivity of rice specially for the Kerala.

[Translation]

Modern Weighing Machines

4923. SHRI MANSUKHBHAI D. VASAVA:
SHRI JIVABHAI A. PATEL:

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

(a) whether new modern weighing machines are currently being used by traders in the country for weighing goods sold by them;

(b) if so, the details thereof indicating the types of machines being used;

(c) the norms/rules regarding sealing and other requirements of such machines;

(d) whether the said norms/rules are not being complied with;

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

(f) the remedial measures 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 TASLIMUDDIN): (a) and (b) Technological upgradation is a continuous process and the term "modern" is subjective. Depending upon technological improvement new types of weighing machines are brought into market from time to time.

(c) Sealing and other metrological requirements for weighing machines are prescribed in the Standards of Weights and Measures (General) Rules, 1987.

(d) The State enforcement agencies are responsible for ensuring compliance. This Department is not aware of any complaint regarding general non-compliance of Rules.

(e) and (f) Does not arise.

[English]

Foodgrain Production

4924. SHRI G.M. SIDDESWARA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is contemplating to downscale the estimates regarding foodgrain production in 2008-09;

(b) the revised target set for Kharif and Rabi seasons during the above period separately; and

(c) the reasons for downscaling the said estimates?

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 agriculture year 2008-09 has not yet started. The estimates of foodgrain production are brought out when the agriculture year is in progress, by following a well established procedure.

(b) The targets of crop production for both Kharif and Rabi seasons are set before the start of the agriculture year.

(c) Does not arise.

Losses Suffered by BSNL and MTNL

4925. SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether BSNL and MTNL have failed to recover their dues from their customers as reported in the Hindustan dated March 11, 2008;

(b) if so, the facts of the matter reported therein;

(c) whether there has been a mismanagement and procurement of wasteful equipment by these telecom companies;

(d) if so, the details of losses suffered by both these companies;

(e) whether the Government has made any investigation to find out the persons responsible for the said condition of BSNL and MTNL;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) the action taken/being taken in the regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) and (b) Sir, the facts of the matter reported in Hindustan dated March 11, 2008 in respect of BSNL and MTNL are given in Statement-I and II respectively.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) to (g) Does not arise in view of (c) above.

Statement-I

Facts of the Matter in respect of BSNL

(1) As reported in the Hindustan dated March 11, 2008; an outstanding of Rs.3665.51 crore has been shown against private customers.

(2) This includes an amount of Rs. 170.3 crore pertaining to Govt. agencies (i.e. Central & State Govt. offices and Defence) in the country.

(3) The amount of Rs.3665.51 crore was reflected in the CAG report which had analysed the BSNL performance for the period upto June 07. The amount has since been reduced by Rs.42.15 crore to Rs.3623.36 crore as on 31-1-2008.

(4) Moreover, the total outstanding of Rs.3665.51 crore appearing in the newspaper report is the cumulative outstanding including the period when Services were offered by GOI prior to formation of BSNL from 1990-91 to 2006-07 and the cumulative Billed Amount(ABF) for this period is Rs.241948.15 crore and therefore the outstanding to the ABF works out to 1.50 % only.

Statement-II

Facts of the Matter in respect of MTNL

MTNL has not failed to recover its dues from the customers. MTNL is billing it's customers for more than Rs. 4500 crores annually and inspite of such heavy billing it is continuing to bring down total outstanding dues.

MTNL has managed to bring down its total outstanding dues significantly as shown below:

(Amount, in Crore)

31.3.2006	31.3.2007	Reduction over 31.3.2006	31.3.2008*	Reduction over 31.3.2007
1272.68	1218.43	-54.23	1188.62	-29.81

* estimated.

Various efforts made by MTNL towards recovery of outstanding dues are given below:

1. Strong monitoring of outstanding dues at the corporate level and at the units Head Quarter level as well as in the areas. High targets were set and the units were on their toes to achieve them.

2. Private recovery agents were employed for making recoveries and were able to make some recoveries of about Rs.5 Crores.

3. A Revenue Assurance program is also being implemented in MTNL wherein efforts are being made to ensure that maximum Revenue Billing and Revenue Realization takes place to further reduce the outstanding dues.

4. Convergent Billing System is being introduced for achieving further control on Revenue Assurance and realization of outstanding dues.

5. Automated telephonic reminders are sent to subscribers who default in making payments of their bills.

6. Further action of disconnection of the telephone including disconnection of other working connection of the subscribers is also initiated in case payment is not received.

7. Legal notices are also served to those subscribers who despite the reminders fail to make the payments of the telephone bills.

8. In the events of the above efforts not yielding results, recovery suits are filed in the court of law wherever possible.

Consumer Welfare Fund

4926. SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the objectives for creating Consumer Welfare Fund alongwith the success achieved therein;

(b) the amount sanctioned and utilized from the said fund during each of the last three years;

(c) the manner in which the said funds were utilised during the said period;

(d) whether complaints have been received regarding misuse of funds allocated to the Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) for Consumer Awareness;

(e) if so, the details thereof indicating the number and nature of complaints received alongwith the number of

NGOs engaged in Consumer Awareness and the funds allocated to them; and

(f) the remedial steps taken to check misuse of funds by NGOs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) The overall objectives of the Consumer Welfare Fund is to provide financial assistance to promote and protect the welfare of consumers and strengthen the voluntary consumer movement in the country. Various projects have been sanctioned from the Consumer Welfare Fund to enhance the consumer awareness across the country.

(b) The Budget estimate and amount released during last 3 years is as under:

Year	Budget estimate	Amount Released
2005-06	Rs.31.50 Crores	Rs.8,51,14,000
2006-07	Rs.17.35 Crores	Rs.6,71,56,354
2007-08	Rs.20.60 Crores	Rs.8,72,53,072

(c) During the last 3 years funds were utilized for projects in the following areas:

1. Training programmes on consumer protection.
2. Comparative testing of products.
3. Setting up/strengthening alternate consumer grievances redressal system.
4. Setting up of Consumer Clubs in schools/colleges.
5. Setting up of State Consumer Welfare Funds.
6. Setting up of Chairs/Centers of excellence.
7. Consumer awareness programmes in rural areas.
8. Up grading testing laboratories.
9. District Consumer Information Centers

(d) and (e) A complaint was received against Jajpur Harijan Sewa Samity, District Jajpur, Orissa .The State Government has been asked to take necessary action in the matter.

(f) A Monitoring Committee set up in the Department periodically reviews the progress of activities and the expenditure incurred in addition to the annual internal audit inspection.

[Translation]

Non-Compliance of Orders of Labour Courts

4927. SHRI HARIKEWAL PRASAD:
SHRI JIVABHAI A. PATEL:

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

(a) whether the employers do not implement the orders passed by the labour Courts which leads to injustice being done to the employees and labourers;

(b) if so, whether there is a provision requiring the courts to be apprised of the follow up action taken by the employers;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) As per provisions of Section 17(1) of the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947, every report of a Board or court together with any minute of dissent recorded therewith, every arbitration award and every award of a Labour Court, Tribunal or National Tribunal shall, within a period of thirty days from the date of its receipt by the Appropriate Government be published in such manner as the Appropriate Government thinks fit. It was held in the Rasbehary Mohanty v/s Presiding Officer Labour Court 1974 (2) LLJ 222, that the award when published within the meaning of section 17(1) of the Act, would become effective on the expiry of 30 days from the date of its publication. However, many employers take recourse to writ jurisdiction of the High Courts and obtain stay orders against the operation of award.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d) There is no such provision in the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947.

[English]

Micro-hydel Power Projects

4928. SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal from the Indian Army to set up micro-hydel power projects in remote mountainous border belts in some parts of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which the above projects are likely to be set up?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (c) A total of 1000 Micro Hydel Projects (MHPs) have been undertaken by the Army for which funds have also been provided by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy and Ministry of Home Affairs. The Army has so far constructed 998 MHPs. Their construction is reviewed periodically by the Army Headquarter.

[Translation]

Inquiry against Theft of Telephone Cable

4929. SHRI RAGHUVEER SINGH KOSHAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 666 dated March 3, 2008 and state:

(a) the steps taken by the Government in view of arrest of only 25 persons against 20,118 cases of cable theft during a period of three years;

(b) whether the Government has taken any effective steps in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the Government proposes to conduct a Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) inquiry into the basic reasons of such thefts in order to arrest this trend; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) to (c) Sir, as and when cable theft occurs, BSNL field units lodge FIR with local Police Authority. The matter is also taken up with the higher officers/State Government depending on the severity of the cases. Further action is taken up by BSNL as follows:

(i) Persuasion and regular follow up with the local Police Authorities for expediting pending FIRs of theft cases.

(ii) Local Police Authorities are requested to patrol the vulnerable areas for avoiding cable theft,

(iii) Meetings are held with officer-in-charge of concerned police stations to prevent cable thefts.

(iv) Supervision is enforced whenever digging work is taken up with other agencies to avoid possible theft.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise in view of (d) above.

[English]

Kharif Crops

4930. SHRI KISHANBHAI V.PATEL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Commission on Agriculture Cost and Prices (CACP) has submitted its recommendations regarding food crops particularly kharif crops for the year 2008-09;

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

(c) whether the Government has forwarded the said recommendations to the States for their comments; and

(d) if so, the reaction of the States 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 (d) The Commission for Agricultural Costs & Prices (CACP) has submitted its Report on Price Policy for Kharif Crops of 2008-09 season to the Government. Final decision regarding the Minimum Support Prices (MSPs) for the Kharif crops of 2008-09 season will be taken by the Government after obtaining the views of State Governments/UTs and Central Ministries as well as such other relevant factors which are considered important for fixation of support prices.

[Translation]

Computer Network in Villages

4931 SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has formulated any scheme to provide extensive computer network connectivity to the villages in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of progress made so far in this regard; and

(d) the time by which all the villages in the country are likely to be provided with computer network?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) The Government has approved a Scheme for providing support for establishing 100,000 broadband, Internet enabled, Common

Service Centres (CSCs) in rural areas of the country. The Scheme has been approved at a total cost of Rs. 5742 crores over 4 years, of which the Government of India is estimated to contribute Rs. 856 crore and the State Governments Rs. 793 crores. The balance resources would be mobilized from the private sector.

(b) The Scheme is being implemented in a Public Private Partnership. These Centres would be opened in the ratio of 1 CSC for every 6 Census villages in a State. These Centres would provide a mix of Government and private Services in rural areas. The Centres once established would provide better communication facilities to citizens in rural areas.

(c) The details of the Progress made in the implementation of the Scheme may be seen in the enclosed Statement.

(d) There is no proposal for setting up of CSC's in every village & hence no date for the same can be provided.

Statement

CSC Status (As on 15.4.2008)

Sl. No.	Name of State/UT	No. of CSCs proposed to be set up	Current Status
1	2	3	4
1	Andhra Pradesh	4687	Evaluation Completed. Letter of Intent to be issued
2	Arunachal Pradesh	74	Request for proposal under preparation
3	Assam	4375	Master Service Level Agreement signed. Implementation initiated
4	Bihar	8463	9 Common Service Centers established
5	Chhattisgarh	3385	Request for proposal under preparation
6	Dadra and Nagar	12	Request for proposal under preparation
7	Daman Diu	4	Request for proposal under preparation
8	Gujarat	6000	541 Common Service Centers established
9	Haryana	1159	1159 Common Service Centers established
10	Himachal Pradesh	3366	Evaluation Completed. Letter of Intent to be issued
11	Jammu and Kashmir	1109	Letter of Intent to be issued
12	Jharkhand	4562	4506 Common Service Centers established
13	Karnataka	4901	Request for proposal under preparation
14	Kerala	3178	Request for proposal under preparation
15	Lakshadweep	4	Request for proposal under preparation
16	Madhya Pradesh	9232	Master Service Level Agreement signed. Implementation initiated
17	Maharashtra	7285	Evaluation Completed. Letter of Intent to be issued
18	Manipur	399	Letter of Intent issued. Master Service level Agreement to be signed
19	Meghalaya	225	Bid evaluation underway

1	2	3	4
20	Mizoram	36	Request for proposal issued
21	Nagaland	220	Request for proposal under preparation
22	Orissa	8558	Letter of Intent issued. Master Service Level Agreement to be signed
23	Pondicherry	44	Request for proposal under preparation
24	Punjab	2112	Request for proposal under preparation
25	Rajasthan	6626	Request for proposal under preparation
26	Sikkim	45	Letter of Intent issued. Master Service Level Agreement to be signed
27	Tamilnadu	5440	Letter of Intent issued. Master Service Level Agreement to be signed
28	Tripura	145	4 Common Service Centers established
29	Uttar Pradesh	17909	Master Service Level Agreement signed. Implementation initiated
30	Uttarakhand	2804	Letter of Intent issued. Master Service Level Agreement to be signed
31	West Bengal	6797	1521 Common Service Centers established

Note: Andaman, Goa, Delhi and Chandigarh as of now are not inclined to implement CSC scheme of Government of India.

[English]

Construction of Godowns

4932. SHRI NAND KUMAR SAI: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the targets fixed and achieved for construction of godowns and railway sidings for storage of foodgrains during each year of the Tenth Plan, State-wise;

(b) the reasons for failure to achieve the targets;

(c) the targets fixed and allocation made for creation of storage capacity during each year of the Eleventh Plan alongwith the steps proposed to be taken for achieving the targets fixed, State-wise; and

(d) the number and capacity of storage space proposed to be created during 2008-09, 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 (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) During the Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-03 to 2006-07), the Food Corporation of India (FCI) has created 3,66,880 MTs storage capacity against the target of 3,62,010 MT. The State-wise/Centre-wise details are given in the enclosed Statement-I.

During Tenth Plan, 3 Railway sidings at Nellore (Andhra Pradesh), Dhamora (Uttar Pradesh) and Balijori (Orissa) were also completed.

During the Tenth Five Year Plan, Central Warehousing Corporation (CWC), against the target of 15.74 lakh MTs, has constructed a total of 14.28 lakh MTs for storage of all commodities including foodgrains. The Year-wise/State-wise/Centre-wise details are given in the enclosed Statement-II. Out of the above total capacity constructed, 1.99 lakh MT was constructed under 7 years guarantee scheme for exclusive storage of foodgrains of FCI and a capacity of 0.51 lakh MT was constructed for Railside Warehousing Complexes (RWCs).

(b) As regards FCI, there was no shortfall in achieving the physical targets set for the Tenth Five Year Plan. The CWC could not achieve the targets fully as the construction at Mundra was delayed due to utilisation of the incomplete infrastructure for the use of imported foodgrains by FCI, which has been completed during 2007-08. Out of 22 locations as per MoU with Railways, the construction of RWCs could not be commenced in time at 18 locations due to delay by Railways in handing over of the land.

(c) The Government has allocated a total of Rs. 149 crores for construction of godowns during Eleventh Plan (2007-08 to 2011-12) out of which Rs.125 crore has been earmarked for FCI for construction of storage godowns in the country and the remaining Rs.24 crore is for the State Governments of North East Region, Sikkim and State Government of Jammu & Kashmir as Grants-in-Aid. The State-wise priority list of centres drawn up by the FCI out of which the construction of storage godowns will be finalised is given in the statement-III. During the first year of the Eleventh Plan i.e. 2007-08, Rs.4 crore was released to the FCI as equity and Rs.2.00 crore was released to State Government of Mizoram as Grants in Aid for construction of storage godowns under Plan Scheme. The centres taken in the Annual Plan 2007-08 were new where land was yet to be acquired. As such, no physical target as taken in the Annual Plan 2007-08 have been met.

As regards CWC [including Central Railside Warehousing Corporation (CRWC)], for the 11th Five Year Plan, construction of 4.03 lakh MT is the target with an allocation of Rs.195.61 crores, out of which, a capacity of 2.40 lakh MT has been constructed during 2007-08. The State-wise/centre-wise details are given in the Statement-IV.

(d) The State-wise tentative details of the number and capacity of storage space proposed to be created by the FCI during the year 2008-09 are given in the statement-V. The construction on these centres will be taken up subject to availability/acquisition/handing over of land by the State Governments to the FCI for taking up construction of storage godowns by FCI.

The State-wise details of the number and capacity of storage space proposed to be created during 2008-09 by the CWC are given in the Statement-VI.

Statement-I

Capacity targeted/completed during Xth Plan (2002-2003 to 2006-2007)

Capacity in Tonnes

Sl. No.	Centre	Year 2002–2003		Year 2003–2004		Year 2004–2005		Year 2005–2006		Year 2006–2007	
		Capacity		Capacity		Capacity		Capacity		Capacity	
		Targeted	Completed	Targeted	Completed	Targeted	Completed	Targeted	Completed	Targeted	Completed
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
North Zone											
1	Malout Ph.II/Pb/10,000	10,000	5,000								
2	Hanumangarh/Raj/15,000	10,000	15,000								
3	Baran/Raj/5,000	5,000	5,000								
4	B.G.Sirsa/Har/26670	15,000			16,670	10,000	10,000				
5	Vyasnagar/UP/13,340			10,000		3,340	13,340				
6	Raibareilly/UP/20,000			10,000	20,000						
7	N.G.Tanda/Pb/23,340			10,000	23,340	13,340					
South Zone											
1	Miryalguda/AP/20,000	10,000	10,000								
2	Nalgonda/AP/20,000	10,000	10,000								
3	Nellore Ph.II/AP/10,000	10,000	10,000								
4	Sevur/TN/5,000	5,000	5,000								
5	Maddur/KTK/5,000	5,000	5,000								

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
6	Kazipet/AP/10,000	10,000	10,000								
7	Mysore/KTK/2800	2970	2800								
8	Ditchpally/AP/10,000		5,000	5,000	5,000						
9	Salem/TN/10,000			10,000	3,340		3,340	3,340	3,340		
10	Tumkur/KTK/15,000			10,000		5,000	5,000		5,000		
11	Hanuman junction/AP/10,000			10,000	10,000						
12	Shimoga/KTK/15,000			10,000	15,000	5,000					
13	Nellore Ph.III/AP/15,000					10,000	15,000				
14	Koppal/KTK/10,000					10,000	10,000				
West Zone											
1	Manmad/Mah/18,600	18,600			6,680		11,920				
2	Godhra/Guj/25,000	15,000		10,000	15,000		10,000				
3	Tilda/Chatis/13,340			5,000		8,340	13,340				
East Zone											
1	Ongole/Orissa/5,000			5,000	5,000						
2	Dhenkanal/Orissa/2,500			2,500	2,500						
3	Keojhar/Orissa/2,500			2,500	2,500						
4	Phulbani/Orissa/2,500			2,500	2,500						
5	Nowrangpur/Orissa/2,500			2,500	2,500						
Hill and Remote Area											
1	Chamba/HP/1670		1,670								
2	Kargil/J&K/2,500		2,500								
3	Leh/J&K/2,500	2,500	2,500								
4	Kishtwar/J&K/2,500	2,500	2,500								
5	Badgaon/J&K/2,500					2,500			1,250		1,250
6	Leh/J&K/10,000					5,000		5,000	10,000		
7	Kupwara/J&K/5,000							5,000			5000
8	Keylong/HP/2500							2,500			2,500
NE and Sikkim											
1	Rangpoo/Sikkim/2,500	2,500	2,500								
2	Jiribam/Manipur/2,500	2,500					2,500				
3	Dimapur/Nagaland/2,500			2,500			2,500				

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
4	Agartala/Tripura/2,500			2,500	2,500						
5	Lunglei/Mizoram/2900							2,900	2,920		
6	Lawngtalei/Mizoram/3,340							3,340			3,340
7	Bualpui/Mizoram/5,000									5,000	
8	Chanderpur/Tripura/5,000									5,000	5,000
9	Senchowa/Assam/1,670									1,670	1,670
10	Badarpurghat/Assam/5,000									5,000	
11	Chaulkhowa/Assam/4,170									4,170	1,670
	Total	136,570	94,470	110,000	132,530	72,520	96,940	22080	22,510	20840	20430
Total targeted capacity during Xth Plan		3,62,010									
Total achievement during Xth Plan		3,66,880									

Statement-II

Year-wise/State-wise/Centre-wise details of the storage capacity created by the Central Warehousing Corporation (CWC) during the Tenth Five Year Plan

(Capacity figures in MTs)

State	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	Total
Andhra Pradesh	1,40,810	10,000	-	-	-	1,50,810
Karnataka	20,000	10,400	11,140	-	23,960	65,500
Orissa	29,300	-	-	-	-	29,300
Uttar Pradesh	61,480	12,000	5,000	11,350	59,400	1,49,230
Haryana	31,100	-	-	-	-	31,100
Punjab	17,200	-	-	-	-	17.200
Tamil Nadu	8,900	1,550	-	-	-	10,450
Kerala	5,000	25,000	-	-	-	30,000
Rajasthan	25,000	12,589	17,300	-	18,300	73,189
West Bengal	20,000	57,400	12,800	-	-	90,200
Madhya Pradesh	-	10,000	6,000	-	-	16,000
Gujarat	-	73,800	-	54,000	2,01,300	3,29,100
Assam	-	20,000	-	-	-	20,000
Maharashtra	-	38,400	47,100	2,11,050	18,760	3,15,310
Himachal Pradesh	-	1,670	-	-	-	1,670
Delhi	-	25,300	10,000	-	-	35,300
Bihar	-	-	5,000	-	5,000	10,000
Andman and Nicobar	-	-	2,700	-	-	2,700
Grand Total						13,77,059 Say 13.77 lakh MT

Storage capacity constructed under Seven Year Guarantee

(Capacity in MTs)

State	Year		Total
	2002-03	2003-04	
Andhra Pradesh	1,03,370	10,000	1,13,370
Uttar Pradesh	50,430	12,000	62,430
Haryana	5,800		5,800
Punjab	17,200		17,200
	Grand Total		1,98,800 Say 1.99 lakh MTs

Railside Warehousing Complex

1.	RWC Bangalore Ph.II (Karnataka)	15,500 MT
2.	RWC Nasik (Maharashtra)	9,000 MT
3.	RWC Nishatpura (Bhopal)	16,700 MT
4.	RWC Shakurbasti (Delhi)	9,900 MT
	Total	51,100 MT Say 0.51 lakh MT

Statement-III

List of priority of Centres proposed for construction of godowns during 11th five year plan (2007-12)

Sl.No.	Name of the Centre	Proposed Capacity (Fig. in MT)	Estimated Cost (Rs. in crores)
N.E. Zone			
I	**Assam Region**		
1	Changsari	50,000 with siding	25.00
2	Hailakandi	5,000	1.50
3	Karimganj	5,000	1.75
4	Kokrajhar	5,000	1.75
5	Nowgaon	25,000 with siding	17.5
6	Dibrugarh	25,000 with siding	17.5
7	Fakiragram	5,000	1.75
	Total	1.20 lakh MT	66.75
II	**Tripura**		
1	Nandannagar (within Existing Complex)	2,500	1.25
2	Kumarghat	5,000	3.00
	Total	7,500	4.25
III	**Manipur**		
1	Jiribam	7,500	4.50
2.	Senapati	5,000	3.00
3.	Churachandpur	2,500	1.50
	Total	15,000	9.00
IV	**Nagaland**		
1	Kohima	5,000	3.00
2	Dimapur	5,000	3.00
	Total	10,000 MT	6.00
V	Meghalaya		
1	Baghamara (South Garo Hills)	2,500	1.50
2	Shillong	5,000	3.00
	Total	7,500	4.50
North Zone			
VI	**Jammu & Kashmir**		
1	Srinagar Vally (Rly Siding)	20,000	12.00
2	Pulwama	2,500	1.50
3	Udhampur	15,000	9.00
	Total	37,500	22.50
VII	**Himachal Pradesh**		
1	Kinnaur	1,670	1.00
2	Bilaspur	5,000	2.00
3	Mandi	5,000	2 00
4	Nahan	5,000	2.00
5	Nagrota Bhawan	5,000	2.00
6	Shimla	5,000	2.00
	Total	26,670 MT	11.00

1	2	3	4
East Zone			
VIII	**Sikkim**		
1.	Jorthan	5,000	3.00
IX	**Jharkhand**		
1	Chakradharpur	15,000	7.50
	Total	15,000	7.50
X	**Bihar**		
1	Mohania/Kaimur	25,000	7.25
	Total	25,000	7.25
XI	**Orissa**		
1	Dungrapalli	10,000	3.00
2	Mancheswar	10,000	3.00
3	Baripeda	10,000	3.00
	Total	30,000	9.00
XII	**West Bengal**		
1	Jalpaiguri	10,000	3.00
	Total	10,000	3.00
West Zone			
XIII	Chhattisgarh		
1	Balod	10,000	3.00
2	Akaltara	10,000	3.00
	Total	20,000	6.00
XIV			
Maharashtra			
1	Bhandara	10,000	3.00
	Total	10,000	3.00
South Zone			
XV	**Union Territory**		
1	Lakshadweep	2,500	1.25
	Total	2,500	1.25
	Grand Total	3,41,670 MT	164.00 crores

Statement-IV

The year-wise/State-wise/Centre-wise details of the targets fixed for construction of godowns by CWC in the Eleventh Five Year Plan

2007-08 (Revised)

S.No.	Centre	State	Capacity (in Mt)
1.	CFS MSEZ Mundra	Gujarat	33750
2.	Mundra (34 Acre)	Gujarat	66580
3.	CFS D' Node	Maharashtra	5000
4.	EPIP, Kasna (P. Fab.)	Uttar Pradesh	4000
5.	Kannur	Tamil Nadu	10000
6.	Hubli	Karnataka	10000
		Total	129330
RWCs			
1.	Ghaziabad	Uttar Pradesh	
2.	Nasik Road	Maharashtra	
3.	Badnera (Amravati)	Maharashtra	
4.	Yamuna Bridge, Agra	Uttar Pradesh	11500
5.	Kudalnagar (Madurai)	Tamil Nadu	12000
6.	Kandla	Gujarat	32200
7.	Roza (Shahjahanpur)	Uttar Pradesh	18400
8.	RWC, Whitefield, Bangalore	Karnataka	10000
	Total		84100
	Grand Total		213430 MT

Centres completed during 2007-08

Capacity (in Mt)

S.No.	Centre	State	Capacity
1	2	3	4
CWC			
1.	CFS, MSEZ Mundra	Gujarat	33750

1	2	3	4
2.	Mundra Plot No. 1	Gujarat	66580
3.	EPIP, Kasna	U.P.	21250
4.	CFS D'node (Import Hub)	Maharashtra	5000
	Total	126580	

S.No.	Centre	State	Capacity (in Mt)
CRWC Ltd.			
1.	RWC, Badnera (Amravati)	Maharashtra	17000
2.	RWC, Sanathnagar (Hyderabad)	A.P.	13200
3.	RWC, Shakurbasti	Delhi	10000
4.	RWC, Yamuna Bridge, Agra	Uttar Pradesh	5500
5.	RWC, Alamnagar (Lucknow)	Uttar Pradesh	17000
6.	RWC, Roza (Shahjahanpur)	Uttar Pradesh	18400
7.	RWC, Kandla	Gujarat	32200
	Total		113300
	Grand Total		239880
			Say 2.40 Lakhs Tonnes
2008-09			
1.	Shimla	Himachal Pradesh	5000
2.	Barhi	Haryana	10000
3.	Kurukshetra	Haryana	5000
4.	Jaipur	Rajasthan	5000
5.	Bharatpur	Rajasthan	5000
6.	Baran	Rajasthan	5000
7.	Panihati	West Bengal	10000
		Total	45000
RWC,s			
1.	Hatia (Ranchi)	Jharkhand	14800
2.	Dankuni (Kolkata)	West Bengal	14000
3.	Kokg (Chennai)	Tamil Nadu	15000
4.	Dehri-On-Sone	Bihar	10000
5.	Indore	Madhya Pradesh	10000
6.	Rohtak	Haryana	10000
	Total		73800
	Grand Total		1,18,800 MT
2009-10			
S.No.	Centre	State	Capacity (in MT)
1.	Siddarthnagar	Uttar Pradesh	10000
2.	Santkabirnagar	Uttar Pradesh	10000
3.	Cold Storage		5000
	Total		25000 MT
2010-2011			
1.	Cold Stroage		5000
	Total		5000
RWC,s			
1.	Nasik Road Phase-II	Maharashtra	9000
	Total		9000
	Grand Total		14000 MT
2011-2012			
RWC,s			
1	Kandla Phase-II	Gujarat	32200
	Total		32200 MT

Statement-V

Tentative Annual Plan Outlay 2008-09 and their physical targets in respect of plan scheme operated by deptt. of Food & Public Distribution (in order to priority)

(Capacity in MT)

North East Region including Sikkim

Sl. No.	Name of State/ Centre	Targeted storage capacity	Funds requirement (Rs. crores)
1	2	3	4
On-going projects			
1.	Bualpui/Mizoram/5,000		0.30
2.	Badarpurghat/Assam/5,000		0.20
3.	Chaulkhowa/Assam/4170		0.25
4.	Nandan Nagar/Tripura/2500	2,500	1.00
5.	Changsari/Assam/50000	5,000	14.00*+ 2.00

1	2	3	4
6.	Jiribam/Manipur/2500	2,500	0.85
7.	Dimapur/Nagaland/5000		1.80*
8.	Kohima/Nagaland/5000	5,000	1.50
9.	Hailakandi/Assam/5000	5000	2.00
	Total	20,000	23.90

* Only land cost

Other than North East Region

Sl. No.	Name of State/ Centre	Targeted storage capacity	Funds requirement (Rs. crores)
On Going projects			
1	Kishtwar/2500	2500	0.10
2.	Badgaon/2500	2500	0.10
3.	Kupwara/5000	5000	0.20
4.	Leh/10000	10000	0.30
New Projects			
5.	Lakshadweep/UT/2500	2,500	1.25
6.	Dungrapalli/Orissa/9,170	5,000	1.75
	Total	7,500	3.70

* The BE for 2008-09 is Rs. 15 crore for construction of godowns by FCI.

Statement-VI

The State-wise/Centre-wise details of the Storage Capacity proposed to be created by the CWC during the year 2008-09

S.No.	Centre	State	Capacity (in MT)
1	2	3	4
1.	Shimla	Himachal Pradesh	5000
2.	Barhi	Haryana	10000
3.	Kurukshetа	Haryana	5000
4.	Jaipur	Rajasthan	5000
5.	Bharatpur	Rajasthan	5000
6.	Baran	Rajasthan	5000
7.	Panihati	West Bengal	10000
	Total		45000

1	2	3	4
RWC,s			
1.	Hatia (Ranchi)	Jharkhand	14800
2.	Dankuni (Kolkata)	West Bengal	14000
3.	Kokg (Chennai)	Tamil Nadu	15000
4.	Dehri-On-Sone	Bihar	10000
5.	Indore	Madhya Pradesh	10000
6.	Rohtak	Haryana	10000
	Total		73800
	Grand Total		1,18,800 MT

Committee on Handloom Sector

4933. SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has constituted any committee/panel to examine the financial problem of the Handloom Sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the said Committee panel has given its report;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) and (b) A High level committee headed by Managing Director, National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) was formed to look into the problems of high cost of working capital and choking of credit lines in the handloom sector and to work out detailed strategies and an implementable action plan for this purpose. The committee consisted of representatives of Indian Banks Association, Reserve Bank of India, National Institute of Fashion Technology, Secretary (Handlooms) of major handloom States and representative of National Association of State Cooperative Banks (NAFSCOB).

(c) and (d) The report submitted by the High level Committee gave following recommendations for seeking financial package for Handloom Sector:

i. Restructuring/Categorization of Primary Handloom Weavers Cooperative Societies (PHWCSs) as viable, potentially viable and non-viable units.

ii. Cleansing of the balance sheet of Apex and Primary Weavers Cooperative Societies (viable and potentially viable) with adequate fund support from Government.

iii. Organization of weavers outside the cooperative fold/ members of non-viable/defunct PWCSs/Weavers in areas of weak cooperative structure into Handloom Weavers Group (HWGs) in handloom clusters adopting the concept of Joint Liability Group.

iv. Waiver of overdue interest and overdue loans of Weavers/PWCSs/Apex Societies as on 31st March, 2006.

v. Financing the credit needs of handloom weavers/ societies at 7% rate of interest with interest subvention to NABARD and banks from Government of India.

vi. Establishment of a "Handloom Development and Equity Fund (HDEF)" in NABARD for providing equity, promotional and development support to agencies connected with the handloom sector. Government of India may provide an initial contribution of Rs.50.00 crore. NABARD may make initial contribution of Rs.10 crores and annual contributions as decided by the Board of Directors. Other banks and State Governments would also be requested to contribute to the fund later.

vii. An MOU to be signed by the major stake holders, viz, Government of India, State Government and NABARD.

The total financial package as recommended by the Committee is estimated to cost Rs.1295 crores. Out of this, the Central Governments' share will be Rs. 1155 crores, while State Government's contribution will be Rs.130 crore, and NABARD's contribution will be Rs. 10 crores.

(e) Does not arise.

Centrally Sponsored Scheme

4934. SHRI AJOY CHAKRABORTY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of centrally sponsored agricultural projects that are currently being implemented in West Bengal;

(b) the total number of targeted beneficiaries of these projects;

(c) whether any special programme has been undertaken for the tribal population in the State under these projects; 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) The Department of Agriculture and Cooperation is implementing a number of Centrally Sponsored Schemes for increasing production and productivity in the agriculture sector and for benefits of the farmers. The list of Centrally Sponsored Schemes being implemented by the Department of Agriculture & Cooperation in the State of West Bengal during the year 2008-09 is furnished in the Statement enclosed.

(c) and (d) No special programme has been undertaken by the Ministry of Agriculture for the tribal population in the State. However, as per the existing guidelines issued by the Planning Commission, 8% of the total allocation made under these schemes has been earmarked for the benefit of the Tribal population in the State.

Statement

Details of the Centrally Sponsored schemes being implemented in the State of West Bengal during the year 2008-09

1. Macro Management of Agriculture (MMA)
2. Technology Mission on Cotton (TMC)
3. Integrated Scheme of Oilseeds, Pulses, Oilpalm and Maize (ISOPOM).
4. National Food Security Mission.
5. Support to State Extension Programmes for Extension Reforms.
6. National Horticulture Mission (NHM)
7. Micro Irrigation.
8. National Bamboo Mission.

Medical Facilities to Mines Workers

4935. SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the number and percentage of miners suffering from notified diseases in mines Under Section 25 of the Mines Act, 1952 during each of the last three years, State-wise;

(b) whether the Government has taken any measure to save the lives of such miners;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the further steps taken by the Government to check and control such diseases?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) The number of miners affected by notified diseases under Section 25 of the Mines Act, 1952 are given as under:

State	Year		
	2005	2006	2007
Jharkhand	08 (0.0007)	13 (0.0011	07 (0.0006)
Andhra Pradesh	02 (0.0030)	-	04 (0.0060)
Karnataka	03 (0.0211)	-	-
Rajasthan	30 (0.1460)	-	-
Maharashtra	-	01 (0.0029)	01 (0.0029)

Note: Figure within parenthesis indicated the percentage figures.

(b) and (c) Adequate provisions have been made under the Mines Act, 1952, and the Regulations, 'Rules & Orders made thereunder for the treatment of the affected persons.

(d) (i) Close monitoring of conditions of workings of such mines is done.

(ii) Wet drilling drive is taken by the companies to control the dust.

Demand for Oilseeds

4936. SHRI JASUBHAI DHANABHAI BARAD: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the demand for oilseeds during each of the last three years, State-wise;

(b) whether imports were made during that period to meet the demand;

(c) if so, the details thereof, country-wise and year-wise and amount spent thereon; and

(d) the target fixed for the production of oilseeds for 2008 and the steps being taken to achieve the same?

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) Based on Behavioristic Approach, the demand for oilseeds in the country was 40.37 million tonnes during 2004-05, 42.31 million tonnes during 2005-06 and 44.34 million tonnes during 2006-07. The State-wise details of demand are not available.

(b) and (c) The demand - supply gap in oilseeds is met through the import of edible oils. Table below gives the year-wise and country-wise import of edible oils alongwith amount spent (value) thereon for the years 2004-05 to 2006-07:

Quantity ('000 Tonnes), Value (Rs. Crore)

Country	2004-05		2005-06		2006-07	
	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value
Argentina	771.73	2083.15	1180.28	2770.54	1106.91	2837.85
Brazil	281.19	750.77	350.24	829.08	126.71	325.10
Indonesia	2705.24	6012.21	2131.2	4065.5	2305.57	4710.98
Malaysia	898.37	1960.67	389.69	722.39	481.07	976.31
Nepal	4.11	10.58	2.38	5.11	3.42	7.89
Singapore	2.32	7.17	0.15	0.61	0.12	0.59
South Africa	2.50	7.86	NA	NA	NA	NA
Sri Lanka	6.06	15.16	6.85	14.54	7.12	15.63
Thailand	3.74	10.87	1.5	2.7	43.9	89.63
UAE	56.23	145.08	81.52	194.03	12.94	32.14
USA	12.53	58.20	26.33	97.88	13.54	56.62
Total	4751.19	11076.89	4288.10	8960.99	4216.86	9416.27

NA = Not applicable.

(d) A target of 318.00 lakh tonnes is proposed for oilseeds production in the country during 2008-09. To increase the production of oilseeds and make the country self-sufficient, the Government is implementing a Centrally Sponsored "Integrated Scheme of Oilseeds, Pulses, Oil Palm and Maize (ISOPOM)" in 14 major oilseeds growing States in the country. Under the Scheme, financial assistance is provided for purchase of breeder seeds, production of foundation and certified seeds, distribution of seed minikits, distribution of plant protection chemicals and equipments, weedicides, distribution of sprinkler sets, water carrying pipes and training to encourage farmers to grow these crops.

Coconut Cultivation

4937. DR. K. S. MANOJ : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry has started any programme for the conservation of coconut cultivation in the coastal areas of Kerala;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government proposes to extend this programme to all the coastal areas of the country; 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) Yes, Sir. To conserve and rejuvenate the coconut cultivation in the traditional coconut areas of Kerala, the Coconut Development Board (CDB) under the aegis of Department of Agriculture & Cooperation has sanctioned a pilot project on "Bio-hedging village programme" to coastal Mararikulam North Panchayath of Alleppey District. The objective of the project is to demonstrate the management practices to be adopted for the conservation of coconut cultivation in coastal areas by establishing bio-shelter belt along the coast to prevent soil erosion, besides, rejuvenating and developing coconut garden in a compact block of 25 hectares. The pilot project also envisages the renovation of existing ponds and drainage canals for rain water harvesting.

In addition, the CDB has proposed to implement a new scheme for "Replanting and rejuvenation of coconut gardens in traditional coconut growing States" with a view to conserve coconut cultivation in the coastal areas. The States/Union Territories proposed to be covered under this scheme are Kerala, Tamilnadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Goa, Orissa and U.T. of Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Pondicherry and Lakshadweep.

Irregularities in Loading Operations

4938. SHRI MANSUKHBHAI D. VASAVA:
SHRI V.K. THUMMAR:

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

(a) whether cases of proxy labour in loading and unloading operations have been detected in various depots of Food Corporation of India (FCI) during the last three years;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the resultant financial losses incurred by FCI during the above period, depot-wise;

(c) whether any enquiry has been conducted in this regard;

(d) if so, the details and outcome thereof; and

(e) the remedial steps 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 (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) According to information given by Food Corporation of India, no case of Proxy Labour in loading and unloading operations have been detected in FCI depots, during the last three years.

(b) to (e) Does not arise.

Financial Assistance to Handloom and Powerloom Sector

4939. SHRI G.M. SIDDESWARA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government has received any proposals from various State Governments particularly from Karnataka for financial assistance to support the handloom and powerloom sector;

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

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) to (c) Submission of proposals by the State Governments including Government of Karnataka under various schemes of the Government of India is an on-going process. These proposals are considered on merit and as per the procedure laid down in the guidelines of the respective schemes and financial assistance is released accordingly. At present, no proposal under any of the scheme is pending. However,

during the current financial year i.e. 2008-09, a sum of Rs.393.535 lakh has been released so far to Government of Karnataka under various handloom schemes.

Increase in Wage Limit of Textile Workers

4940. SHRI G. KARUNAKARA REDDY: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to increase the wage limit of textile workers in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the year from which the enhanced remuneration of textile workers is likely to be affected; and

(d) the number of textile workers likely to be benefited?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) to (d) The subject matter of increasing of wage limits of workers, including the textile workers, falls within the purview of the Ministry of Labour & Employment. The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[Translation]

Fishermen Welfare Scheme

4941. SHRI MAHAVIR BHAGORA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of programme being implemented for the welfare of fishermen;

(b) whether there is any provision for insurance to the fishermen under the said programme;

(c) if so, the State-wise details of fishermen insured during the last three years;

(d) the criteria followed for providing insurance cover to the fishermen;

(e) the State-wise number and details of the insured fishermen who died during the last three years, State-wise;

(f) whether the families of all the deceased fishermen have been provided the insurance benefits under the scheme; and

(g) if not, the reasons therefor alongwith the time by which the families of the insured fishermen are likely to be provided benefits?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) The National Scheme of Welfare of Fishermen is being implemented in the States/Union Territories as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme comprising of the following components:

(i) Development of Model Fishermen Villages i.e. construction of fishermen houses, community halls and installation of tube wells for drinking water.

(ii) Saving-cum-Relief to provide financial assistance to fishermen during the lean (fishing ban) period.

(iii) Group Accident Insurance for Active Fishermen.

(b) Yes, Sir. Under the component of Group Accident Insurance for Active Fishermen, Rs. 50,000/- are provided in case of death or permanent disability and Rs.2,50,000/- in case of partial disability.

(c) Statement-I indicating State-wise number of fishermen insured under the Group Accident Insurance Scheme during the last three years is enclosed.

(d) All active fishermen in age group of 18-70 years are eligible for insurance cover under the said scheme.

(e) Statement-II indicating number of insured fishermen State-wise in respect of whom the insurance claims (death cases) have been received during the last three years is enclosed.

(f) and (g) Most of the families of the deceased fishermen have been given benefits of insurance cover under the scheme. The benefits are provided within two months from the date of receiving the claims if the claim papers are in order.

Statement-I

State-wise number of fishermen insured under the Group Accident Insurance Scheme during the last three years (2005-06 to 2007-08).

Sl. No.	Name of States/ UTs	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Andhra Pradesh	200000	200000	402742
2.	Assam	3909	100	3909
3.	Bihar	40000	10000	50000
4.	Chhattisgarh	31427	40498	32856

1	2	3	4	5
5.	Goa	1000	1000	5000
6.	Gujarat	80000	53589	172359
7.	Jammu & Kashmir	14000	14000	14000
8.	Himachal Pradesh	7096	6222	5716
9.	Kerala	22787	232388	227815
10.	Karnataka	60000	60000	100000
11.	Madhya Pradesh	62571	63901	70686
12.	Manipur	2829	2927	2927
13.	Orissa	120000	150000	200000
14.	Rajasthan	3404	4356	5459
15.	Tamil Nadu	500000	567716	555744
16.	Tripura	1000	1000	1000
17.	Uttar Pradesh	41000	43000	100000
18.	West Bengal	160000	160000	160000
19.	Jharkhand	34500	29571	33000
20.	Andaman & Nicobar	3812	5528	6272
21.	Daman and Diu	11511	11511	11511
22.	Lakshadweep	1530	941	8620
23.	Pondicherry	24500	28150	33000
	Total	1426876	1686398	2202616

Statement-II

State-wise list of Insurance Claims (Death Cases) received

Sl.No.	States/ UTs	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
1	2	3	4	5
1	Andhra Pradesh	38	65	104
2	Assam	0	0	0
3	Bihar	2	5	6
4	Chhattisgarh	4	12	14
5	Goa	0	0	0
6	Gujarat	2	6	6
7	Jammu & Kashmir	8	8	12
8	Himachal Pradesh	3	7	5
9	Kerala	150	127	8
10	Karnataka	27	33	19
11	Madhya Pradesh	7	16	20
12	Manipur	5	0	0
13	Orissa	12	6	20
14	Rajasthan	1	1	0
15	Tamil Nadu	121	177	226
16	Tripura	0	0	0
17	Uttar Pradesh	1	2	2
18	West Bengal	12	2	17
19	Jharkhand	2	3	4
20	Andaman & Nicobar	1	3	4
21	Daman and Diu	6	10	11
22	Lakshadweep	0	0	0
23	Pondicherry	4	5	7
	Total	406	488	485

[English]

Projects of HAL

4942. SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) has geared up to handle projects in tune with the requirements of the Armed Forces for aircrafts, helicopters etc. delayed for a number of years;

(b) if so, the details of the projects that have remained incomplete over the years giving the reasons therefor; and

(c) the details of the projects which have been carried forward?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir. Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) is fully geared up to handle projects in tune with the requirements and schedules agreed with the Armed Forces for aircraft like SU-30 MKI, Advanced Jet Trainers and helicopters like Advanced Light Helicopters. The deliveries are as per targets fixed.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

[Translation]

Export and Commercial Development of Kota Doria Sarees

4943. SHRI RAGHUVEER SINGH KOSHAL: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government has taken steps for exports and commercial development of the famous Kota doria sarees manufactured in Kota, Rajasthan;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Union Government has prepared any action plan in this regard;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the demand and supply of Kota doria sarees in the country as well as abroad?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) to (d) A project was sanctioned by the Government in November 1999, for Kota Doria products under which eight new looms were installed and training given to two master weavers and 50 weavers for production of a diversified range of Kota Doria products. Subsequently, these products were displayed at an exhibition in Karur, Tamil Nadu where 80 designs produced under the project were sold. In addition, the State Government of Rajasthan has sanctioned a special cluster development project Kota Doria weaver in Kota region, under which new collections of Kota Doria sarees and fabrics have been developed with the support of international fashion designers during 2005-06 and 2006-07. These collections have been exhibited at many important events in the country and have also been displayed in the USA, France and Pakistan during 2006-07. The International Labour Organization is also involved in the development, and marketing abroad of Kota Doria products. The Kota Doria products were the first in the handloom sector to receive Geographical Indication status.

(e) It is not possible to indicate the specific demand and supply of Kota Doria sarees in the country and abroad.

[English]

MSP for Sericulture Commodities

4944. SHRI E.G. SUGAVANAM: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Silk Board has submitted a proposal for Minimum Support Price (MSP) Scheme for sericulture commodities;

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

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) to (c) There has been requests from major silk producing states namely Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu for the introduction of Minimum Support Price (MSP) Scheme for sericulture sector. Based on the proposal received from these States, the Government of India, has asked the Central Silk Board to prepare a scheme on price support mechanism for providing necessary relief to the farmers and reelers to compensate the loss incurred by them due to distress sale. A Committee has been constituted by the Central Silk Board for preparation of a proposal on the price support mechanism based on the cost of production of cocoons and raw silk in different States. The concerned State Departments of Sericulture of different States have been requested by the Central Silk Board to furnish the cost of production for cocoon and raw silk (variety-wise) pertaining to their States for working out the amount to be compensated during distress sales.

[Translation]

Review in the Telecommunications Order Act, 1999

4945. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has taken/being taken any steps to review the Telecommunications Order/Act, 1999 which allows the telecom operators to enter into the revenue sharing system by way of licencing system;

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

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) The revenue sharing regime of Licence Fee payment under New Telecom Policy-1999 (NTP-99) is not under review.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) NTP-99 is resulting in very rapid growth of Telecom Sector in India.

[English]

Computerisation in FCI

4946. SHRI NAND KUMAR SAI: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Management Information System for foodgrains in Food Corporation of India (FCI) is being computerised;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the targets fixed for the computerisation of FCI during 2007-08 alongwith the achievements made thereunder;

(d) the allocation made and expenditure incurred thereon during the said period, State-wise; and

(e) the time by which the computerisation of Management Information System for foodgrains, in FCI is likely to be completed?

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. According to FCI, the Management Information System for Foodgrains is fully operational from FCI District Office upwards through District Stock Accounting Module. Stock Position and Scheme-wise Off-take of all the 167 FCI District Offices is available on website www.iisfm.nic.in on fortnightly basis.

For the Depot wise information, Depot Module software version 2 2.2 (modified) has been released in all the depots of 167 FCI Districts. As per the Transmission Status report at IISFM website of 21.04.2008, more than 530 'Parent Depots' and 250 'Attached Depots' of 142 FCI Districts have transferred the depot module data to Central Server. This is being monitored by the respective Depots / Districts for consistency and veracity with manual stock ledger, local depot module server data, transmitted data to Central Server.

(c) The targets fixed for computerisation of Food Corporation of India during 2007-08 alongwith achievement is enclosed as Statement.

(d) and (e) An amount of Rs.25 crore has been allocated for the implementation IISFM Project during the period 2007-08 to FCI. An expenditure of Rs 12.20 crore has been incurred by the FCI by 31.3.2008 and the remaining amount will be utilized fully by FCI for releasing committed payment for Hard-ware/Software supplied/ to be supplied in major procuring/ distributing States of U.P., Orissa, Karnataka, Chhattisgarh, Tamilnadu, Andhra Pradesh, Haryana, M.P. and Punjab & Financial Accounting Package (FAP) being implemented in FCI. The computerization of management and information system for foodgrains in FCI would be completed by 31st March. 2009.

Statement

Qtr.	Physical Targets 2007-08	Achievements
1	2	3
1st Qtr.	a) Software development, testing & implementation.	Depot Module Software Version 2.1.1 tested at 5 locations. Feedback submitted by FCI to National Informatics Centre (NIC) for modification in the software.
	b) Depot Module Final Testing and Acceptance by FCI. *FCI to accept the current version of Depot Module software for roll out before the end of June 2007.	Decentralised Procurement (DCP) State- Software testing for Uttar Pradesh and software development for Chhattisgarh Order for supply of Hardware placed for Uttar Pradesh & Chhattisgarh as Decentralised Procurement States. Release of balance funds for Computer Training of the employees of Decentralised Procurement State of Haryana.
2nd Qtr.	a) Software implementation, trainings & workshops for Chhattisgarh, U.P. & Orissa.	Software testing at Uttar Pradesh and its roll out. Software developed for Orissa
	b) Hardware supplies for Haryana and Tamil Nadu,	Hardware supplied for UP and Chhattisgarh. Orders placed for Orissa and Tamil Nadu.

1	2	3
	c) Launch of final version of Depot Module & implementation of Depot Module in all Districts	Depot Module Software Version 2.2.2 (modified) released on 07.07.2007 initially for all depots of 23 identified FCI Districts (one of each Region). Subsequently, it was released for all depots of another 72 FCI Districts. Problems faced in the software were reported to NIC for modification in the software.
	d) Training of FCI Managers and Staff	FCI Managers and Staff are being trained through Technical Support Persons (TSPs).
3rd Qtr.	a) Software customization, testing & training for DCP states of Tamil Nadu and Haryana.	Software testing for Chhattisgarh. Software development for Tamil Nadu and Haryana. Software given to Orissa for testing. Hardware supplied to Orissa and Tamil Nadu. Training completed and software customized for Tamil Nadu and Haryana. Hardware supplied to Orissa , Haryana and Tamil Nadu.
	b) Data replication and MIS queries	Roll out of Depot Module Reports at website. Depot / District level reports hoisted at IISFM website for testing and fine tuning by NIC.
	c) FCI to ensure required Network Connectivity at all levels of FCI.	Virtual Private Network (VPN) Connectivity established at 191 locations of FCI offices. For Depot level connectivity, Executive Directors (Zone) have been authorized to take decision keeping in view the cost economics and local conditions.
4th Qtr.	a) Software implementation and workshops for Tamil Nadu and Haryana	Onsite Software testing in Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Tamil Nadu. Orders placed for AP and to be placed for Karnataka.
	b) Software customization, testing & training for DCP states of Karnataka and M.P.	Depot Module Software released for all depots of 167 FCI Districts. Central Server MIS reports (under test) on stocks a/c - commodity wise, crop year wise, location wise available on IISFM website for Depot and District level,
	c) Parallel run of Manual and Computerised system	These are being tested for veracity with manual system. After this, a parallel run for three months of manual and computerized system will be done.
	d) Migration to computer based system in all locations.	Subsequently, migration to computer based system in all locations will be undertaken,

Losses of Agricultural Food Items due to lack of Cold Storages

4947. SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a huge quantity of Agricultural Food items were wasted due to lack of refrigerated transport and cold storage facilities during the last year;

(b) if so, the details thereof indicating the quantum of value of food item wasted during the said period;

(c) whether such wastage have added to food insecurity and price rise;

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

(e) the steps taken to evolve suitable policy on refrigerated transportation and cold storages to check such wastage?

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 statistics is collected by the Government for assessing the annual loss of agricultural food items wasted due to lack of refrigerated transport and cold storage facilities, however, under some studies, wastage of fruits and vegetables due to improper post-harvest management and lack of cold chain facilities, has been estimated to be to the extent of 25% to 30%, valued at Rs. 20,000 crore to Rs. 50,000 crore annually, as reported in the fifth and final report of the National Commission of Farmers.

(c) to (e) There are no reports that such wastage of perishable horticultural produce has added to food insecurity or price rise, however, studies indicate that if such wastage is prevented, it will help farmers in getting better value of then produce and will help consumers in getting horticultural products at lesser cost.

Government is providing financial assistance to the private sector and Government agencies for setting up cold chain infrastructure including refrigerated transport vehicles and different kinds of cold storages under the schemes of the National Horticulture Mission, National Horticulture Board, Ministry of Food Processing Industries etc. and also under the Central Sector Scheme of Development/ Strengthening of Agricultural Marketing Infrastructure, Grading and Standardization being implemented by the Directorate of Marketing and Inspection. In order to encourage private sector investment in this kind of infrastructure, the Government of India has formulated a Model Agricultural Produce Marketing (Regulation) Act and circulated to the State Governments for amending their concerned Acts, which has facilitated direct marketing, contract farming etc. in various States through such amendments, resulting into a growth of cold chain infrastructure.

Network problem in MTNL and BSNL connections

4948. SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATEL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the restructuring of MTNL and BSNL, has been withheld;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the customers of MTNL and BSNL are facing difficulties to get the network during morning and evening peak hours;

(d) if so, whether the Government has made any investigation to find out the factors responsible in this regard;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the action taken/being by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA): (a) and (b) Sir, a consortium of consultants led by M/s ICICI Securities, appointed by the Government to advise and aid the Government in restructuring of MTNL and BSNL for achieving higher synergies in their operations, has suggested some options for restructuring. Since the enabling conditions for the suggested options are not appropriate enough to lead to a successful merger and considering the complexity of the issues involved, the restructuring of BSNL and MTNL has been put on hold for the time being.

(c) to (f) Global System for Mobile Communication (GSM) based Cellular Mobile Telephone Service being provided by BSNL is working satisfactorily and is, in general, meeting the Quality of Service (QoS) parameters prescribed by TRAI even during time constraint busy hours. However, sometimes during peak hours in some States especially in Bihar, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh and North East Region, congestion has been observed in the network due to heavy traffic as well as constraint of capacity of switch/ media. Optical Fiber Cable cut is also a factor in disruption in BSNL network due to mainly road widening / digging work being done all over India. BSNL is progressively augmenting its GSM mobile network which is also being continuously optimized. Monitoring of the network has been strengthened to ensure performance as per the QoS parameters prescribed by TRAI.

MTNL network services are satisfactory. There were some temporary congestion in the cellular mobile network due to upgradation and capacity expansion of 750K lines in MTNL Delhi which has now been commissioned and network is working satisfactorily.

Most of the Optical Fiber System are auto-protected through ring management. The Network Management Systems (NMS) which is an online monitoring mechanism is installed for monitoring of switches as well as transmission system. Performance of the network is monitored on a continuous basis and necessary actions are taken.

Development and Promotion of Handloom

4949. SHRI G.M. SIDDESWARA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) the steps taken by the Government for development and promotion of handloom and other handloom weavings occupations in the country particularly in Karnataka during the Tenth Plan period, State-wise; and

(b) the target fixed and success acnieved during each year of Tenth Plan and thereafter till date?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) and (b) During the X Plan period, Government of India had been implementing the following major schemes for the development and promotion of the handloom sector and welfare of the handloom weavers of the country including those of Karnataka:

1) Deen Dayal Hathkargha Protsahan Yojana.

2) Handloom Export Scheme.

3) Marketing Promotion Programme.

4) Mahatma Gandhi Bima Bunkar Yojana (MGBBY)

5) Workshed-cum-Housing Scheme

6) Weavers Welfare Schemes comprising of Health Package Scheme, Thrift Fund Scheme, Group Insurance Scheme

7) Integrated Handloom Training Project

8) Mill Gate Price Scheme

9) Health Insurance Scheme

10) Integrated Handloom Cluster Development Programme

No state-wise financial targets are fixed. Based on viable projects received from the state governments, funds are released. During the 10th Plan, the originally approved outlay was Rs.625 crore. However, actual expenditure was Rs.803.73 crore. The details regarding year-wise and state-wise amount released to various states during each year of 10th Plan and thereafter till date are enclosed as Statement.

Statement

(Rs. in lakhs)

Sl.No.	Name of State	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	Total
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	Arunachal Pradesh	66.92	20.76	122.25	397.00	119.35	726.28
2	Andhra Pradesh	1320.94	1784.14	848.21	829.44	1121.19	5903.92
3	Assam	1131.92	762.86	469.33	409.12	616.22	3389.45
4	Bihar	6.25	12.62	-	-	6.26	25.13
5	Chhattisgarh	89.71	46.63	18.70	19.72	25.06	199.82
6	Goa	-	-	-	-	-	0
7	Gujarat	52.25	64.18	22.55	50.42	489.62	679.02
8	Haryana	17.57	35.26	69.71	32.10	36.75	191.39
9	Himachal Pradesh	201.32	173.32	110.59	82.13	129.92	697.28
10	Jharkhand	8.60	-	-	38.22	22.58	69.4
11	Jammu and Kashmir	85.31	40.76	63.41	31.13	88.23	308.84
12	Karnataka	498.57	451.40	472.18	1140.59	886.11	3448.85
13	Kerala	1152.17	821.84	706.53	372.42	330.50	3383.46
14	Madhya Pradesh	114.20	45.23	61.22	83.52	43.00	347.17
15	Maharashtra	106.24	11.66	60.73	43.85	324.61	547.09
16	Manipur	608.57	115.79	480.70	486.17	282.80	1974.03
17	Mizoram	53.98	32.19	27.74	24.74	12.87	151.52
18	Meghalaya	19.73	3.91	3.97	26.56	43.66	97.83

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
19	Nagaland	163.88	1114.22	903.13	1239.91	1018.18	4439.32
20	Orissa	40.34	78.03	250.33	276.97	1655.22	2300.89
21	Pondicherry	-	-	-	-	-	0
22	Punjab	21.10	-	5.33	-	20.00	46.43
23	Rajasthan	86.53	122.14	124.66	88.19	115.10	536.62
24	Sikkim	2.97	-	-	-	2.00	4.97
25	Tamil Nadu	2982.48	2619.46	3978.96	4910.25	2533.53	17024.68
26	Tripura	27.35	35.98	54.16	32.13	5.03	154.65
27	Uttar Pradesh	872.09	1070.08	1366.90	1407.76	974.00	5690.83
28	Uttaranchal	79.22	10.13	62.31	21.54	65.00	238.2
29	West Bengal	401.67	180.45	961.26	440.39	412.04	2395.81
30	Delhi	164.02	112.00	115.43	15.73	11.58	418.76
	Total	10375.90	9765.04	11360.29	12500.00	11390.41	55391.64
Others (NHDC, ACASH, AIHFMCS NEHHDC, LIC, ICICI Lombard etc.		2707.10	3260.96	4048.71	6788.00	8176.59	24981.36
Grand Total		13083.00	13026.00	15409.00	19288.00	19567.00	80373.00

New National Labour Policy

4950. SHRI G.KARUNAKARA REDDY:
SHRI M.K. SUBBA:

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

(a) whether multiple Labour Laws are being implemented by different departments in the name of labour reforms;

(b) if so, the details thereof indication the name of such departments and variation in Labour Laws applicable therein;

(c) whether in view of the above the Government proposes to introduce a comprehensive and uniform new National Labour Policy; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the strategy drawn out to implement the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) and (b) India's Labour Policy is based on Labour Laws. The Labour Laws are implemented by the Appropriate Governments both Central and State as defined in the Acts themselves.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Raids against PDS Shops

4951. SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether huge quantity of foodgrains diverted from Public Distribution System (PDS) were recovered during raids on PDS shops in Dakshinpuri and Alipur areas;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the enquiry instituted into this incident has been received by the Union Government;

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

(e) whether the Government is contemplating any action against the States that failed to discharge their duties in proper implementation of PDS; and

(f) if so, the details thereof and 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 (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (f) A raid was conducted by Food and Supplies Department of Government of Delhi on 18.02.2008 at two

godowns situated at Shop No.3 & 4, F-Block Market, Dakshin Puri, Delhi an Approx. 2200 bags of SFAs meant for PDS were found lying in them. A number of gunny bags lying in these godowns were marked with the number of 12 FPSs also. Consequently case FIR No.72/08 dated 19.02.2008 was lodged with Police Station Ambedkar Nagar, Delhi. 11 of these FPSs have been suspended by the Licensing Authority i.e. the Asstt. Commissioner of the concerned district and one FPS licence has already been cancelled. 14 persons have been arrested in the case i.e. the godown owner, Contractor DSCSC, 2 drivers and 10 FPS holders.

A raid was conducted by Food and Supplies Department of Government of Delhi on 16.03.2008 at a godowns situated at Village Boodpur, Alipur, Delhi and a truck bearing No. HR-55-A-5450 and approx. 11600 bags of Rice were found lying in the godown. Consequently case FIR No.58/08 dated 16.03.2008 was lodged with Police Station Alipur Delhi. It was also revealed that PDS rice of 11 FPSs of Distt. North-West, Delhi was diverted to said godown and licenses of all of these FPSs have been suspended by the Licensing Authority i.e. the Asstt. Commissioner (North-West). 13 persons were arrested i.e. the owner of the godown, the godown-keeper, the driver of the truck and 10 FPS holders.

Wage Revision of Farm Workers of Central Silk Board

4952. SHRI E.G. SUGAVANAM: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a long pending demand for revision of wages of farm workers engaged in Central Silk Board; and

(b) if so, the action taken by the Government thereon alongwith the time by which their wages are likely to be revised?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. There is a demand for revision of wages of Farm Workers engaged in Central Silk Board. Government is looking into the merits of a proposal sent by Central Silk Board.

Installation of Modern Three D Simulator

4953. SHRI SUGRIB SINGH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to install the modern three D simulator in all fighter aircrafts;

(b) if so, the salient features of the said simulator;

(c) the estimated expenditure likely to be incurred thereon;

(d) the time by which it is likely to be installed in all the fighter aircrafts in the country; and

(e) the benefits likely to accrue therefrom?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) Simulators are not proposed to be installed in any fighter aircraft of Indian Air Force.

(b) to (e) Question does not arise.

Indian Veterinary Research Institute

4954. SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATEL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Veterinary Research Institute (IVRI) has developed a new Rabies Vaccine which was tested on plants as reported in Jansatta dated April, 13, 2008;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether such alternatives to test medicines/vaccines will also develop for other medicines/vaccines in the country; 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) No new rabies vaccine has been developed and tested on plants.

12.00 hrs.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

[English]

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): I beg to lay on the Table –

(1) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, New Delhi, for the year 2007-2008.

(2) A copy of the Annual Accounts (Hindi and English versions) of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, New Delhi, for the year 2007-2008, together with Audit Report thereon.

(3) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (2) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. L.T. 8667/2008]

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ): I beg to lay on the Table –

(1) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the National Water Development Agency, New Delhi, for the year 2006-2007, alongwith Audited Accounts.

(ii) Statement regarding Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the National Water Development Agency, New Delhi, for the year 2006-2007.

(2) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.

[Placed in Library, **See** No. L.T. 8668/2008]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): I beg to lay on the Table –

(1) A copy of the Notification No. S.O. 152(E) (Hindi and English versions) published in Gazette of India dated the 28th January, 2008 appointing the 1st day of February, 2008 as the date on which the Apprentices (Amendment) Act, 2007 to come into force issued under sub-section (2) of section 1 of the Apprentices (Amendment) Act, 2007.

[Placed in Library, **See** No. L.T. 8669/2008]

(2) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation, New Delhi, for the year 2006-2007.

(3) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (2) above.

[Placed in Library, **See** No. L.T. 8670/2008]

(4) A copy of the Notification No. S.O. 3456 (Hindi and English versions) published in Gazette of India dated the 8th December, 2007 specifying the certain establishments employing twenty or more persons, as the class of establishments to which the Employees' Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952 shall apply, issued under sub-section (3) of Section 1 of the said Act.

[Placed in Library, **See** No. L.T. 8671/2008]

(5) A copy of the Employees' State Insurance (Central) (Amendment) Rules, 2008 (Hindi and English versions) published in Notification No. G.S.R. 254(E) in Gazette of India dated the 31st March, 2008 under sub-section (4) of section 95 of the Employees' State Insurance Act, 1948.

[Placed in Library, **See** No. L.T. 8672/2008]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): On behalf of Shri Kantilal Bhuria, I beg to lay on the Table –

(1) A copy each of the following notifications (Hindi and English versions) issued under sub-section (1) of section 3 of the Destructive Insects and Pests Act, 1914:-

(i) The Plant Quarantine (Regulation of Import into India) First Amendment, Order, 2007 published in Notification No. S.O. 2069 (E) in Gazette of India dated the 3rd December, 2007.

(ii) The Plant Quarantine (Regulation of Import into India) Second Amendment, Order, 2007 published in Notification No. S.O. 3 (E) in Gazette of India dated the 1st January, 2008.

(iii) The Plant Quarantine (Regulation of Import into India) (Third Amendment), Order, 2006 published in Notification No. S.O. 1873 (E) in Gazette of India dated the 31st October, 2006.

(iv) S.O. 1353(E) published in Gazette of India dated the 24th August, 2006 making certain amendments in the notification No. S.O. 1121(E) dated the 17th July, 2006.

[Placed in Library, **See** No. L.T. 8673/2008]

(2) A copy each of the following papers (Hindi and English versions) under section 619A of the Companies Act, 1956:-

(i) Review by the Government of the working of the Punjab Agro Industries Corporation Limited, Chandigarh, for the year 2006-2007.

(ii) Annual Report of the Punjab Agro Industries Corporation Limited, Chandigarh, for the year 2006-2007, alongwith Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

(3) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (2) above.

[Placed in Library, **See** No. L.T. 8674/2008]

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): 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 Consumer Coordination Council, Noida, for the year 2006-2007, alongwith Audited Accounts.

(ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Consumer Coordination Council, Noida, for the year 2006-2007.

(2) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.

[Placed in Library, **See** No: L.T. 8675/2008]

(3) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Voice Society, New Delhi, for the year 2006-2007, alongwith Audited Accounts.

(ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Voice Society, New Delhi, for the year 2006-2007.

(4) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (3) above.

[Placed in Library, **See** No. L.T. 8676/2008]

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 papers (Hindi and English versions) under sub-section (1) of section 619A of the Companies Act, 1956:-

(i) Review by the Government of the working of the Hindustan Vegetable Oil Corporation Limited, New Delhi, for the year 2003-2004.

(ii) Annual Report of the Hindustan Vegetable Oil Corporation Limited, New Delhi, for the year 2003-2004, alongwith Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

(2) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.

[Placed in Library, **See** No. L.T. 8677/2008]

(3) A copy of the Memorandum of Understanding (Hindi and English versions) between the Central Warehousing Corporation and the Department of Food and Public Distribution, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution for the year 2008-2009.

[Placed in Library, **See** No. L.T. 8678/2008]

(4) 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) G.S.R. 117(E)/Ess. Com/Sugarcane published in Gazette of India dated the 29th February, 2008 containing Order determining the minimum price of sugarcane to be payable by sugar factories mentioned therein for the sugar year 2007-2008.

(ii) G.S.R. 166(E)/Ess. Com/Sugarcane published in Gazette of India dated the 5th March, 2008 containing Order determining the minimum price of sugarcane to be payable by sugar factories mentioned therein for the sugar year 2005-2006.

(iii) G.S.R. 165(E)/Ess. Com/Sugarcane published in Gazette of India dated the 5th March, 2008 containing Order determining the minimum price of sugarcane to be payable by sugar factories mentioned therein for the sugar year 2006-2007.

[Placed in Library, **See** No. L.T. 8679/2008]

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRIDITYA M. SCINDIA): Mr. Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table-

(1) A copy each of the following papers (Hindi and English versions) under sub-section (1) of section 619A of the Companies Act, 1956:-

(i) Reveiw by the Government of the working of the Telecommunications Consultants India Limited, New Delhi, for the year 2006-2007.

(ii) Annual Report of the Telecommunications Consultants India Limited, New Delhi, for

the year 2006-2007, alongwith Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library, See No. L.T. 8680/2008]

(2) A copy of the Telecom Unsolicited Commercial Communications (Amendment) Regulations, 2008 (Hindi and English versions) published in Notification No. 15-2/2008-RE in Gazette of India dated the 18th March, 2008 under section 37 of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India Act, 1997.

[Placed in Library, See No. L.T. 8681/2008]

(3) A copy of the Indian Post Office (Second Amendment) Rules, 2008 (Hindi and English versions) published in Notification No. G.S.R. 238(E) in Gazette of India dated the 28th March, 2008 under sub-section (4) of section 74 of the Indian Post Office Act, 1898.

[Placed in Library, See No. L.T. 8682/2008]

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: This is your maiden intervention as a Minister. I compliment you.

12.03 hrs.

MESSAGE FROM RAJYA SABHA AND BILL AS PASSED BY RAJYA SABHA

[English]

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Sir, I have to report the following message received from the Secretary-General of Rajya Sabha:-

"In accordance with the provisions of rule 111 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Rajya Sabha, I am directed to enclose a copy of the Central Universities Law (Amendment) Bill, 2008 which has been passed by the Rajya Sabha at its sitting held on the 25th April, 2008."

2. Sir, I lay on the Table the Central Universities Law (Amendment) Bill, 2008, as passed by Rajya Sabha on the 25th April, 2008."

12.04 hrs.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

69th to 71st Reports

[English]

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA (South Delhi): I beg to present the following Reports (Hindi and English versions) of the Public Accounts Committee:

(1) Sixty-ninth Report on "Injudicious release of Grants by the University Grants Commission (UGC)";

(2) Seventieth Report on Action Taken on 49th Report of PAC "Avoidable expenditure due to delay in taking decision – Chennai Port Trust" and

(3) Seventy-first Report on Action Taken on 50th Report of PAC on "Delay in finalisation of demands."

12.04½ hrs.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT, TOURISM AND CULTURE

135th to 139th Reports

[English]

DR. P.P. KOYA (Lakshadweep): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table the following Reports (Hindi and English versions) of the Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture:-

(1) One Hundred thirty-fifth Report on Demands for Grants (2008-09) of the Department of Road Transport and Highways;

(2) One Hundred thirty-sixth Report on Demands for Grants (2008-09) of Ministry of Tourism;

(3) One Hundred thirty-seventh Report on Demands for Grants (2008-09) of Ministry of Culture;

(4) One Hundred thirty-eighth Report on Demands for Grants (2008-09) of Ministry of Civil Aviation; and

(5) One Hundred thirty-ninth Report on the Motor Vehicle (Amendment) Bill, 2007.

12.05 hrs.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

(I) Status of implementation of recommendations contained in 14th, 17th and 18th Reports of Standing Committee on Defence pertaining to the Ministry of Defence *

[English]

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): Hon. Speaker, Sir,

I beg to lay the statement on the status of implementation of recommendations contained in the 14th, 17th and 18th Reports of the Standing Committee on Defence (14th Lok Sabha) in pursuance of the direction of the hon. Speaker, Lok Sabha contained in Lok Sabha Bulletin - Part II dated September 01, 2004.

The 14th Report of the Standing Committee on Defence (14th Lok Sabha) relates to 'Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO)', the 17th Report relates to 'In-depth Study and Critical Review of Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. (HAL)' and the 18th Report relates to 'In-depth Study and Critical Review of Bharat Electronics Ltd. (BEL)'. The 14th Report was presented to the Lok Sabha on 2.8.2006. The 17th Report was presented on 4.5.2007 and the 18th Report was presented on the 7.5.2007. The Reports were laid in Rajya Sabha on the same day i.e. 2.8.2006, 4.5.2007 and 7.5.2007 respectively.

Action Taken Statements on the recommendations/ observations contained in the 14th Report were sent to the Standing Committee on Defence on 25.6.2007. Action Taken Statements on the 17th Report were sent on 19.7.2007 and the Action Taken Notes on the 18th Report of the Committee were sent to the Standing Committee on Defence on 10.8.2007.

The present status of implementation of the various recommendations made by the Committee in their 14th, 17th and 18th Reports is indicated in the Annexure-I, II and III respectively to my Statement, which is laid on the Table of the House. I would not like to take the valuable time of the House to read out all the contents of these Annexures. I would request that these may be considered as read.

12.05½ hrs.

(II) Status of implementation of recommendations contained in 20th Report of Standing Committee on Labour on Demands for Grants (2007-08) pertaining to the Ministry of Labour and Employment**

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): Sir, I beg to lay the Statement on the status of implementation of recommendations contained in the Twentieth Report of the Standing Committee on Labour, as per Direction issued by the hon. Speaker, Lok Sabha in pursuance of Rule 389 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha, on 1st September, 2004.

The Twentieth Report of the Committee concerns the Ministry of Labour and Employment, which was laid on the Table of the House on 26th April, 2007. I would like to mention that the Ministry had submitted to the Committee, the Action Taken Report on this Report on 20th July, 2007, which has been taken note of by the Committee in their 23rd Report.

The status of implementation of the recommendations of the Committee, contained in the Twentieth Report, is indicated in the Annexure to my Statement, circulated among the hon. Members. I would not like to take the valuable time of the House to read out all the contents of this Annexure. I would request that this might be considered as read.

12.06 hrs.

(III) Successful launch of 10 Satellites by India's Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV-C9)

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN): Sir, I am happy to inform this august house that today, the April 28, 2008, India's Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV-C9) successfully launched CARTOSAT-2A, Indian Mini Satellite - 1 (IMS-1) and eight nano satellites for international customers into the desired orbit. This is the 12th consecutively successful flight of PSLV conducted from Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC), Sriharikota. All the systems have performed satisfactorily. PSLV-C9 launched in its core alone configuration launched ten satellites with a total weight of about 820 kg.

CARTOSAT-2A weighing 690 kg is a state-of-the-art Remote Sensing Satellite, similar to CARTOSAT-2 launched on January 10, 2007. The data with a resolution of about one meter from this satellite will be used for detailed mapping applications at cadastral level, urban and rural infrastructure development, and management.

Along with CARTOSAT-2A, 83 kg Indian Mini Satellites - 1(IMS-1) which incorporates many new technologies and has miniature subsystems was also launched successfully. The data from this mission will be made available to the interested space agencies and student community from developing countries to provide necessary impetus to capacity building in using satellite data.

Eight nano-satellites launched onboard PSLV-C9 were built by Universities and Research institutions in Canada and Cosmos International, Germany.

* Laid on the Table and also Placed in Library, See No. LT 8663/08

** Laid on the Table and also Placed in Library, See No. LT 8664/08

This successful launch of PSLV-C9 has reiterated its capability and versatility to launch satellites in various types of orbits and also to carry out multiple satellite missions. I am sure that, this august House will join me in congratulating Chairman, ISRO and his team on this magnificent achievement.

MR. SPEAKER: I have already mentioned from the Chair.

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY (Puri): Sir, along with this we should congratulate the public sector company Mecon Limited, which designed and made the launch platform.

SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN: We congratulate all the people involved.

MR. SPEAKER: The House congratulates all the people involved. Thank you for raising it.

[Placed in Library, See No. L.T. 8685/08]

12.07 hrs.

MOTION RE: FORTY-NINTH REPORT OF BUSINESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

[English]

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): Sir, I beg to move:

"That this House do agree with the Forty-ninth Report of the Business Advisory Committee presented to the House on the 25th April, 2008."

MR. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That this House do agree with the Forty-ninth Report of the Business Advisory Committee presented to the House on the 25th April, 2008."

The motion was adopted.

MR. SPEAKER: Now there are some important matters to be raised.

[Translation]

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA (South Delhi): Mr. Speaker, a matter was raised that an hon. Minister. *...(Interruptions)**

* Expunged as ordered by the Chair

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Member, may I make one earnest request?

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: *...(Interruptions)**

MR. SPEAKER: I have not disputed anything about importance or non-importance. I am only requesting you to please follow the rules. You say that you have sent a notice of motion. I will look into it and I will give my views tomorrow morning.

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: I have sent a notice for raising it in the 'Zero Hour'.

MR. SPEAKER: That is not a motion.

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: I made a request to you. The Prime Minister should make a statement. *...(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

His office has been misused that. *...(Interruptions)*

[English]

DR. C. KRISHNAN (Pollachi): ...*

12.08 hrs.

(At this stage, Dr. C. Krishnan came and stood on the floor near the Table.)

MR. SPEAKER: What is happening? Go there.

... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing is being recorded. Do not record any more.

*(Interruptions) ...***

MR SPEAKER: You have made your statement, all right. The issue cannot be discussed here.

*(Interruptions) ...***

12.09 hrs.

(At this stage, Dr. C. Krishnan went back to his seat.)

MR. SPEAKER: I will see the record and delete what is not admissible.

...(Interruptions)

* Expunged as ordered by the Chair

** Not recorded

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: We have also taken an oath to work to the best of our abilities.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH (Maharajganj, Bihar): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to observe that when we took an oath, it no where stipulated. That the House will be silent on the question of corruption.

MR. SPEAKER: The oath does not even permit you to make noise and disturb the House.

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: I wish to say it will not send a good message. *...(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I will see the record. Nothing will go on record.

*(Interruptions)...**

MR. SPEAKER: Do not record anything.

*(Interruptions)...**

MR. SPEAKER: I will consider if you have given a proper motion. I can assure the hon. Member I will certainly consider with all sense of responsibility any motion that you give according to rules.

What more can I say? If you have given it, I will let you know about it.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the case of Shri Natwar Singh ji has already been discussed in the House. Similarly, other matters are also discussed. *...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Malhotra Saheb, you have raised the matter, I will look into it, I do not intend to stop anyone.

[English]

You are both a respected and responsible Member.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Now, let us come to important matters.

Shri Lonappan Nambadan.

* Not recorded.

[Translation]

He is raising a very important issue.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing will be recorded.

*(Interruptions)...**

[Translation]

SHRI RATILAL KALIDAS VARMA (Dhandhuka): Mr. Speaker, Sir, let the truth come to the fore. *...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Now, there is no time.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Take your seat. You go awa, so for what do we sit here?

...(Interruptions)

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: You do not allow us to speak, so we boycott the House.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Are you Member walking out? I though you are on behalf of the Minister; you are against him! I did not realize it.

12.11 hrs.

(Prof. Vijay Kumar Malhotra, Shri Prabhunath Singh, Dr. C. Krishnan and some other hon. Members then left the House.)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Take your seat.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: We have to find a way out. We have to do it in writing.

[Translation]

**SHRI LONAPPAN NAMBADAN (Mukundapuram): Speaker Sir, In India there are over one lakh registered NGO groups. In Delhi itself there are about 61,000 registered NGO groups But in fact, majority of these NGO groups are non-functional and 80% of these groups do not mention proper

* Not recorded

** English translation of the speech originally delivered in Malayalam

records about their functioning. About 75% of these groups Sir, do not submit their income and expenditure accounts.

There are thousands of NGO groups who embezzle crores of rupees every year by submitting fake documents. 85% of NGO groups function only with a profit motive.

Sir, many political leaders, religious leaders and peoples representatives are misleading foreign countries, Central and States Governments and the poor of this country by co-operating with these fake NGO groups. Sir, as per the existing Registration Act there are no provisions to take stringent legal action against corrupt NGO groups and these NGO groups function without any checks or control from the Central Government.

I request Sir, that the Central Government should immediately conduct enquires about the functioning of all NGO group registered in India and the registration of unauthorized NGO groups should be withdrawn.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Please conclude, Shri Lonappan.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEKAER: Do not record anything more.

*(Interruptions)...**

MR. SPEAKER: Defiance of the Chair has become a habit. It is becoming absolutely a disease throughout the House.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing is being recorded any more. You cannot go on indefinitely.

[Translation]

What's this?

[English]

I am sorry.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: He is going to raise a very important issue. If you alone take the whole time how will it do?

...(Interruptions)

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* Not recorded

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: This is a time when you mention some very important issues.

SHRI B. MAHTAB (Cuttack): I would like to raise a very important issue before the House today, which relates to the deadliest form of Malaria on the rise in India. Malaria is caused by the deadly plasmodium falciparum parasite which is becoming common in India. Even though the number of Malaria cases are declining from 30 lakhs in 1996 to 16 lakhs in 2006; infections caused by plasmodium falciparum have increased from 38 per cent to nearly 50 per cent. States like Orissa, which has about three per cent of the population, reports 28 per cent of India falciparum cases. Five States including Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh record 60 per cent of India's Malaria cases, while West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh report high proportion of plasmodium falciparum deaths. As Malaria remains a major health problem in South East Asia with 83 per cent of the population at risk, there is a need to increase Artemisinin-based Combination Therapy (ACT). Multi-drug resistant Malaria originated from Mekong region and spread westward to Myanmar and now reaching Bangladesh. It would soon be in India. Taking this into consideration, is the Government going to change its Malaria Drug Policy immediately and shift to higher coverage of ACT?

MD. SALIM (Calcutta- North East): I associate with him.

MR. SPEAKER: All right. The whole House associates with the issue.

[Translation]

SHRI HANSRAJ G. AHIR (Chandrapur): Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to draw the attention of the Government towards a very serious issue. Recently a survey with regard to the position of ozone has been conducted by the world famous space organization, 'NASA' through which Ozone monitoring satellite and pictures of ozone's position have been captured in it. On the basis of these pictures, a detailed report has been published in an US scientific magazine. According to it, cloijds of nitrogen oxide are hovering over various cities of India. Among these cities particularly my parliamentary constituency Chandrapur is the worst affected by such clouds. Where the sky is overcast with such clouds, there is apprehension of acid rainfall due to which the life of human beings and other creatures may be in danger. So, through you, I would like to request the Government to take necessary measures to save the life of innocent people. *...(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I am sure it is an important matter and it is being taken note of.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I am sure this is a matter which will be looked into.

Shri Madhusudan Mistry.

SHRI MADHUSUDAN MISTRY (Sabarkantha): Sir, I am coming to my seat.

MR. SPEAKER: I hope such a situation will not be seen in future.

SHRI MADHUSUDAN MISTRY: Yes, Sir, I was just trying to look at the names of the speakers on the Finance Bill.

Thank you very much, Sir, for giving me this opportunity to speak. I would just like to draw the attention of this House towards the plight of the Anganwadi workers in the entire country. First of all, I would like to congratulate the Government and the Finance Minister for increasing their salary by Rs.500 and also the salary of the helpers by Rs.250.

Sir, these Anganwadi workers are being asked by the Administration to travel long distances to reach their work places and they are also not being paid the Travel Allowances. Besides this, the State Governments compel them to do a number of other works like conducting survey or making Self-Help Groups and so on. They do not have the fixed working hours. They are also being asked to purchase the register. I was surprised to see in my State these workers are given 5g of oil to prepare snack or *nashta* for a child. Per child 5g cooking oil is being given to them. Besides that the quality of food-grain or other snacks that are being supplied to them is not good at all. Since the recruitment policy is with the State Government, they are a very vulnerable section of the society. They cannot even say that they have been given a meager amount of Rs.1000, which has, of course, now been increased recently.

I would request the Government that payment of their salary with the increase of Rs.500, that has recently been made, should start from the month of June onwards. The situation is very bad. I would request the Union Government to frame some rules for their recruitment and also have some mechanism to resolve the grievances of Anganwadi workers throughout the country. They are in such a vulnerable situation where they have been paid a meager amount and are being made to work very hard.

SHRI PRABODH PANDA (Midnapore): Mr. Speaker, Sir,

MR. SPEAKER: You can associate with him.

Shri Punnu Lal Mohale – Not present.

[Translation]

SHRI HANSRAJ G. AHIR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, Chandrapur has the largest power plant of this country where 2340 MW power is generated. Apart from it, there are also so many units of cement, steel and paper industries in Chandrapur. But the necessary pollution control devices have not been installed in these industries. Similarly, there is no proper monitoring by Pollution Control Boards constituted both by the Central and the State Government due to which pollution is not being controlled over there. I, therefore, request the Central Government to take initiative and issue instruction to the State Government to protect the life of the people from the hazards posed by clouds containing nitrogen oxide hovering over this city.

[Translation]

SHRI REWATI RAMAN SINGH (Allahabad): Mr. Speaker, Sir, Ganga is not only a river for India, but it is also the symbol of its culture and civilization. Ganga River has been flowing from time immemorial in our country, but according to the scientists, Ganga will disappear by the year 2030. The stretch of glacier upto about 20 k.m. has receded and the rest of the glaciers are melting at the rate of 30 metre every year. If this process is continued, Ganga will be no more.

I belong to Allahabad where every year Magh festival is held and after every 6 and 12 years, Kumbh melas take palce Millions of devotees come over there.

Through you, I would request the Government to set up Ganga Authority and save Ganga by releasing water therein. In Allahabad, it flows like a drain as if all the garbages are flowing down into it. My demand is that the C.P. may be set up there and water be released in Ganga. The flows of Ganga is being interrupted by stopping water in dams. *...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Please conclude.

SHRI REWATI RAMAN SINGH: Sir, you please give them direction. *...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I have heard you. I had allowed you; as such that was the direction in itself.

SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE (Aurangabad, Maharashtra): Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I want to raise the matter regarding the situation prevailing in industries which are running on coal.

Six months ago, the Government had announced a new coal distribution policy. Then, the small businessmen and industrialists who were running their industries with coal had hoped to get some relief with this announcement. But today, even after the lapse of six months, confusion prevails among the Government and the Coal India Limited in this regard. Guidelines formulated through this policy are not being compiled with. Under this coal policy, all such companies which were having a supply of 4000-ton coal per annum were asked to sign a Fuel Supply Agreement (FSA). The Ministry of Coal had directed the Coal India Ltd. to make an F.S.A. to to the effect to supply 75% coal of normative quantity. However, the Coal India Limited and its subsidiaries have issued circular for the F.S.A. of 75% coal of Minimum Permissible Quantity (MPQ). That is to say, the company that was earlier getting supply of 6000 ton normative quantity coal and later 2000 ton under MPQ coal should now get 4500 ton coal under the new coal distribution policy, whereas the Coal India Limited has issued circular for FSA, to supply 75% of MPQ, i.e. 1500 ton coal.

I would like to submit that due to our policy, the industries and companies are being closed and all our employees are being thrown out of job. This is the situation prevailing in my constituency. Thank you.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you for raising it. I have allowed it. You should be brief and specific. You should not give lecture.

SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN (Kasargod): Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the Government to a serious situation that the Indian workers are facing in USA. Through some advertisement in the newspapers, many of the workers were recruited by some recruiting agency in India and they were sent to America. They have been given H2B visa and the special feature of the visa is that it is valid only for ten months. It can be cancelled at any time. Though they were promised to give permanency, better wages and all other amenities, the situation in USA is really very difficult.

MR. SPEAKER: What can the Government do here? They can restrict the recruiting agent.

SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN: Sir, that is why, I say that there are labour laws in India and there are labour laws in America. It is the recruiting agencies which are exploiting the workers. So, I would request the Government to have discussion with the American Ambassador to India. Many of them are from Kerala. Their relatives are really in a very pathetic condition. They are afraid whether they would return back or not. They are not even ready to give them employment in other firms because under this H2B visa, they cannot go to other places. So, the Government has to take the initiative to discuss with the American Ambassador to give relief to these people.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Bhanu Pratap Singh — Not present.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: You give a notice of important matter, but remain absent.

[English]

SHRIMATI K. RANI (Rasipuram): Sir, I would like to bring the following matter of urgent public importance to the notice of the hon. Minister of Information Technology.

In Namakkal, due to non-installation of tower by BSNL, both pre-paid and post-paid connections are not being given to the public.

Though adequate infrastructure to have the tower is already ready, the 'mobile equipment' or the 'exchange equipment' is not received from the Government for installation at the mobile site for the last two years, due to which, the BSNL or the Department loses revenue since people get connection from the private companies.

Another drawback with the connections in the BSNL or MTNL network is that quite often people get some standard messages like 'error in network connection' etc. which is not the case with the private players, with the result we are not able to make even normal calls, what to talk about emergency calls.

I request the hon. Minister of Information Technology to kindly look into the matter and sort out these problems.

12.26 hrs.

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Matters under Rule 377 listed for the day may be treated as laid on the Table of the House.

*Treated as laid on the Table

(i) Need to increase the retirement age of Central Government employees from 60 to 62 years

SHRI N.S.V. CHITTHAN (Dindigul): The recommendations of the 6th Pay Commission on salary hike cater to a large percentage mostly to the officers of the higher cadre and the salary hike is very limited for the other staff members. To give better benefit to the Central Government officers of the lower cadre, it will be proper to raise the age of retirement from 60 to 62 as it would benefit Central Government Servants of all the cadres uniformly.

Increasing the retirement age from 60 to 62 would not in any way hamper the employment opportunity as the youngsters are mostly looking for placement in IT. Sector, Private Sector etc. after having education in Computer. It is also to be noted that during the past 5 years the recruitment to the Central Government is very negligible and hence raising the retirement age from 60 to 62 would stand in the way of employment is incorrect.

The retirement age of the Judges throughout India has already been raised to 65 years and hence it is yet another proof that the capacity of Central Government employees to discharge their official duties after the age of 62 would also be equally good. The expertise and effectiveness based on the experience would be more constructive and put to use if the retirement age is raised from 60 to 62.

The mortality ratio has gone up and the senior citizens lead healthy life and they are mentally and physically fit to discharge their official duties effectively for 2 more years due to available services of clinical and health programmes.

(ii) Need to restore the land to the original landowners after extracting Oil and Gas by the O.N.G.C.

[Translation]

SHRI JIVABHAI A. PATEL (Mehsana): Mr. Speaker, Sir, land of farmers are acquired by ONGC for extraction of oil and gas in my parliamentary constituency of Mehsana district. Out of these, some land of farmers is acquired forever, but oil and gas is not extracted all the time from these lands. So, the lands having been used after extracting gas and oil should be given back to the orignial landowners so that they could earn their livelihood for their families. Now the situation is that the ONGC leaves the land lying useless after extracting oil and gas. As such lands are of no use. At the same time, it is also requested that the status of shareholders should be accorded to those landowners whose lands are acquired for extracting oil and gas because the rent and the compensation under rules being given to the landowners are not sufficient, which is not fair to the farmers. At the same time, there should also be parity in rent and compensation because there is a great disparity in the amount provided in normal course or paid through the Deputy Collector and the Court.

So, through the House, I request the Government to restore the lands to the original landowners once the ONGC exhausts extraction of oil and gas from these lands.

(iii) Need to make announcements regarding Arrival/Departure of trains in Nepali language at New Jalpaiguri Railway Station in Bengal

[English]

SHRI D. NARBULA (Darjeeling): New Jalpaiguri Railway Station is the main Railway Station in North Bengal. It is the Gateway of entire North East States, Sikkim, Bhutan, Darjeeling, Nepal and Bangladesh. People going to different parts of the Country from these regions board trains from New Jalpaiguri Railway Station. A large number of Nepali speaking people from Darjeeling, Sikkim, Bhutan and Nepal also board trains in New Jalpaiguri Railway Station to go to the different parts of India. Till to-day there is no provision of making announcements in Nepali language. At present announcements of train timings etc. are made in Hindi, Bengali and English which causes inconvenience to the Nepali/Gurkhali passengers. I, therefore, request the Hon'ble Railway Minister to introduce announcements of train timing etc. in Nepali language also which will help the Nepali/ Gurkhali passengers who board trains at New Jalpaiguri Railway Station.

(iv) Need to review the closure of vaccine manufacturing Pasteur Institute, Coonoor; BCG Vaccine Laboratory, Chennai; and Central Research Institute, Kasauli, Himachal Pradesh

SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN (Palani): The Health Ministry, Government of India had ordered to shut down the three age-old vaccine manufacturing units at Pasteur Institute, Coonoor, BCG Vaccine Laboratory, Chennai and Central Research Institute, Kasauli (Himachal Pradesh), as they did not follow the good manufacturing practices. All the three units which produce primary vaccines like DPT, BCG and Polio have been regularly supplying vaccines for the routine immunization programmes for decades. The entire 8 crore doses of the BCG vaccine for TB are supplied by the BCG Vaccine Laboratory, Chennai while CRI, Kasauli and Pasteur Institute, Coonoor provides over half of the required

DBT doses in India. Other vaccines like the Yellow Fever Vaccine are manufactured only by the Kasauli unit in Asia. They were directed not to supply vaccines from the stocks and, therefore, they had to stop the procurement of raw materials by Central Licensing Approving Authority (CLAA). Pasteur Institute sold anti-rabies vaccine only for Rs. 10. After closure, now it is sold in the open market for Rs. 370 to Rs. 1,200. Due to sudden stoppage of vaccine production by these three units nearly 38 crore Indian children will not get any vaccines.

Procuring the Vaccine from the private sector would put the entire Indian population and particularly the poor at a great risk and also the Vaccines are not affordable by them. Government of India has proposed to start a Central Vaccine Park in Chengalpattu, Tamil Nadu *in lieu* of these three units.

Hence, I urge upon the Union Government that till the opening of the above Central Vaccine Park, the three Vaccine Units should be allowed to continue the manufacturing of vaccines otherwise there will be huge shortage of vaccines in the country and the lives of the entire citizens will be in danger.

(v) Need for four-laning of Bhiwadi - Alwar road in Rajasthan

[Translation]

DR. KARAN SINGH YADAV (Alwar): Mr. Speaker, Sir, the traffic on national highway no. 8 from Dharuheda and Bhiwadi to Alwar has increased tremendously during the last years. Due to rapid industrial growth in Bhiwadi, Kushkheda, Chauchanki and its adjoining areas and rise in number of residential colonies, now the Bhiwadi-Alwar route falls short of requirement. There is a dire need of four-laning of Bhiwadi-Alwar route. I would like to request the hon'ble Minister of Surface transport to make budgetary allocation from Central Road Fund for four-laning of Bhiwadi-Alwar route.

(vi) Need to ensure procurement of wheat and garlic at Minimum Support Price in Amreli and Bhavnagar, Gujarat

SHRI V.K. THUMMAR (Amreli): Mr. Speaker, Sir, wheat and garlic crops have been good in Amreli and Bhavnagar area of my parliamentary constituency in Saurashtra area of Gujarat. Due to bumper crop, the farmers are compelled to sell their wheat and garlic produce at a price lower than minimum support price because wheat and garlic from farmers are not being procured at minimum support price, due to which they are compelled to sell their crop at lower rates. The traders have started to procure wheat on lower rates from the farmers. This is not in the interest of the farmers. The Government agencies have so far not procured wheat and garlic from the farmers.

Through the House, I would like to request the Government to evolve such a system that farmers are not compelled to sell wheat and garlic at rates lower than the minimum support price.

(vii) Need to construct a bye-pass road on N.H.-3 for Shajapur city and a Railway Over Bridge on Makshi railway crossing in Shajapur Parliamentary Constituency, Madhya Pradesh

SHRI THAWAR CHAND GEHLOT (Shajapur): Mr. Speaker, Sir, there is an urgent need to construct a bye-pass road on N.H.-3, known as Agra-Mumbai highway, for Shajapur city and a Railway Over Bridge on Makshi railway crossing and four-laning of said route in Shajapur Parliamentary Constituency. The process for giving approval for these three construction jobs has been going on for quite a long time. Makshi R.O.B. is approved since 2006, but even then work has not been started due to which resentment is prevailing among the people. I demand from the Government to immediately start construction for these jobs, particularly in regard to Shajapur Bye-pass and Makshi R.O.B.

(viii) Need to provide concessions in rail-fare to the Sickle Cell patients travelling for treatment to big cities

[English]

SHRI HARIBHAU RATHOD (Yavatmal): In our country already there are large number of patients of Sickle-Cell disease and the numbers are increasing day by day. This is a genetic disease. Sickle-Cell disease or Sickle-Cell anemia is a blood disorder characterized by red blood cells that assume an abnormal, rigid, sickle shape. Sickling decreases the cells' flexibility and results in their restricted movement through blood vessels, depriving the downstream tissues of oxygen. Due to less blood supply in heart and kidney, the patients of sickle cell disease are prone to heart attack and kidney failure which can lead to death and severe complications such as swelling in joints, legs and hands with pain. The disease is chronic and lifelong, individuals are most often look well from outside, but their lives are punctuated by periodic painful attacks and a risk of varicus other complications. Life expectancy of patient of this disease is shortened. The sickle-shaped red blood cells that obstruct capillaries and restrict blood flow to an organ, resulting in

insomnia, pain and organ damage. The patient of Sickle-Celt disease have to take various treatments which is not available in small villages/towns. They have to go to far off cities in big hospitals for having their blood transfusion and taking other treatment. Since most of the people who suffer from Sickle-Cell disease belong to poor and backward lower class such as SC/STs, they can not afford to go to big cities for treatment. As a result of which most of the patients attacked by this disease succumb to death without treatment. Railways give fare concessions to the patients of Thalassemia, AIDS, Cancer and Heart diseases. As the poor patients of Sickle Cell disease are to go to the hospitals in large cities from their villages regularly for blood transfusion and other treatments, it is utmost necessary to give Railways fare concession to the patients of Sickle Cell Disease for going to the big cities from their village for treatment like Thalassemia, AIDS and cancer patients.

(ix) Need to ensure adequate supply of LPG in Jhalawar Parliamentary Constituency, Rajasthan

SHRI DUSHYANT SINGH (Jhalawar): There is tremendous shortage of LPG cylinder in Jhalawar and Baran districts. The people of Jhalawar have to wait for days to get their gas cylinders. The Government had planned to appoint more dealers to provide facility to the common man. But nothing has been done about it.

In Jhalawar and Baran districts the common man has to wait for long time. This has witnessed unruly scenes in Unhel, Churela, Dag, Bhawanimandi, Sunel, Pirawa, Jhalawar, Jhalarapatan, Khanpur, Aklera, Manohar Thana, Chipabarod, Chabra, Atru, Kawai, Kelwada, Kishanganj, Shahabd.

I urge the Union Government to please ensure the common man gets the facility. We hope the Government will take a look at it to rectify the issue.

(x) Need to provide financial assistance from Calamity Relief Fund to the farmers of Rajasthan whose crops have been damaged due to unseasonal rains and hailstorms

[Translation]

SHRI MAHAVIR BHAGORA (Salumber): Mr. Speaker, Sir, unseasonal rains, hailstorm and dust storm violent storm had severly hit the Udaipur division of Rajasthan state from 30th March to 5th April. Before that, mustard crop of more than one thousand crore rupees was affected due to frost from December, 2007 to February, 2008. This year, the mustard production of the State has decreased by 6 lakh metric tonne. The State Government has sanctioned an assistance of 126 crore rupees, which has been termed inadequate by the farmers.

At present the market price of mustard is around 2 to 2.5 thousand rupees per quintal and minimum support price is Rs. 1825 per quintal. Leave aside the market price and if one calculates it from minimum support price point of view only, then also the price of 6 lakh metric tonne of mustard is more than one thousand crore rupees. The loss incurred in the State is as follows:-

1. 22 districts of this area have been worst hit by the frost. Minimum loss has been suffered in Hanumangarh, Sriganganagar, Churu, Bikaner, Jhunjhunu, Swai Madhopur.
2. The crops on 8.96 lakh hectare of land have been damaged.
3. 70 to 80 percent of cumin seed crop have been damaged.
4. More than 50 percent of crop on 3.45 lakh hectare of areas have got damaged.
5. The quality of wheat, chilly, mustard worth crores of rupees lying piled up in markets has got deteriorated, as it has got wet.
6. 1.40 lakh farmers have been affected.
7. Besides mustard and grams, the vegetable crops were also affected due to hailstorm.
8. The loss of cattle and tress have also been suffered. Standing and harvested crops have suffered 20 to 25 percent loss.

I would like to request the Minister of Agriculture and the Prime Minister that keeping in view the interests of the farmers, special package for Rajasthan from Natural Calamity Relief Fund should be approved.

(xi) Need to sanction a corpus fund of Rs. 5 crores to construct Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Memorial at Karamsad, district Anand, Gujarat

[English]

SHRI KASHIRAM RANA (Surat): Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Memorial is being developed at Karamsad, in District Anand, Gujarat. A great patriot Sardar Patel aroused the national spirit of the country. He wanted India to be free, strong and united. All his actions including his outstanding

achievement of integration of Princely States sprung from this central aim. He was a magnanimous, large hearted man, full of wit and wisdom. He also has organizational abilities. He loved Gujarat and India and displayed respect for the heritage of our country without being parochial. He is often referred to as an Iron-Man. To commemorate and preserve the memory of Sardar Patel and Veer Vithhal, a unique Joint memorial of both brothers is being developed at Karmasad. At present the information on the life and works of both brothers is scattered at many places, archives and with many individuals. The Memorial proposes to remove this lacuna by setting up a National Resource Centre wherein published, unpublished and archival material including letters, audio and visual material will be brought at one place for preservation, retrieval and dissemination. The ultimate aim is to develop the Memorial into a vibrant and Multinational Institution. To make the Memorial fully operational, additional facilities such as Audio-visual equipment, Digital/Virtual Library equipment, Computers and Networking equipment, office equipment and furniture will be required. The total cost of these equipments and facilities is estimated at Rs. 107 lakhs. For maintenance and development of Memorial, a Corpus Fund of Rs. 5.00 crores is required. The Government of Gujarat has forwarded a proposal to Ministry of Culture vide letter No. SJU/102002/M-3/F, dated 09.11.2006 to sanction Corpus Fund of Rs. 5.00 Crores for maintenance of Trust.

I urge upon the Govt. to sanction Corpus fund of Rs. 5.00 Crores immediately.

(xii) Need to provide Income Tax Relief to the Cooperative Banks under section 80P and extend section 80C rebate to Cooperative deposits

DR. K.S. MANOJ (Alleppey): Cooperative banks mainly serve the poor, middle and the salaried section by mobilizing the small savings in providing credit at affordable rates. Cooperative Banks have done an excellent job in providing banking services and credit facilities to the vast majority of rural and semi urban population. This service have been appreciated by most of the committees appointed by the Govt, and Reserve Bank of India. These committees, in fact, have opined that Govt, must encourage these Banks further by providing them additional concessions.

But, the Govt. of India has imposed in its budget 2006 a hefty income tax on the income of Cooperative banks by withdrawing the concession available under Section 80P. Imposing a hefty 30% Income Tax will severely affect the health of Cooperative banks. It is unfortunate that the Govt. of India has decided to withdraw the tax concession available for decades and has imposed a hefty tax. While the giant corporate and software industries get many concessions and pay an effective tax of 19%, Cooperative banks are not allowed any concession and have to pay 30% income tax. It is pertinent to note that more than 80 percent of the countries world over exempt Cooperative sector form paying tax and in the rest of the countries this is very marginal.

Cooperative Banks suffer discrimination. Deposits of scheduled bank of five year tenure get Income Tax rebate under Section 80C. This rebate is not available to the Cooperative Bank deposit. This would cause migration of deposits making the Cooperative Banks weak further.

I, therefore, urge upon the Govt, to restore the Income Tax relief for the Cooperative Banks under Section 80P and also extension of Section 80C rebate to Cooperative Bank deposits.

(xiii) Need to look into the demands of Sales Promotion Employees as per Section 2 (j) of the Industrial Disputes (Amendment) Act, 1982

SHRI SANTASRI CHATTERJEE (Serampore): The Sales promotion employees throughout the country went on a strike on 24 April, 2008 demanding enforcement of their legal rights as contained in Section 2(j) of the Industrial Disputes (Amendment) Act 1982, enforcement of minimum wages, extension of the Sales Promotion Employees (Conditions of Service) Act to employees engaged in industries other than pharmaceuticals, action against employers violating the provisions of the S.P.E. Act. Besides, these they have put forward very important demands which concern the interests of the common people. They are (a) reduction of excise duty to 0% on 354 essential drugs and 4% for other medicines, and (b) stopping of proliferation of spurious drugs and unfair trading of medicines.

The Hon'ble Minister of Labour and Finance may kindly look into these demands and take appropriate action.

(xiv) Need to achieve the targets set under Rajiv Gandhi Gramin Vidyutikaran Yojana in the country

[Translation]

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN (Firozabad): In the year 2005, the present Government had started an ambitious scheme "Rajiv Gandhi Gram Vidyutikaran Yojna" in context of rural development with the target of completing the task of electrification of all villages in the country by year 2009

but only 28,706 villages have been electrified in the year 2006-07 against the target of 40,000 villages. The target fixed for the year 2006-07 under this scheme could not be achieved and in the next financial year 2007-08 (15 February-08) the target was reduced to 9,000 villages even this target could not be achieved and only 7,077 villages have been electrified under this scheme.

Under this scheme the target of electrification of 67,445 villages has been fixed for the year 2008-09, but only Rs. 5,500 crore have been made available in this regard, whereas approximately Rs. 24,000 crores are required for achieving this target.

This is a very serious matter. The Government should give priority to complete the schemes started by the Ministry so that villages may develop and problems like unemployment, illiteracy etc. prevailing in the country mat get resolved.

(xv) Need to declare State Highway No. 29 in Uttar Pradesh as a National Highway

SHRI CHANDRA BHUSHAN SINGH (Farrukhabad): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have been making this demand in the Parliament for many years. If the State Highway No. 29 in Uttar Pradesh linking Bewar to Katra is declared a National Highway, the three National Highways will have inter connectivity. The major benefit is that the three districts will also have inter connectivity. These districts are Farrukhabad, Shahjahanpur and Hardoi.

If the National Highway No. 91 which links Etawah to Bewar and which is only 56 km long, is extended up to additional 100 km, the National Highways No. 92, N. H. No. 91 and Delhi-Gorakhpur via Bareilly National Highway will be interconnected.

There is substantial amount of production of potatoes in Farrukhabad district of Uttar Pradesh. This potato is transported to various parts of the country. With the new development, it will be easy to transport the potatoes. At the same time, it will also be easy to transport the goods stored at Jalalabad (Shahjahanpur) which is a Tehsil and one of the main markets of paddy crops and other foodgrains.

I request the Government to declare the State Highway No. 29 in Uttar Pradesh as a National Highway.

(xvi) Need to give travel concessions and incentives to those Police Officers who have been awarded Police Medals for Distinguished and Meritorious Services

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV (Patna): Mr. Speaker, Sir, there is a special police force that is on 24-hour vigil to ensure peace and harmony in our country. While remaining away from their families, the police personnel of this special force solve the problems of the people of this country with utmost integrity, honesty and dedication. They endanger their lives while carrying out their duty. I appreciate the Government that it too, recognizes the sacrifices made by these police personnel and rewards them with Vishisht Seva Medals and other prestigious medals.

I request the Government to provide the following facilities to those police personnel who have been awarded Indian Police Medals for Distinguished & Meritorious services-free traveling facilities with one companion in second class Air-conditioned coaches of Indian Railways; 75% concession in air travel (All private and public sector airlines); concession in telephone rent, cash payment of Rs. 750 and 450 per month to each of the police officers who have been awarded medals for Distinguished service/ Meritorious service respectively and also special tax rebate in their income.

I, therefore, request the Government to pay special attention towards my recommendation and take immediate action in this regard.

(xvii) Need to declare 'May Day' as a paid holiday for working class throughout the country

[English]

SHRI C. KUPPUSAMI (Madras North): Sir, I want to raise a matter of urgent public importance regarding the welfare of working class and the need to declare the day which was marked by struggle and sacrifice throughout the world, as a paid holiday.

May Day is being celebrated in the entire globe as a labour victorious day and the 1st day of May every year is declared as a holiday by the Government under the Payment of Wages Act. In Tamil Nadu, during the period of Periar, Annadurai and Dr. Kalaingar, May Day was declared as paid holiday. During the tenure of Shri V.P. Singh, as the Prime Minister, our leader, Dr. Kalaingar took the initiative and requested the then P.M. to declare May Day as a paid holiday throughout India, at par with Tamil Nadu. However, at that time, it was declared as a holiday under the Negotiable Instruments Act by the Centre.

Now, after so many changes having taken place globally, still the Government of India has not come forward to declare May Day as a paid holiday. I, therefore, urge upon the Central Government and the Hon'ble Prime Minister to declare May Day as a paid holiday which would give proper recognition of the right of the working class.

(xviii) Need to set up two Navodaya Vidyalayas in Fatehpur district, Uttar Pradesh

[Translation]

SHRI MAHENDRA PRASAD NISHAD (Fatehpur): Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to draw the attention of the hon'ble Minister of Human Resource Development, Government of India, in this House towards my parliamentary constituency, Fatehpur, U.P. and submit that the Navodaya Vidyalayas run by the Government of India are providing better education to the students, particularly in rural areas and, at the same time, producing better results. Due to one Navodaya Vidyalaya each in a number of districts, a large number of students are unable to get admission in this school and are, therefore, deprived of quality education.

I, therefore, request the Government to take necessary action to set up at least two Navodaya Vidyalayas in each of the backward districts of the country including Fatehpur district of Uttar Pradesh.

(xix) Need to lift ban on the production of 'Lakhodi' pulse in Maharashtra

SHRI TUKARAM GANPAT RAO RENGE PATIL (Parbhani): Mr. Speaker, Sir, the 'Lakhodi' pulse and the commodities based on its production had been banned without any proper research thereon in Maharashtra in 1961 due to which the farmers were badly affected financially. This ban had been imposed only because of buyers. The Central Government had authorised the State Government to lift the ban on the production of 'Lakhodi' pulse, but the same has not been done so far. In this regard people have resorted to strikes from time to time in Maharashtra. With the production of 'Lakhodi' pulse, the farmers will gain profit of Rs. 14,700 per hectare. This one is more beneficial than the crops of gram and wheat. Keeping in view the likely profit accruing to the farmers, the crop of 'Lakhodi' pulse is the most favourable crop for the farmers. The study conducted on how the 'Lakhoki' pulse is harmful, is yet to be known.

I, therefore, request the Government, through you, to lift the ban on the production of 'Lakhodi' pulse.

(xx) Need to enhance the pension of workers given under the First Pension Plan since 1995

[English]

PROF. M. RAMADASS (Pondicherry): The First Pension Plan for the benefit of workers was introduced in India in the year 1995, when Hon'ble Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao was the Prime Minister. The pension paid to the workers under this scheme was a meagre amount, which was not sufficient to lead a normal life by a worker. At the time when this plan was implemented, it was assured that this scheme would be revised after 10 years and when revised, additional pension would be given to the workers. This assurance was given by the former Prime Minister. The 10 year period expired on 15.11.2005, but as assured the pension has not been revised upward since 1995 when the scheme came into operation. The workers were given an amount ranging from Rs. 600 to Rs. 1000 only, which is simply a pittance in the modern days of rising prices. It is unimaginable as to how workers would lead even the life of subsistence with this lower amount of pension. There are about 4 crore workers under this pension scheme and it is said that an amount of Rs. 1,20,000 crores are lying in PF account, out of which Rs. 52,000 crores is earmarked for pension purposes. The comfortable financial position should normally enable the Government to provide enhanced pension to the workers. A simple policy is to relate the pension amount to the price index as done to the State and Central Government employees.

I, therefore, urge upon the Government of India to immediately replace the old pension scheme as assured earlier and revise the pension amount linking it to the price index and socio- economic development in the country.

12.27 hrs.

FINANCE BILL, 2008 - *Contd.*

[English]

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO (Kalahandi): Sir, I would continue from where I left last time when this discussion took place. I was mentioning about agriculture as to how to increase its productivity in order that we are able to get a 4 per cent growth in GDP. I already have made various suggestions to this effect. The main suggestion that I would like to give is that most of our arable lands are not fully irrigated. We get 4,000 billion cubic meters of waters out of which we have been able to utilize only 30 per cent of that. What we now hear that by the year 2010 the Government would be able to create irrigation potential to irrigate about 1.4 million hectares of land. I do not know how he is going to achieve that target. He now proposes to form a new Corporation by the name Irrigation and Water Resources Finance Corporation with a corpus of about Rs. 100 crore to complete the old projects. Recently I happened to visit Jharkhand to see a project as a Member of the Committee on Water Resources and we found a project which was still incomplete that was inaugurated by the late Jawaharlal Nehru. So, it could be well imagined how this sector has

been totally neglected. The farmers require credit facilities; they require water resources; they require irrigation and timely procurement and the right Minimum Support Price. Today agriculture is becoming unsustainable. Farmers are not feeling secure. So, to make farming a profitable proposition, the Government must come up with new programmes and look at land reforms. I would like to compliment the State Governments of Kerala and Bengal who initiated land reforms and their efforts have been appreciated by the International Monetary Fund. That is a noble thing. But it is a sad thing to say that these farmers are not cultivating their land. They are giving them on lease and running away from rural areas because of unsure irrigation and unsure credit facilities. The small land holders are migrating to the urban areas. Today urban centres are becoming crowded and the rural areas are becoming empty. Forty per cent of the population today lives in urban areas.

Sir, next I will turn to taxes. I would like to congratulate the Government as well as the tax payers, particularly the direct tax payers, because the Direct Taxes have overtaken the Indirect Taxes in its collection and also the corporate tax payers. But the Government must look at the problems of the Corporate Tax payers. It is not only the private companies that pay the Corporate Tax, but the Public Sector Enterprises also pay Corporate Taxes. They are 244 in number employing about 17 to 18 lakh employees, excluding the casual and non-casual workers. The tax sops that have been announced this year will definitely have an encouraging effect on the tax payers, but it should be simplified. The income tax forms, the wealth tax forms should be simplified.

So, the assessee gets confused. You must have something like a new tax code by which if the taxes are paid, you would get more returns and your income from direct taxes would improve further. India, today, is the country which is paying the highest corporate tax amounting to 33.68 per cent and about 70,000 companies pay about 33.6 per cent corporate tax and about 30,000 companies pay between 30.6 per cent to 33.6 per cent corporate tax. Small enterprises pay between 30 per cent and 33.6 per cent tax. You will be astonished to know that the biggest contributor of the excise duty or the corporate taxes which are collected, are from Oil and Natural Gas Commission. They are coming up with a lot of projects like refineries in the country and my State, Orissa, will be hard hit if Paradip Refineries are not given concession and there will be delay in the project coming up. I read about it in the newspapers. I was hearing about it from Mr. Sarthak, Chairman, Indian Oil Corporation the other day who was my school mate.

As regards tax holiday, I would like to say about hospitals. I congratulate the Minister that hospitals which have been started in different rural areas will be getting 100 per cent tax holidays. But here I would like to recommend one thing. It should be extended to ten years instead of five. If you are giving tax holidays to hospitals, you should also give it to those institutions which are imparting nursing, pharmacy and other medical training courses. Otherwise, the health sector will be totally neglected The biggest sector after IT in the country is the health sector and it has got a future. The excluded areas which he has named are metros. But I feel that somehow super speciality hospitals are required in the excluded areas also and they should be termed accordingly.

Regarding corporate tax, I was saying that we are paying the highest. In the European Union, out of 27 countries, seven countries have already reduced it. Bulgaria has reduced to about five per cent. As regards Asia Pacific Region and as regards the Look East Policy, we say that China is our competitor but China has reduced its corporate tax to 15 per cent for small scale sector and technological specified sectors. For big sectors, it has cut down to about 20 per cent. So, if we want to compete with China whom we feel is the biggest competitor with India, or Indians feel that China is the biggest competitor as regards foreign investments, it is time that we should give level-playing field to our Indian corporates also so that they can compete with outsiders. If we do not give them the level-playing field, all the industries will go to China and other Asian countries. India should be a good destination for capital investment because alongwith agriculture, capital investment also should grow in the country. And this will strengthen the service sector also.

Regarding UNESCO sites, the hon. Minister has given tax holidays and other sops for development of hotels and other infrastructural facilities for UNESCO sites. But UNESCO sites are over-saturated which is what I feel. I think the tax holiday should be extended to other major archaeological sites which have not been declared as UNESCO sites and are on the verge of getting declared as UNESCO sites but are under the protection of ASI or the State Archaeological Department. These sites have a lot of value and a lot of researchers and professors who go down there do not have accommodation. So, the archaeological sites which are in far-flung interior areas of the country cannot be reached by explorers, archaeologists, etc. Thus our heritage is not coming to light.

The tax holiday should be extended to these sites also for the development of infrastructure in these sites. It is a

[Shri Bikram Keshari Deo]

very important step if you want our cultural heritage sites to sustain and should be kept fine.

I would like to say about skill development. The Labour Commission Report 2007 says that we do not have enough skilled people in the country. We have more children with bookish knowledge. So, we have to develop skills. With industries coming up, skill development is primary. You have made a projected investment of Rs. 15,000 crore and the Government's participation will be Rs. 1,000 crore.

Kalahandi is a backward area. We have a large number of industries coming up there based on bauxite. Other industries are also coming up. The Government's investment for setting up a tool room in Kalahandi should be in the agenda of the Government so that poor adivasi tribals will get a chance to get some skills and get jobs to earn their livelihood. Let it not be with private participation, but let the Government take the initiative and do this in Kalahandi, Koraput, Bolangir and Sambalpur. It is because this has become the bauxite and aluminium hub of the country. Many industries like, Vedanta, Sterlite, Hindalco, Birla are coming up. But the saddest part is that the skilled posts are being filled by people coming from outside. They are coming from Bhilai and they are coming from other industrial areas and they are getting jobs. This is earning the wrath of the local people and the local people are angry about it. They say that we have given our land; our soil and we have given our forest for the development of industries, but today when the industries are coming up, they are sleeping hungry and they are not getting a chance to serve and earn their livelihood. So, I would request the Government to kindly look into the matter seriously and enact the Rehabilitation and Resettlement Bill as fast as possible. It has been already introduced in Rajya Sabha. I hope it is done immediately so that people get some respite.

Regarding tax holiday, I would like to mention about palm oil. Once upon a time, palm oil was part of the PDS along with rice, wheat, kerosene and sugar. But today palm oil seems to have vanished. Local manufacturers of palm oil or vegetable oil are being charged a duty of Rs. 8,000 and odd on crude palm oil. So, I would request that it should be reduced to Rs. 2500 per tonne. In Sri Lanka they are paying Rs. 1,000 per tonne of palm oil. The palm oil sector in South East Asia is being dominated by countries like Malaysia and Sri Lanka. So, the Indian producers should be given some concessions in the matter. So, this rate on crude palm oil should be reduced to a minimum of Rs. 2,000 or Rs. 3,000. Then only they could compete and it could be a part of the PDS, to serve the poor people of the country.

12.39 hrs.

(SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN *in the Chair*)

My next point is about the wealth tax and income tax forms. They should be simplified. The new tax code proposed by so many groups and conglomerates may please be considered seriously. Backward regions like KBK region in Orissa, Palamu region in Jharkhand and such other regions in other parts of the country should be given the thrust. Additional and proper funds should be given to them to develop irrigation sources so that the farmers could benefit, who are the mainstay of our country.

As rightly pointed out by the hon. Finance Minister a couple of days back, food production has stagnated. Who is responsible for it? Who is responsible for the stagnation? It is because most of the time, the Government was led by the Congress Party. In these four years, they have not been able to improve the production of rice and wheat which is becoming a big problem and in the world there is a crisis. So, India should lead in this sector. We cannot forget the PL-480 days when we used to get wheat imported to India which was not fit for human consumption. But we came out of that. We had the Green Revolution. Now, people are talking about the Evergreen Revolution. But are we prepared for the Evergreen Revolution to the farmer? He is suffering the most. Can the hon. Minister of Finance commit in this House to reduce the interest rates on farm loans, to 4% and the farm credit at four per cent, as suggested by the Swaminathan Committee Report? Swaminathan comes from his State and Swaminathan Foundation is there in Chennai. The Swaminathan Foundation is working in Orissa. They are doing a wonderful job. We are grateful to them. Besides, here they are doing a very good work.

Sir, while I was going through the Budget, I found that a suggestion has been made regarding Provision of Urban Amenities in Rural Areas (PURA). You had given Rs. 7 crore in the last Budget and now you have given Rs. 18 crore. So, you are giving Rs. 25 crore in total. Will that suffice? You have got only seven clusters in the country. So, I would request you to kindly extend these clusters to backward regions of the country. You extend it to the backward States like Orissa, Jharkhand, Bihar, and to Chhattisgarh. You extend this provision of Urban Amenities to clusters in the States. Then only, the people will be satisfied and happy because a human being requires proper health, proper

education facilities and proper drinking water facilities. So, these five primary requirements of any individual or any family should be met in the rural areas also. That is why this big rural-urban divide is taking place. So to stop it, a provision of Rs. 25 crore is nothing. It is peanuts. So, I would request that he should make it at least Rs. 1,000 crore so that this could be extended to other areas also.

SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR (Aurangabad, Bihar): Sir, I rise to speak on this Finance Bill. It is my privilege to do so because I sincerely feel that the hon. Minister of Finance has presented an extremely good Budget this year. There has been universal appreciation of the Budget and despite what my good friend, Shri Bikram Keshari Deo, may have said, the Budget is a reflection of India's good fiscal health. This no doubt goes back when the foundation was laid during the 1991 to 1996 period of financial reforms. But they did create a climate which is congenial to investments and more importantly, it led to a good deal of increased foreign direct investment.

Sir, the Annual Economic Survey also mentions that there was an increase in the investment rate from 25.2 per cent of the GDP in the very first year of the Tenth Plan to a hefty 36 per cent in the last year of the Tenth Plan period which finished last year on the 31st of March. If India is today in good fiscal health, it is because of prudent management of the fundamentals of our economy. I compliment the hon. Minister of Finance for maintaining a moderate and stable tax regime, and above all, of simplifying the process of compliance with this regime. It is because of this simplified procedure that the Government revenues have gone up so much.

We unhesitatingly appreciate the fact that tax collections have been of an unprecedented high. For this, we must not only compliment – as our friend Shri Deo has said – the tax payers but also primarily the system that has been put in place by the Finance Ministry because of which we are in this happy position.

The Finance Minister has also announced in his Budget Speech considerable reduction in taxes, excise duties, IT exemption limit, Central Sales Tax, reduction in some import duties. But what is really praiseworthy is that in spite of the loss of revenue because of these reductions, he has made generous provisions for the social sector, social welfare schemes and social security schemes. It is in the context of these schemes that I have to make a few suggestions.

First is about the Annapoorna Yojana. Today it is permissible only to 'destitute' persons who are above 65 years of age and who have no regular source of income. There is something dicey about it, for the word "destitute" is being misinterpreted by people who are tasked to operate this Yojana. At the same time, because there is also a scheme of Old-Age and Other Pensions, the question of destitute and the requirement of people not having any regular source of income, create problems. So, my suggestion is that we should make the Annapoorna Yojana admissible to everyone regardless of gender and anything else except that the person should be on the BPL List and should be above 65 years of age.

My second suggestion relates to the National Old-Age Pension Scheme. At present, everyone, who is on the BPL List and is above 65 years of age, irrespective of the gender or the number of people in a family – if it is family as a unit – is entitled to this Pension. The proposal that I have for the consideration of the Government is that the coverage should be brought down from 65 years of age to 60 years. We should also cover all widows between 18 and 60 years of age and also people who are handicapped. These are my three suggestions regarding the Pension Scheme. This, no doubt, is called the National Old-Age Pension Scheme. But if we are to include people who are handicapped, then, perhaps, there could be a small amendment to the nomenclature if only to benefit genuinely needy people.

A very important social welfare scheme launched by the Government some time back in the 1980s was the Indira Awaas Yojana. A very hefty provision has been made in the Budget for the implementation of the Scheme. I have gone through the statistics of implementation in the various States in the country. I find it very unfortunate that the performance of my home State, Bihar, is not what it should be. Whether it is in achieving the physical target or the financial target, the implementation has been less than 50 per cent. It is because of this that every time when we face our people in the constituency or elsewhere, we are unable to explain to them as to why they do not have a roof over their heads particularly when there is such an ambitious Scheme, the Indira Awaas Yojana, especially since its implementation has been simplified now. Now, the Scheme is implemented on the basis of the BPL List. I know that in my home State, the BPL List had a lot of defects. Last year, we demanded that the BPL List should be scrapped and a fresh one should be drawn up. We were given the assurance that this would be done. Indeed, a process was launched and a new BPL List has been drawn up. But, unfortunately, even that has not yet been published with the result that the benefit that should have accrued to the deserving people has not accrued as yet.

[Shri Bikram Keshari Deo]

Where the list has been prepared, even there the total number of people who have benefited from this is very small. As I said, it is less than 50 per cent. My suggestion to the Government of India is that though it happens to be within the jurisdiction of the State government and this being a federal country, we should not interfere with the state administration, surely there can be some system in place to monitor the expenditure utilisation of the funds given for these social welfare security schemes. My appeal is that this kind of a monitoring mechanism should be put in place so that the amounts that the centre gives to the States, and especially to my home State, are fully and properly utilised and this is done for the benefit of those who deserve it.

The hon. Finance Minister has been really kind to the tax payer. He has also been kind to the world of Information Technology which needs sympathy. I am aware of it because I happen to be Chairman of the Standing Committee on Information Technology. I find that it is doing extremely well. It is expected that by 2010, it will earn up to $50 million dollars abroad. It was announced that some tax benefits would be given to the industry, but these benefits would be available only up till 2009. My appeal to the hon. Finance Minister is that he should please consider extending the benefits beyond 2009. If he could also consider making an appropriate announcement about this, we will be very grateful. Another suggestion relating to income tax is with reference to IT deductions for individuals. We acknowledge the fact that the hon. Finance Minister has raised the IT exemption limit and benefited all individuals, particularly, senior citizens and women. But there is one sector which deserves his attention. This sector comprises of the people who are old, infirm and who do not have their own means of income. They are looked after by their children and who, in turn, do not have any substantial means of income. So, my suggestion is that IT deductions could be permitted to individuals who incur medical expenses on the treatment of their aged parents who have no substantial means of income of their own.

I now come to the problem of inflation. It is a serious problem. There is no doubt about it. At 7.33% that I last heard, it is indeed a matter of concern and there has been naturally and understandably much concern expressed about the inflation rate. But, we must understand that inflation cannot be seen in isolation. We have to see it in the world context. We have to see as to whether our country is being affected by factors which are present all over the world. Take the question of oil prices. Three and a half years back, one barrel of oil cost us less than $50. Today the oil price is $117 per barrel.

[Translation]

SHRI BRAJESH PATHAK (Unnao): Mr. Chairman, Sir, there is no quorum in the House. The discussion on the Finance Bill cannot take place for want of quorum. The Finance Bill is a very important Bill.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: If an hon. Member is raising the question of quorum, I will have to check it up. You please be seated.

SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR: I will wait.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do you want quorum, Mr. Pathak?

[Translation]

SHRI BRAJESH PATHAK: Mr. Chairman, Sir, kindly ensure the quorum.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Let the quorum bell be rung—

12.57 hrs.

(MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair)*

MR. SPEAKER: Now there is a quorum. The hon. Member, Shri Nikhil Kumar may continue.

SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR: Sir, I was speaking about inflation. I was saying that it is really very high and it is something very serious. We have to take note of this fact, but we have to take note of this fact not in isolation. We do not have to take note of the fact only in respect of India, but this has to be taken note of in the world context. Today, the world is facing multiple crises. There is, first of all, the question of the price of oil. The oil price today is at an all time high. From what we read in the newspapers, one barrel of oil today costs $ 117 and three or four years ago, it used to be less than $ 50. It is remarkable that in spite of the oil price going up by more than three times, our petrol prices have remained well within control. For this, we need to understand the mechanics of keeping the price under control and if we understand this mechanics, we will be in a position to compliment the Government.

The second thing I would like to mention in this context is climate changes. Climate changes all over the world are creating geo-political problems and affecting mainly agriculture. Only the other day we had unseasonal rains in India and those unseasonal rains could have affected our Rabi crop. It is only hoped that these unseasonal rains have

not affected or damaged our Rabi crop very seriously. But the most important thing is the food prices. The food prices today worldwide are at an all time high.

MR. SPEAKER: How long will you take?

SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR: Sir, I have just two more points. I finish very quickly.

MR. SPEAKER: We are going to adjourn for Lunch now. You may continue after Lunch break.

12.59 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned for Lunch till Fourteen of the Clock.

14.04 hrs.

The Lok Sabha re-assembled after Lunch at four minutes past Fourteen of the Clock.

(MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair)*

FINANCE BILL, 2008 – *Contd.*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Now, I would request Shri Nikhil Kumar to continue.

SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR: Thank you Sir. When we adjourned for Lunch, I was on my feet and I was speaking about inflation. I had said that inflation is high and 7.33 per cent is a very high figure.

It is a matter of some concern. But we must not see the rate of inflation in India in its isolation. It will have to be seen against the context of the world situation. If you see the world situation today, it is facing a multiple crises situation. Oil prices are at an all-time high. A barrel of oil today costs 117 dollars; three-and-a-half years ago this was less than 50 dollars. In fact the total increase in the price of oil has been nearly three-and-a-half times in these last three-and-a-half years. This is bound to impact the prices of food and of fertilizers; of food because it will also involve transportation costs. Similarly in fertilizers; it is a nebulous circle. It will affect the prices come what may.

The other crisis is of climate changes. Only the other day we had unseasonal rains. That will have most certainly affected our rabi crop. We can only pray and hope that damage is not extensive. But this kind of climate change is now affecting the whole world and we have to be careful about that. That climate change is impacting us also and willy-nilly it is also affecting our price rise.

Now I come finally to the food prices. Food prices the world over have doubled in just one year's time. In just one year's time food prices have gone up unimaginably. In just one year the price rise has been nearly double of what it was in 2007, whether it is wheat, rice, maize or whether it is soybeans. So the situation is that the high oil prices will affect food prices, and the prices of fertilizers if, of course, the prices of fertilizers are not subsidised. Increased food prices the world over will also affect us. Parallel to that, there has been a wide shortage of food. Food production has gone down. As a result of this deadly combination, there have been food riots across the world. There is a social survey conducted by a United Nations organisation which has said that the Asia Pacific region is in for very serious financial turmoil. It has gone on to say the reasons for this financial turmoil which will be affecting the entire Asia Pacific zone. But here what is important to notice, what is significant is that the same survey has said that India will not be affected by this in the future. This is a tribute to this Government which has done some remarkable things just now. It has taken into account the increase in world food prices and banned food exports. It had earlier done so much for the farmers. It had increased the Minimum Support Price. And, of course, it has resorted to debt waiver which is in itself a revolutionary step.

The point I am trying to make is that whereas our Government is taking all possible measures that it can to keep things under check, there is a limit up to which it can go. It cannot be delinked from the world situation. We will have to take note of the fact that the world situation is going to impact our economy. Therefore, today, it is a national problem. We need to introspect. All of us seated here, cutting across party lines, must do some introspection and come up with a suggestion, some policy decision so that we are able to interact with the whole world. This serious situation that we are facing today is not of our making; it is a result of global factors. Now, in the context of this, I say that national interest demands a policy that takes note of these factors. There is need for a broad consensus here. Where else, but in this august House? It is in this context that we must see the appeal made by the Prime Minister the other day.

He had said and made an appeal that let us not politicise the issue of inflation. It is a fact that if you politicise the issue of inflation, what you are doing is against the expectation of the entire country from this august House that it should come up with some workable solutions. It is here that we are in a position to put our heads together, build a consensus and allow the Government to work on that consensus. It is for this that I, in my own way, would

[Shri Nikhil Kumar]

make an appeal to this august House to help the Government build a consensus on meeting this critical situation, which I repeat is not of our making.

Having said that, I would now come to two very important points. The first important point is about the Public Distribution System, and I say this with reference particularly to my State Bihar. The situation in Bihar is not very satisfactory. I am aware of the theory that prices are determined by demand and supply, and so on. Today, in Bihar I have reasons to believe that there should be no shortage of food grains. When I say this, I have with me figures regarding allotment of food to Bihar but the tragedy is that the off-take of this food allotment has been poor. Sir, if you please permit me, I will give some figures. In Bihar, the total amount of off-take of food grains allotted by the Government of India to that State in the past two years – 2006-07 and 2007-08 – is less than 40 per cent. In the first year, it is 23 per cent, and in the second year it is 41 per cent. It is well below what should be the Bihar Government's effort to take the food that has been allotted to it.

If the PDS outlets do not get the food allotted to them, where do you think the poor people will go? The food outlets in the blocks and at places in Panchayats also are not working well. If they are not working well, what is the reason for that? There is a very ominous situation that has developed which we must take note of. The fact is that it is known in the whole world over, it is known in India, it is known in all our States, and it is known in Bihar that the world prices of food grains have risen and have more than doubled. The private traders are only on the lookout for exporting food grains. In this context, the Government of India has done extremely well to ban food exports. At the same time we have increased the Minimum Support Price by nearly 19 per cent over what it used to be during the NDA regime. It is a big step. It is there on the records. But if food grains are not available to the common man and he is not in a position to access food grains, then obviously there is something wrong somewhere.

We have, in this country, a very ambitious Public Distribution System. But let me understand that it cannot be taken out and placed under the control of the Central Government for it is the responsibility of the State Government. What the State Government needs from the Centre is an assurance of supply of required food grains, whether it is edible oil, food grains, or whatever. This has been done. As I said just now, the off-take percentage shows that the performance is very poor in Bihar. Sir, if the prices are going up and we feel that enough is not being done, then let us not play the blame game, let us see why it is so. It is because the Public Distribution System is not working well and so it has not been possible to keep the prices under control. Public Distribution System happens to be the responsibility of the State Governments. Therefore, I feel that the Bihar Government should be advised by the Central Government to see that the Public Distribution System is working and the off-take percentage is increased.

Sir, I would now come to what has been written about, spoken about and discussed all over the country, the revolutionary step of debt waiver of farmers for which we have complimented the Government, for which the Government has taken the credit, and justifiably so. But I would submit for the Government's consideration a small suggestion. This waiver covers debts taken up to 31st March,2007; by small and marginal farmers. Their debt has been written off cent per cent and the debt of those, who are above this grade, meaning medium and big farmers has been waived up to the extent of 25 per cent. It is fair enough. But this waiver has been up to 31st March, 2007 with overdue up to 31st December, 2007. My submission is: why 31st March, 2007? Why cover only the rabi crop? Why not cover, in one full year, the two crops that we have in the cycle both kharif and rabi? If the Government is to extend this cut-off date to 31st December and with the consequent overdue up to 31st March, 2008, it will be widely welcomed as a fair decision and it will provide enormous relief. The fact also is that it is just and fair that both the crops per year should be covered.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR: Sir, after making one small point, I would conclude.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: There are so many hon. Members of your own party who want to speak.

SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR: Kindly give me a minute. I am speaking for my Constituency. It is something very important that I place this before the House and before the Government.

Two years running, my Constituency suffered very heavy drought because of lack of irrigation facilities. The hon. Minister of Water Resources, at present, is not here. But I have placed before him some suggestions to improve the water and the irrigation facilities in my Constituency. But at the same time, in the State of Bihar, there are areas in North Bihar, which are every year flooded and consequently causing enormous damage. In both these areas, there are lands, which are either waterlogged or which are affected by drought. The farmers who have taken loan against such

land will have to be treated in a different manner; they will have to be given more importance. For that, I plead with the Government that the classification of land for small and marginal farmers should be redone, and instead of two hectares it should be made four or five hectares. It will be very fair. Also, at the same time, their overdues should be extended to beyond 31st December, 2007. This is an important suggestion and I hope that the Government will be kind enough to consider this.

With these words I support the Finance Bill and I once again compliment the hon. Finance Minister for producing a wonderful Budget.

SHRI B. MAHTAB (Cuttack): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I stand here to deliberate on the Finance Bill, 2008-09. Long back, if we can say that, Vladimir Lenin had said:

"The way to crush the bourgeoisie is to grind them between the millstone of taxation and inflation."

I need not explain the present situation prevalent today in our country. But I would congratulate the hon. Finance Minister who has said very categorically in his taxation proposals that: "We are on course to achieve the Budget Estimates of Indirect Taxes and exceed the Budget Estimates of Direct Taxes."

The year 2007-08 is definitely a landmark fiscal when for the first time, Direct Taxes have contributed more than 50 per cent of the Centre's revenue kitty. Of the total of Rs. 5,85,410 crore to be mobilized from all Central tax sources, Direct Taxes mainly those on personal income and corporate profits account for Rs. 304,760 crore or 52. 06 per cent. This is significant because when we compare the present with that of 1990-91, less than a fifth of Centre's gross tax revenues came from Direct Taxes. The major tax sources then was Excise followed by Customs.

That time the Government mainly taxed production and trade. Now, it is income and profit. The shift away from indirect to direct taxes all through the post-reforms period is viewed as progressive, and I hope, the comrades will understand this basic issue.

Firstly, by taxing earnings of individuals and corporates, rather than production and trade, there is less stifling of economic activity. Secondly, whereas taxes on goods are paid by the poor and rich alike, taxes on income and profits have a relatively egalitarian character. The other progressive feature during the last 15 years is widening of the tax base, which has been because of service tax. Taxing services is a sector that accounts for 55 per cent of the country's Gross Domestic Product. It is slated to yield around Rs.65,460 crore for this fiscal year 2008-09.

Having said that, I would like to draw the attention of this House to an issue which I will be raising, which I think all the political Parties should consider and express their views. Under the Constitution, the State Governments have always had very significant responsibilities. They are responsible for law and order, education, health, infra-structure development and agriculture. However, they have not had commensurate powers either to raise the resources or to influence broader trends that create the context or enabling conditions for fulfilling these promises, these responsibilities. The assigning of responsibility to States is now becoming more pronounced by the Union Government. For instance, this Government has argued that the recent price rise, rising rate of inflation, is the problem of State Governments and must be dealt with by them. But who determines the fiscal policy, the monetary policies? Are not they the sole preserve of the Union Government?

Often we hear that the States are now flush with funds because of the increase in the sales tax, and therefore, do not require further transfer of financial resources from the Centre. The basic difference between the Centre and the States is that the State Governments face a hard Budget constraint unlike the Centre. This is often forgotten in this context. Since the State Government cannot impose service tax, and, therefore, must exclude the fastest growing segment of the economy from their resource raising effort, that means, that the States are at a significant disadvantage compared to the Centre. The basic means of financial transfer is through the successive Finance Commissions that are supposed to assure a fair and equitable—I give more stress on fair and equitable devolution—of fiscal resources from the Centre to the States. However, the terms of reference of recent Finance Commissions have gone beyond the simple allocation of tax revenues between the Centre and different States according to a given formula. This goes against the basic principle of federal devolution.

For all the talk of decentralisation, this actually amounts to a greater centralisation of Government finances. Direct Central allocations to States are increasingly covered by conditonalities, even if they are unsuitable to the State in question.

Another attempt is to undermine federalism and the authority of elected State Governments is the way the Union Government directly providing funds to Panchayats at the district level, with norms for expenditure determined by the Centre as well as decisions are made at the very top. It is true the fiscal health of States have improved.

[Shri B. Mahtab]

Since 2004, all major deficit indicators have been declining. The revenue and primary deficits are now close to zero for the States. Even the fiscal deficit total is under three per cent of GDP.

It is generally perceived that this improved fiscal health is the result of the Eleventh Finance Commission's award, but the significant increase has been in tax receipts of the State Governments themselves which in 2006-07 accounted for more than 55 per cent of their total financial resources. The share of Central taxes has remained small and shown hardly any increase as a proportion of total receipts. In fact, the States' share of Central taxes as a proportion of the total Central tax collection has been declining since 2001-02. Is it not true that all State Governments taken together currently receive just around one-quarter of Central tax revenue, even though they are directly responsible for most of the public service delivery that directly affects the lives of the people? Is it not true that the grants have increased only marginally in share of total revenue of the States? Why is it that the substantial proportion of the grants provided to the States come in the form of Centrally-sponsored schemes, which is more than 21 per cent and Central schemes, which is nearly five per cent? Why do you include Central schemes' grants as part of devolved resources? Are they not Central Government expenditure? All this suggests that fiscal federalism still remains an empty promise. If the Union Government continues to control public finance, then it should take more responsibility for the economic and social outcomes too, but not at the cost of federal character of our country and the Constitution.

This Bill seeks to withdraw tax holiday, about which my colleague Shri Deo had also mentioned just a few hours before, to oil refineries that are going to be set up after 1st April, 2009. Because of this, the future of oil refineries that were to be set up during the Eleventh Five Year Plan has become topsy-turvy. The whole of projects have become topsy-turvy. The prospect of the proposed Paradip Oil Refinery is now in doldrums. Why are you withdrawing the tax holiday in the middle of a Plan period?

I would like to delve into certain tax proposals now. The basic exemption threshold for taxation of individual in India will be higher than that in the US and in China. However, we are yet to reach the levels of the United Kingdom, Singapore or Australia. The reduction in taxes is expected to increase tax compliance and result in widening of tax base. There is no doubt about it, but there is very little relief to the fixed income group because as the Sixth Pay Commission's Report is implemented, a large number of people, who feel that they are out of the tax net, will all be in because tax due date is March, 2009.

A clause in this Bill is designed to target "paper charities" - for profit organisations that exploit tax shelters for non-governmental organisations. The clause seeks to clear the ambiguity in defining charity. I think, Shri Swain had referred to this clause while initiating the debate. Until now, you defined charity as relief to the poor, education and medical relief and the fourth area included "the advancement of any other object of general utility". This fourth limb has proven to be vulnerable to misuse. The proposal is that organisations carrying on activities in the nature of trade, commerce, business or any service in relation thereto for a consideration or fee will not be classified as charity organisations.

My point here is that the Government is free to take its own decision and implement it, but I would like to emphasise on a specific issue. This proposal, if enacted, will override the decision of the Supreme Court in the case of Gujarat Maritime Board, where it was held that development and maintenance of ports was an object of general public utility.

I am of the opinion that while the amendment is intended to exclude commercial entities from tax benefits available to charitable institutions, this amendment will affect Chamber of Commerce and Trade Associations as they collect fee for their services. The concept of mutuality may, however, apply to such Chambers, Associations, etc. This is not the only one, but as many as 23 court or tribunal judgements are slated to be overruled by this year's Finance Bill.

Around 11 tax rules are being amended while bringing clarity to prevent abuse of tax norms; the definition of charitable purpose is being streamlined; and the scope of agriculture income has been widened to include income derived from saplings or seedlings planted in pots. Interestingly, some of these amendments are proposed to be implemented with retrospective effect. Clarification is required on Minimum Alternate Tax (MAT), Deferred Tax, Dividend Distribution Tax, Interest on Income Tax as it will come into effect from 01 April 2001, reversing judgements in the case of Balrampur Chinni Mills and Salgaonkar Mining Ind. Similarly, the amendment doing away with the need for recording of satisfaction of initiation of penalty is proposed to come into effect from 1989.

Such is the scope of the Bill on which we are deliberating today. On the same lines, a ruling in the case of Associated Cements has been overruled by amending

section 201 of the Income Tax Act, which deals with the consequences of non-deduction tax. Are we not aware that our judicial system gives a lot of importance to case laws and precedence? Making retrospective amendments to counter judicial decisions on the grounds that they are contrary to the legislative intent creates significant uncertainty in the minds of the tax payers who have relied on such judgements while computing their taxes for past years. Should we say that the Government wants the tax payers to interpret the law more on its intent rather than on how it has been worded?

Another point of concern is the proposal to levy service tax on information technology software services for use in the course or furtherance of business. Broadly, software can be categorised as general software and specific software. Today, IT industry is involved in significant litigation on the applicability of VAT on customised software. In view of the proposals to introduce service tax on customised software services, there should be clarity on the consequent non-applicability of VAT although the possibility that both service tax and VAT should be applied cannot be ruled out. Will the Minister clarify this point?

Further, with effect from March, 01 this year, the packaged software is subject to excise duty at the enhanced rate of 12 per cent. Accordingly, on packaged software, including those intended for educational purpose, will be subject to excise duty at the enhanced rate, besides, the State VAT. This is a significant cumulative indirect tax incidence on such goods. If the idea is that software in both its manifestation of packaged as well as customised versions should pay a uniform 12 per cent tax, then it should be stated in clear terms that it is 12 per cent either as excise or as service tax.

I would come to the most important aspect of this Bill which has drawn the attention of at least the Agriculture Minister and a large section of the farming community. Transaction in commodity futures is a topic for discussion. The Minister has introduced the Commodities Transaction Tax on the same lines as security transaction tax. The Consumer Affairs Ministry has made a strong pitch for immediate withdrawal of this proposal. We are told that CTT would escalate the transaction cost by 600 per cent in some cases and drive market operations back to the illegal market. Experts are of the opinion that Commodities Transaction Tax is a retrograde tax. Yet this Government is implementing it. A tax system should reduce the cost of operation in the formal sector and increase the cost of operation in the informal sector. The proposed CTT would distort the price discovery mechanism of commodity exchange. I would urge this Government to consider this proposal.

I would like to draw the attention of this House about Rs.2,78,644 crore forgone in 2007-08 due to exemptions, of which Customs Duty is around Rs.1,48,000 crore and Central Excise is Rs.88,000 crore. These are disturbing figures. If one goes through the exemption notification in the Customs and Central Excise tariffs, their contents are mind-boggling. If one says that these exemptions are the biggest source of corruption, what would the hon. Finance Minister say? These exemptions are also perhaps the biggest source of litigation in the Department. Is it not true that interpretation of these exemptions forms bulk of the appeals before the Customs and Excise Appellate Tribunals, High Courts and Supreme Court?

Lastly, I would like to draw the attention of the Minister about TDS. In 2004-05, it was amended. Many traders and firms deducted the amount but defaulted to deposit before 31st March. This amount has been paid subsequently. The period for which they defaulted penalty has been imposed and has been collected. Since the amount of TDS was not deposited in time, TDS amount is now being treated as income for the subsequent year and is treated as gross income and they have been asked to pay income tax on this. This should be reviewed. I would request the Finance Minister that once penalty is charged, why tax it again.

With these words, I conclude, Sir.

[Translation]

SHRI HARIN PATHAK (Ahmedabad): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Financial Bill is being discussed in the House. The discussion has been started from Friday. It is our constitutional obligation to pass the Finance Bill, 2008-09 in the House under Section-110 (1) (A) of the constitution. The hon'ble Minister of Finance has brought some amendments and changes in the tax proposals in his budget and he will have to get them passed by the House through this Bill.

Being a representative of such a big democratic country and Member of this House for over 18-19 years, I got the opportunity to speak on this subject on a number of occasions. All my colleagues, associates and senior friends are sitting here. It is our responsibility to overcome the financial problems and challenges, which are prevalent in our country. I have always made efforts and it is my opinion that this House should be used as a platform to fulfill the feelings and expectations of the people whether we are in Government or in opposition. The economic scenario of this country that you have projected is absolutely right. I do not want to call it a rosy picture. It is a real one. There is 8 per

[Shri Harin Pathak]
cent economic growth and 8.8 per cent G.D.P. In 2003-04, our tax collection was Rs. 254,000 crore-which has now increased to 6,87,000 crore.

[English]

It is about three times more.

[Translation]

Our stocks are full. In page No. 2 you have said about foodgrains. Earlier, you had said that it was a matter of concern. He has said it in page No. 4 that since we have recorded low agriculture production i.e., 2.6 per cent. Later, he expressed hope and said that

[English]

we are determined to become self-sufficient in foodgrains.

[Translation]

If we do not become self-sufficient, we will have no alternative. In 2008-09, our revenue will be 6,87,000. We have reserve fund worth over 260 billion dollar. You have further stated that we have had record production of foodgrains this year. Despite it, the picture of the country-which is presented before us – is not correct. There is every thing in the country. There is development including economic development in the country. There is a substantial increase in GDP. However, the picture presented before us is not correct. I do not want to make political statements. However, to say that the price-rise in other countries and irregular performance by the States in similar way are the factors that have caused the situation which is now prevailing in the country, is not justifiable. I honestly would like to say that we are not doing justice to the country by sitting in the House. I have risen above politics to express my opinion in 20 years of my career in politics.

Your colleague hon'ble Minister Shri Kamal Nath Ji has just, talked about it on the 25th. I have put the true picture of the country. The country is heading towards economic development. There is sufficient fund in the country; godowns are full of foodgrains. Even then, the people are committing suicide due to poverty.

Last week, as a result of price rise three people had committed suicide in Delhi. Why has situation arisen? A statement to this effect has been made by your colleague. Minister Shri Kamal Nath Ji in Dubai on 25th or two days earlier. While speaking on the situation of the country, he stated that

[English]

30 crore Indians do not earn more than Rs. 40 per day.

[Translation]

At the introduction of the Finance Bill, I submitted you to go through National Sample Survey for the year 2006-07.

[English]

According to the National Sample Survey, 10 crore people in this country cannot afford to spend more than Rs. 9 per day, 30 crore people living in villages cannot afford to spend more than Rs. 12 per day; 30 crore people living in urban areas cannot afford to spend more than Rs. 19 per day; and 26 crore people are living below the poverty line.

[Translation]

If you count all these, we will be in the figures of 80-85 crores, where we are unable to fulfill their minimum requirement of food and we say that country is making progressive. We are not against it. He further added that after the unprecedented economic progress,

[English]

the fruits of economic growth have not reached the poor, middle class and needy people of this country. Kabir Das Ji said in a couplet:-

"Bada Hua to Kya Hua Jaise Paid Khazoor

Panchhi Ko Chhaya Nahi, Fal Lage Ati Doór."

[English]

What is the use of date Palm tree as a traveler passing by that tree does not get its shelter and if he is desirous to get its fruits, it is at the height and thus inaccessible.

[Translation]

The shinning state of economic world is not reaching to the people of the country. How to feed 80 crore people of the country? We should think over this issue. I am not levelling any charges or allegation and I don't want to implicate any politics in this. Whenever, I get a chance to speak in the House, I say things which I have seen. Since you are also a social worker and an elected representative of public and usually you have to visit your constituency also.

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI M.M. PALLAM RAJU): This is the right spirit.

[Translation]

SHRI HARIN PATHAK: Members of Parliament are allocated a fund of Rs. 8 lakh by the Ministry of Health for organizing health melas. Through this, I organized a camp in a backward region in my constituency in Ahmedabad. This was the reason. I wanted to initiate on Finance Bill on Friday, but I could not reach the House for that. Despite heat about 6 thousand poor people got benefited by it during a period of three days. There were long queues and announcement had to be made that if there is registration, ever after three days, people would get medicines and receive treatment. This is the position in our cities. We have to think about it seriously. Funds are being released but it does not reach to the poor. Planning is done. You have formulated the Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme. Leaders from your own party say that it is not being implemented properly. We all have to work it out together. I would like to invite special attention towards a few things. Mr. Finance Minister, when you visited Gujarat at the time of election in 2007, you said that this Government had burdened the people of Gujarat with loans three times more. Today, we owe a debt of Rs. 30 crore lakh i.e. about Rs. 30,000/- per person. This debt is five times more. The condition of our foreign trade is also deteriorating, but you have not mentioned it. The import deficiency is about 40 billion dollar.

[English]

At page 17 you have mentioned about 21 per cent increase in export but what about the import deficiency?

[Translation]

Despite a resource fund of 260 billion dollar, we have to take loans.

[English]

We have taken 12 billion dollar from the World Bank and ADB.

[Translation]

We need money. We have funds with us. But we have to take loans from outside. The country is not self-sufficient in agriculturer.

All these things are said not only by Kamalnathji but by others as well You have mentioned about Bharat Nirman. It has been mentioned in para-2 at page No.3. I feel sorry for not fulfilling the aspirations of the people of the country for which we all are responsible. Please tell us whether you have any time bound programme for that or not, because I don't want to link it with this Government or that even after 60 years of independence. But the Sachar Committee had said that 2,12085 villages out of 5,85,000 villages in the country do not have metalic roads. Simimarly, there is no bus stop at 3,50035 villages. There is no post office in 279009 villages. Despite this, we claim to have provided roads to 17,000 villages within 1000 day after three years of Bharat Nirman. Now two lakh villages remain isolated. You have stated that 52,000 villages have been provided with Telephone facilities and 42,000 villages have access to electricity. To go by estimate, it will take another 25-30 years of time in equipping two and a half lakh villages with these facilities. Please tell us how the pace of economic development will be judged?

I would like to draw your attention towards one a different issue. Mehtabji was speaking on Finance Bill. You expressed your concern about farmers. He has also talked about the package of Rs. 60,000 crore given to farmers. But this is for a certain period, you will have to go to the bottom of the problem.

[English]

Why are the farmers committing suicide? This is one time settlement of life. You have rightly pointed out in paragraph 4 that we have to be conscious about the increase of agricultural product.

[Translation]

That will have to be enhanced by 2.6 per cent. It is not fair to let people die and then give compensation. Currently, 67 per cent people of the country are dependent on agriculture. You say that you are concerned about the farmers. You are going to make an amendment to IT Act 2 (15). It has been mentioned therein that all the institutions of the countiy function as charitable institutions. Whenever there is any calamity in the country be it flood or earthquake or any external aggression, these charitable institutions always come forward. I have witnessed it and you too have witnessed it. While expressing concern for the farmers you forget one thing that these two states mainly Gujarat and Maharashtra have Agriculture Produce Marketing Cooperative Societies. It is spread among 36 districts in seven Divisions and is run by the farmers. These co-operative institutions extend loan facilities to the farmers. Their crops are also taken care of and donations are given to the farmers. Inspite of having adequate information I don't want to go into the details. You have met them.

[Shri Harin Pathak]

[English]

They have met you and they are satisfied with that meeting.

[Translation]

These co-operative committees are run and controlled by the farmers. Two by fifteen amendment is going to be made in and in Gujarat these people charge 60-70 paise on Rs. 100 against which these committees engage themselves in imparting education to the farmers' children, making ponds and in setting up schools. Moreover, these committees also provide money to the Government funds. Therefore, when it comes to the sensitivity of the farmers, you have announced in your budget speech that you are going to amend the bye-laws of institutions like APMC that are engaged in agricultural activities. The amendment you propose to make will encompass women as well that engage themselves in social service. There is Ela Ben Shah in the State of Gujarat and there are several institutions engaged in manufacturing Lijjat Papad. These are not affiliated to any political parties. They have their marked presence in the foreign countries and have earned good reputation there.

The poor women working with them and those engaged in papad-making will be affected if the amendment in 2 (15) is made. Those who are running medical stores would also be affected. You are an economist, you should think over it. "Sab Kehte Kagaz Ki Lekhi, Main Kehta Aankhan Ki Dekhi" Being among the people I meet them.

[English]

Before your Budget speech on 28th February,

[Translation]

For the first time, the "Times of India" wrote for several days as to "how the budget should be."

[English]

A series of articles had been written by the Gujarat Times of India.

[Translation]

These articles were contributed by Prof. Bakul Dholakiaji, former Director of IIM and Shri Mukesh Bhai Patel, Tax consultant'who are not associated with any political party. Shri Jainarayanji Vyas, an economist, who is associated with our party, also suggested as to what kind of budget should be presented. He started a new trend.

[English]

I was a Member in corporation where the Budget was presented by the Ruling party, where we gave amendments to the proposals contained in the Budget.

[Translation]

If we get an opportunity, then, we will present such a budget. Now we have come to know about all these things due to him. I would like the APMC, an institution associated with the farmers which is considered as a charitable institution and which is a registered institution to be treated properly. On the one hand, he is saying that he is sensitive towards the farmers.

[English]

I am very sensitive.

[Translation]

I definitely feel that in our case whether we are sitting in the Treasury Benches or in Opposition there has been no dilution in our commitment. Uproarious scenes are witnessed in Legislative Assemblies of the country and in Lok Sabha on these issues. However, every member who is sitting here, though he may belong to any party, is sensitive towards the people of this country and the hon'ble Finance Minister is not an exception too.

I do not doubt your integrity.

Now, where have we proved wrong? I have given so many examples during these 60 years.

[English]

After sixty years of our Independence, where are we lacking? Why our programmes and policies are not properly implemented? Why are the fruits of these policies and programmes not reaching our poor people?

[Translation]

This is a big question before us. A day before yesterday in my constituency people of all religions were standing in queue in the Health Mela braving 42° temperature and were asking whether this fair will continue on Monday and have made registration accordingly. I would like to have some information from you with regard to para-182 of your Budget speech given at page-29.

[English]

I fail to understand as to how the tax revenues are neutral. I would quote para-182 of your Budget speech at

page-29. It says, "My tax proposals on Direct Taxes are revenue neutral." Whatever knowledge I have gained from these learned persons and whatever I have read may not be true also.

[Translation]

Whatever knowledge I have gained from these learned persons and whatever I have read, may not be true also

[English]

I wish at the time of reply you could enlighten me that the calculations that I am quoting is not right and this is the right calculation. I am ready to accept that.

[Translation]

You are saying that the tax proposals are revenue neutral.

[English]

This time you have not given the break-up. After all these beautiful tax exemptions, how many tax payers would be out of the net? I met a few economists and according to them there are about three crore tax payers in this country. Out of that only 60 lakhs would be out of the net because of these exemptions. The benefit out of the relief given would range from Rs. 4,000 to Rs. 50,000. Average benefit would be around Rs. 24,000 to Rs. 25,000/-. It is because you have not given the break-up, I am giving you the break-up. If you have the break-up, please give it to us.

15.00 hrs.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Shri Suresh will give it. *...(Interruptions)*

SHRI HARIN PATHAK: Either you or Shri Suresh may give me the break-up. But you have not given the break-up.

[Translation]

An Amout of Rs. Four thousand is the minimum and Rs. 45000-50,000 have to be paid by those having an income of above 10 lakh.

[English]

I am just requesting you to please give us the actual picture when you would reply at the end of the debat as to how many tax payers will be benefited. According to me, the range will be from 4,000 to 50,000.

[Translation]

If we calculate the average amount then the benefit to each would be around Rs. 20 thousand or 25 thousand. I do not mention that amount of Rs. 2.5 crore.

[English]

If you multiply 2.40 by 25, the relief will be 60,000 crore.

[Translation]

You will have to generate an additional amount of Rs. 60,000/- crore.

[English]

Which you are giving as tax relief. With Rs. 2,18,000 crore as income estimated in 2007, this year you are estimating Rs. 2,38,000 crore.

[Translation]

That comes to Rs. 20,0007/-. Thus, 60 plus 20 amounts to Rupees 80,000 crore and still you say that this is revenue neutral. I am not an economist. I to do not mention the implications of the Sixth Pay Commission and also I do not count these figures. I do not even refer to the figure of Rs. 60,000 crore pertaining to the farmers but if you look at these two figures and take into account the relief package of Rs. 60,000 crore for farmers, the figure should ultimately be between Rs. 2 lakh 17-18 thousand crore to Rs. 2 lakh 37 thousand crore with an estimated average of Rs. 20-25 thousand crore. The actual figure will emerge after calculating all these figures. Where will an amount of Rs. 70-80 thousand crore emerge from?

[English]

The only significant revenue is from short-term capital gain tax.

[Translation]

It all comes through Mauritius route. Foreign investors come. You increased the same from 10 percent to 15 percent for them. Most of them are coming from Mauritious route and they have got exemption.

[English]

Look at the present situation of the capital market! Do you expect that you can raise your income? In paragraph 182, you say that capital revenue is neutral. I fail to understand this point. A minimum of Rs. 70,000 to Rs. 80,000 crores is nowhere mentioned. I would request the hon. Finance Minister to please enlighten us on this point.

Coming to my last point, I think there is some printing mistake in paragraph 181 which deals about Bank Cash Transaction Tax. I was the first man to raise it. When it was mentioned, I immediately screamed and then the whole House joined me.

[Shri Harin Pathak]

[Translation]

What is this going on? If one wants to withdraw one's money from bank, one has to pay tax for that. You said that you will withdraw the tax later. You assured that it will be done in April 2009. It should be the year 2008. I congratulate you that you are withdrawing it but how can you say that it will be withdrawn w.e.f. April, 2009. I can gather two meanings from this, statement. Either you are going to withdraw this year or you think that since you might not come to power again so there is not any harm in accepting our view Point. We will correct it. I am already against this tax. You are announcing budget proposal of coming year that you will withdraw the tax on cash withdrawal from 1st April, 2009. I have already mentioned in this House that it is not practical. My request is that withdraw it from this year only.

At last I want to say that you should consider seriously about T D S According to income tax rule if you impose penalty for not filing TDS, you charge interest from a person, But the late fee charged on TDS should be treated as income. It will create problem for the persons working in developing states.

I have put two-three suggestions here and we all have to think over them. There are many basic problems in this country and not only in coming years but we have to plan it for five years or upto the year 2020. We were also thinking of it and you are also keeping the scheme Bharat Nirman in your mind that no one should be hungry, any farmer, a poor person in our country should not commit suicide due to economic crisis, due to poverty. If a citizen commits suicide, whether he belong to any place or person, it is a loss to our country.

With these words, I conclude my speech and I would request you to consider these issues.

[English]

SHRI GURUDAS DASGUPTA (Panskura): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, we have elaborately expressed our views while speaking on the Budget. Therefore, there is limited scope to speak on this. I do not rise to congratulate the tax laws. I rise to raise serious concerns, apprehensions and misgivings about the way in which the tax system is sought to be evolved in the current Budget.

India is one of the lowest taxed countries of the world. Let there be no misunderstanding on that. Secondly, India is also one of those countries, which in terms of Human Development Index, is one of the lowest. Therefore, tax is one of the lowest – poverty is one of the highest; tax is one of the lowest – deprivation is one of the highest; tax is one of the lowest – employment is also one of the lowest. These are all irreconcilable truths and facts which should have been addressed or sought to be addressed by the hon. Finance Minister, when he was preparing, maybe his last Budget.

Then, the tax system is regressive. I have no hesitation to say that the tax system is regressive. We all know the implications of regressive tax system. We can all see how because of the regressive tax system and policies that were being pursued, we are having huge concentration of wealth, fabulous increase in the richness of a number of people, increase in the number of millionaires and billionaires. But the tax system is regressive.

I must say with humility that the Government lacks the political perspective or commitment to increase the tax base and impose more tax on those who have the capacity to pay. The tax laws have a bias and the bias is not pro-poor, but pro-rich. It is true that tax GDP ratio has increased, but it is still very low.

If I go into the details, let me start with income-tax. Income-tax contributes 18 per cent of the total tax revenue. But the exemptions have been doubled. Due to increase in exemptions, doors have been opened for evasion of income-tax. Secondly, let me look into the corporate tax. The corporate tax provides for 30 per cent of the total tax revenue. But the exemptions are 17. Then, let me come to service tax. In one of the booming sectors of the economy – the hon. Minister will definitely admit – the tax has been as low as 12 per cent. Therefore, the question is when nearly 20 per cent or 23 per cent of the people are exclusively deriving the benefit of economic development of the country, as per the Report presented by the Committee appointed by the Government, the tax laws do not provide for raising adequate revenue by imposing tax on them.

Let us look at the composition of the tax. The composition of the tax is –despite the increase in direct taxation – still direct tax provides for or accounts for a little more than 49 per cent of the tax revenue. What is the direct tax? Direct tax targets the people who do have a capacity to pay. It is still a little more than 49 per cent. It is not equity. It is not development with equity. Tax laws lack equity to the extent that revenue derived is less than 50 per cent of the tax revenue. On the other hand, the indirect tax accounts for more than 51 per cent of the total tax revenue. Who shares the burden of the indirect tax? The common people share the burden of the indirect tax. Still today after four years in the Government with our support, the Government still raises

major parts of its revenue through indirect tax, putting more burden on the common people. Is it equity? Is it social justice? Is it the principles that we had fought for?

Sir, I am making only a short intervention. The question is tax exemption. Under the rule of Dr. Manmohan Singh and Shri P. Chidambaram in the UPA Government, the exemption has increased during these years from 5.1 per cent to 5.9 per cent of the GDP. The more is the exemption, greater is the scope for interpretation; and greater is the scope for interpretation, vigorous is the evasion, more is corruption and more is the scope to oblige the power lobbies and the political leaders.

Sir, what is the exemption the hon. Minister has forgone in terms of money? It is 5.9 per cent in terms of GDP, but in terms of money, it is Rs. 2,78,644 crore. We have lost this money because of the exemption. Who have been benefited? Is it the poor people? It is because only three crore of people pay the tax when we are having more than 100 crore of people. Therefore, it is two crore or around 2.5 crore people who are benefited. It is the corporates who are benefited. Taking advantage of mulitiple interpretation, corruption is perpetrated, political lobbies are taking care of and powerful corporates are not touched.

Sir, we had suggested to the hon. Minister while he held pre-Budget discussions. We suggested to him that let there be a larger Budget - more Budget, more investment, more resources, and more targeted efforts to take care of the basic human problems of the country. What the Budget is? It is a little more than Rs. 7,00,000 crore. We expected a Budget of Rs. 10 lakh crore. We wanted more investment for the social infrastructure. We wanted more resources to alleviate poverty.

We wanted the right of the people to have food; right of the people to have employment. But the Government does not dare to have a larger Budget because it does not dare to touch the rich people of this country. Pro-rich is the bias. Anti-rich is not the bias. I have never said that it should be a Left Government. I know the class character. I know the limitations. I know the peculiar alignment of forces that we are living with. But the basic question is this. After sixty years of freedom and remaining in power with the Left support for four years, should not the hon. Minister of Finance Minister have taken to a new path, broken a new ground? What is the new ground? What is the exclusiveness? What is the newness?

The hon. Minister has evolved a new English word "undoable." Doable and undoable are used. What can be done and what cannot be done. Under the pretext of undoable, nothing new is being done. He is moving in the same way. We know that two steps have been taken – the Employment Guarantee Scheme and the waiving of the loan of the farmers. We know that. But that is not all. That is important but that is not all. More important is a larger Budget, more resources, more tax on the rich, more investment. Breaking a new ground, Shri Chidambaram, while placing the large Budget, you had not shown any light to the people. You have shown no new initiatives. You had not been true to the people who have voted you to power. You had not been able to establish that you are really different from the policies of the BJP. You have not been able to establish it. Therefore, what is the newness? We are sorry. We are extremely sorry. We do not want a mid-term poll to be imposed on the nation. Therefore, I do not put forward a Cut Motion. It is because of the compulsion of the situation. But I say that we are sorry. We are extremely sorry. We feel pained that the Government that we seek to support has been able to produce a Budget as this and formulate the tax laws as these. We are sorry. We are extremely sorry. I do not compliment the hon. Minister for the tax laws that he has promised.

With these words, I conclude.

SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU (Rajapur): Sir, I thank you very much for giving me this opportunity.

In the last Budget discussion that took place immediately after the presentation of the Budget, we all deliberated on the contours of the fiscal policies of the Government. There was a lot of euphoria after the Budget was presented. A lot of thumping of benches all the time was there when the farmers were wailing, beating their chest and trying to say that they are not getting anything. We thought probably that if the farmers are not getting harvest in the field, we probably can reap a very good political harvest. But, unfortunately, it seems that this political harvest is also now under a serious threat. In that, we are now worried how to go forward and face the elections. Now, the talk of mid-term poll, etc. is disappearing like the euphoria that appeared at the time of the last Budget. Why is this happening? This is happening because of inflation. That is really, actually affecting the common man.

The first point is when we say that inflation is 7.24 per cent, 7.3 per cent, this figure is something which really needs clarification. I would request the hon. Minister to tell us how he calculated this figure. Basically, the Wholesale Price Index, the Consumer Price Index (CPI) of course CPM does not figure here! – how have they calculated?

SHRI GURUDAS DASGUPTA: It is a very intelligent remark. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU: I will just come to that.

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): You have asked a question. I think it was in the same manner that you calculated between 1999 and 2004, when nothing had changed.

In 2000-2001, when I believe you were a Minister, for 48 of those 52 weeks, inflation was over six per cent. For 22 of those weeks, it was over 7 per cent. In 12 of those weeks, it was over 8 per cent. If you believe that the numbers were correctly calculated in 2000-2001, please believe that the numbers are correctly calculated today.

SHRI GURUDAS DASGUPTA: This only confirms my statement that the economic policy pursued by my friend and the economic policy pursued by my former friend are the same.

SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU: Therefore, the Finance Minister is saying that just before the election, what the rate of inflation was, it is prevailing now. So, what is going to be the next election's result is already forecasted. My point was as to how you calculate it. How do you actually calculate the inflation that is really hitting the common man and the money that is going out of his pocket because of increasing prices. How does it get captured in the official statistics of the Government of India? I am sure if we go and talk to the common man, we will get this feedback. When we say it is 7 per cent or whatever, the 7 per cent over the last year's figure, which was already 5 per cent above the previous month's figure, because we are already saying that the comfort zone for the Government is to bring down the inflation less than 5 per cent. So, the inflation has been rising by 5 per cent anyway, because that shows the level of tolerance. Above that, it has gone up by 7 per cent. So the common man is getting affected because it is not just 7 per cent, but he has already lost year by year 5 per cent because that is the tolerance level. Those people who get dearness allowance, inflation gets neutralized in their case, but 90 per cent of the people are in the work force who are not getting like this comfort level from the Government in terms of increasing dearness allowance. They are the ones who are very badly affected. Therefore, this euphoria has disappeared. The Prime Minister said the other day that the political parties should not try to make capital out of rising inflation. If this is so, the political parties can keep quiet and the inflation will go down. We will be more than happy to keep quiet in that case if you can convince the common man that you should not make noise because we are taking care of it. If that happens, we will be more than happy. But today, the common man is really suffering. This was already expected. In the last Budget discussions, we had already said that supply constraints are going to create problems later because economy is rising and demand is increasing and therefore, there is going to be more demand for the products which are not available. As a result of it, there is going to be inflation which is actually a structural problem. Unfortunately, the Government did not pay any attention to it. Today what are we saying? Inflation is rising because of global trends. So, global markets are responsible for this. In India, it is said that the State Governments are responsible for this. So, on international scale, it is the global market and on national scale, it is the local Government. I wanted to find out the reasons for this. So, I went to the State Governments who are busy fire fighting obviously. So, I went to the district Government on the advice of the State Government. The National Government has already divested the responsibility. As you know there are 73rd and 74th amendments. Now, the responsibility has gone to the lower Government. About State Government, how can they take the responsibility? The National Government has already abdicated the responsibility. Finally, I found out that a Sarpanch, the head of the village, should be responsible for this.

SHRI GURUDAS DASGUPTA: It is the Tehsildar who is responsible for this, and not the Prime Minister.

SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU: But, the head of the village was not available in her house because she was out to find out if she could get some grains in the market. So, I could not get the real answer. Really speaking, the Government has come out with a real solution that is global trends and the State Governments. Now, we should not be asking questions to this Government in Delhi but we should go around and find out as to who is really responsible for this. But, what is worrying us now? It is the fiscal deficit. In fact, I had said this only six weeks ago in this House. Now there are new figures. In oil account, we have an uncovered deficit under recovery to the extent of Rs. 160 thousand crore by the end of this year if the same situation continues. The prices are rising. Already it has crossed $120 to a barrel. If it continues, we will have a serious problem. I had asked a question to the Finance Minister in the last discussion about the fertilizer subsidy. The Fertilizer Minister himself has written a letter saying that the amount of fertilizer subsidy required to be provided in this year should be one lakh and five thousand crore of rupees.

Sir, a loan waiver of Rs. 60,000 crore to farmers has already been declared. Now actually the Finance Minister answered a question only the other day that they are reconsidering it because there is already a demand made by various persons to increase that amount. So, there is a possibility that that amount will rise, but it is Rs. 60,000 crore as of today. Then, I do not know what is going to be the liability as a result of implementation of the Report of the Sixth Central Pay Commission.

The food prices are rising. I would request the Finance Minister to really tell us as to how much food subsidy would be required. As a result of all this, the interest rates are rising. The Government borrowing itself is going to be more than Rs. 1,30,000 crore and this would require additional interest provision because we are going to borrow at an additional rate. So, probably, all this put together, the fiscal deficit is going to be extremely high. What is the reaction to it? One reaction is that forward markets are responsible for it. My friends from the Left are saying that. But I am not really sure. If it is so, you can ban it, but it is not banned yet. Then, there is so much bad blood between the Ministers as to whether the steel prices should be brought down or not and they are not agreeing on this. So, even today, there is no unanimity as to how we would like to control the price rise.

15.26 hrs.

(SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV *in the Chair*)

Sir, the growth rate is a very important thing because this has an impact on many things. This is a discussion on the Finance Bill and I should be discussing that. I will come to that. But the entire premise of this Budget is dependent on the growth rate. If the growth rate is not going to be 9 per cent or so, then the entire projections of revenue will come down. Then there is a pre-committed expenditure. So, there is going to be a bigger hole in the entire fiscal deficit. Therefore, I would request the Finance Minister to please tell us as to what is his estimation about the growth rate for 2008-09 and maybe for 2009-10 as well because that is an extremely important issue.

The US economy was expanding for a long time and when it was expanding, everybody was pointing out to them that you have a current account deficit, you have a fiscal deficit, your national debt is rising, you are getting money from all over the world and your savings rate is declining. Of course, in India the savings rate is good. The US economy was showing all sorts of signals which were really alarming, but the Federal Reserve Chairman at that time, Alan Greenspan, the Treasury Secretary and the President were all saying that the US economy is going to expand further. But now the US economy is collapsing which is causing problems to all. My concern is that the Indian economy is also showing such signs for a long time and we have been pointing them out to the Government. I am not going into those details because I had spoken about it in the Budget Discussion itself. But my request is, let us pay heed to the right signals which are emanating and let us take corrective action so that the Indian economy will continue to progress. That is what we really want.

Sir, the other issue is about regulation. This is an important issue because the sub prime crisis in US is also affecting many banks even in India and the SBI Chairman has said that it would require Rs. 300 crore or Rs. 400 crore.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: You are mixing it up. He did not say about sub prime crisis.

SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU: Not the sub prime crisis, but because of the banking crisis. My point is that the sub prime crisis has created problems for the entire world and that is affecting many economies and the Indian economy is also going to get affected. So, my request is that we should look at regulation as a subject in which probably we need not look at regulation only nationally, but we should also look at regulation going beyond national borders. That is the issue which, I think, the Finance Minister would like to pay attention to.

We are facing a major crisis in agriculture and we are really worried about it. Unfortunately, after this euphoria of the loan waiver of Rs. 60,000 crore, we have stopped thinking about how to revive farming as a sector. Unless we revive farming as a sector, agriculture becomes commercially viable and our farmers start making profit, this loan waiver of Rs. 60,000 crore is not going to work. So, we should actually make farming a profitable enterprise and for that we hope that the Government would come out with a proper plan. Unfortunately, it has not really come out with any such plan. Therefore, this is really a worrying thing unfortunately. The sub component of that is the issue of financial inclusion. The Government has come out with a very good nomenclature, but 52 per cent of our farmers are still out of the reach of banking sector credit. So, I would request the Finance Minister to take some corrective steps wherein we would be able to succeed in the next 10 years. We nationalized the banks way back in 1969, almost 40 years ago and though we paid a heavy price for nationalization, even then 52 per cent of our farmers are not getting any banking support and that is a very worrying thing.

[Shri Suresh Prabhakar Prabhu]

I would request the hon. Finance Minister to just read a very interesting article, which I was reading while coming to Delhi by plane. It was written by Mr. Amit Bhaduri in the Economic and Political Weekly. I know, it is totally a different view point, a view point to which actually, not necessarily, I subscribe to either. But at the same time, he has come out with some very pertinent questions. We believe that growth automatically will result into trickled down effect, will result into availability of resources which you can allocate through fiscal allocation. Therefore, growth is prerequisite to whatever we do. He has come out with some very interesting points.

My request is that leave apart the argument there, but we really need to look at a different type of model in which this finance inclusion, which we talked about, the growth that we really like to take more people into our ambit, how can that happen is something which we really need to look into.

Sir, the Prime Minister of India, Dr. Manomhan Singh started his innings on a very welcome note. He made a very interesting point that we really need to improve the delivery mechanism. Who can dispute this? Reforms on that count are long overdue. We are all waiting for some blue-print to be introduced by the Government on their side. Unfortunately, now this seems to be out of the agenda of the Government. So, my request to the hon. Finance Minister would be to tell us how we are actually working on these issues, what we are trying to do on that. That is something which will be of great interest to us.

As far as outcome budget is concerned, I really congratulate the hon. Finance Minister for that. It is for the first time, we are making an effort to find out how the money is being spent, what is the outcome of that, what is the output of that and we were trying to deliver out of that. But as I said, two years back, the outcome budget, unfortunately, the way the Ministries have prepared, is far from satisfactory. In fact, it is ridiculous. It is better not to have outcome budget because if now we accept this as an outcome budget, then that is something bad. So, I would request the hon. Finance to really look into this. In fact, I will present the hon. Finance Minister a Report, which we have prepared under my Chairmanship. It is a good welcome measure and it is something which really need to be continued, but in a much improved format. So, outcome budget is something really which is good but needs a revamp.

Now, I come to provisions of the Finance Bill. Firstly, the Income Tax Act is something which is one of the most important laws that is administered by the Ministry. But the Finance Ministry's Revenue Department administers, not just one or two but 20 Acts. So, it is impossible for anybody to really remember the whole objective of this, because it is under the Revenue Department, that is, is to raise revenue. So, why not come out with one or two or maximum three Acts to make sure that they serve their purpose. So, it needs to be looked into whether these 20 legislations are really required or not.

Alongside with this the hon. Finance Minister has been telling us that he is going to present a new code for Income Tax. Last time when I had asked him he said that it was going to come with very soon. Now, this year is gone. I hope, as a Finance Minister, he will be able to present a new tax code to this House and I hope before the Parliament is dissolved, he will be able to do that. In that we really look forward to a very simplified law in which the Chartered Accountants like me will not have any business to do because the Act will be simple. So, we will lose some business, but I will be very happy to accept that.

Now, I come to a specific section 2, sub-section 15. In fact, many people have mentioned this. What is this section 2, sub-section 15? In fact, it is a welcome measure. I am not opposed to it. But what we are saying is, what is the intention of this amendment? The intention is that if you are carrying out business, then the benefit that you get as a charitable institution should be denied to you. But in this, they have already some exemption because you have mentioned that charitable object for business should not include objects like medical relief, education, etc. So, that they have exempted anyway. So, that will not be covered by this.

My concern is little different. It is with regard to the way the wording is made. For example, a charitable institution which is doing rural development work. In the process of doing rural development work, if it is interpreted that some activities are in the nature of business because business is something where it is not necessary that when you make profit or where the profit comes back, you have to see is the profit ploughed back into business of the enterprise or is it going out. So, therefore, rural development types of activities should not be covered by this, otherwise, it should be actually a travesty of justice. Therefore, I request the hon. Minister to take this into consideration.

Second is section 35 of Income Tax Act wherein he is trying to provide exemption to all the institutions which are going to do scientific research. I will just read the relevant part. He may correct me if I am wrong, he was saying that this will be available to a company only if the main object of this company is for scientific research and development.

So, what does it mean? If a company like Tata Steel wants to do scientific research, then it will not be in their main objectives to do scientific research, and obviously not because Tata Steel's main objective is to manufacture steel. Therefore, you kindly see the wording that has been made. My request is that it should be available for institutions irrespective of whether the main objective of that institution or the Articles of Association or Memorandum of Association of this company covers this or not. What is important is that money should be spent exclusively for research and development. That should be the purpose, and the way the wording has been made may actually draw different conclusions.

The other general point, which always agitates my mind, is this. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: When did you read this Section? ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU: Just now.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: That is the problem. Just go back and read it more carefully. Keep the main Act and read it. If you read it on the way to the House and you come into the House and make a reference, then you will fall into that mistake. I will explain it in my reply. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU: That is why, I have said that if it is wrong, please correct me.

The other issue is that many of the exemptions that the Finance Minister would like to offer are welcome ones, like exemptions to hospitals and hotels. The Finance Minister has said that you must start the operation between 1.4.2008 and 31.3.2013. Sir, tell me something that if this exemption announced by the Finance Minister would have been knowing that the Finance Minister is going to announce it on 29.02.2008 and so I can start the operation from 1st April, 2008, within one month of the Finance Minister announcing it. Sir, you should give at least two or three years benefit by saying that whatever announcement that I am making now, if you start the operation within two years from now – that is the minimum time which is required to construct a hospital or a hotel – then the benefit would be available. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: You want more exemptions.

SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU: I am in fact saying that the date of operation should be such a way that it provides for such an institution to come up. Otherwise, it is not possible, and somebody might actually just hoodwink the exemption, and somebody is already working and he will get the exemption but that will not be the planned one. ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Which Section are you referring to? ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU: You have given some tax holiday ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: I am asking him as to which Section he is referring to. According to him, it does not give enough time to start the operation. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU: I am talking about tax holidays given to hotels, particularly because of the Commonwealth Games, which you want to give it in Delhi. You are also giving tax holidays to hospitals because you are saying that if they start operation from 1st April, 2008, and that is what you are saying. You just imagine that when you announce it on the 29th of February, how could the hospital be ready to start operation with one month. So, obviously ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: It does not say, "Start operation on 1.4.2008". It says: "Start operation after 1.4.2008." You have got five years. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU: I know. My point is, why should it be 1.4.2008? If you really want to give an exemption, you should give two years leeway so that they can actually construct it. ...*(Interruptions)* The five-year window gets lapsed because you will get only three years window. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: I will explain it in my reply.

SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU: Sir, the other issue is about advance ruling on income tax. Sir, this advance tax ruling is a very important aspect of the Income-tax Act. It was introduced some years ago. Earlier, this benefit was available only to Non Resident Indians because they were not very well conversant with the Indian laws as if we were conversant. And because of that, we thought that Indian laws should not be a hindrance for Non Resident Indians to do a business in India. So, we came out with a provision of advance tax ruling. My request to the Finance Minister is this. Why do you not make it universal? You make it for anybody who really requires advance tax ruling, he should get it. What is the harm in that? By doing this, you are actually helping the taxpayer and reducing the number of litigations. So many cases which get locked up in the court, and they would not be automatically there. Therefore, this is something which you should try to do.

Sir, cooperatives are denied income-tax benefit some time ago. Then, the Finance Minister had said: "We are going to review it. We are going to find it out." Sir, cooperatives are

[Shri Suresh Prabhakar Prabhu]

getting a lot of incentives from the Government in terms of their revitalization. So, on the one hand, we recognize the importance of cooperatives. That is why, we give them so much of money. On the other hand, we tax their income by saying that cooperatives should also be treated at par with the other corporate. I think, the cooperatives should get a different type of treatment from the Government and, therefore, the taxation of cooperatives should not be at par with just the other institutions.

The other issue is about the accounts of the Government itself. Mr. Finance Minister, if you want this particular system, the outcome should really be the focus of all Government/public expenditure. We would have to go a little bit deeper and change the way the Government accounts are prepared. We would have to make sure that the Government accounts are prepared in a manner that would give us a complete insight into how much money is being spent and for what purpose it is being spent.

So, if you can bring about the uniformity in the Government accounts, Government budgets, Government expenditure and the tracking of it, it would really help. Therefore, I would request the hon. Finance Minister to please appoint a Commission sort of an organisation, which can go into the Government accounts completely. It would take a few years time but it should be a very long lasting contribution that we would be making to the Government accounts of the country.

Sir, tax collection is rising but the number of people working in the Tax Department has remained more or less the same. In fact, it is a compliment that the collection expenditure of the Government of India is the lowest in the world. So, it is high time that we pay attention to some of these people who are working in the Income Tax Department. This Pay Commission has done a huge injustice to them. In fact, they are all agitated. Therefore, I would request that particularly for Revenue Departments like Income Tax Department, Customs Department, Central Excise Department, Service Tax Department, you must have a different types of pay roll; maybe by providing them with some incentives so that they can benefit from whatever tax collection they make. This type of system should really be introduced. I hope that we would be able to get something like this in the next few months time.

MR. CHAIRMAN: How much more time would you require for concluding your speech?

SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU: Sir, I am just winding up.

The effective income rate of corporate been often pointed out. Mr. Minister, I am not saying it; you have mentioned it in your Revenue Budget Document that effective rate of corporate is 20 per cent. Thanks to exemptions. In that very interesting figure, those corporate whose profits are higher, their effective rate is lower; and those corporate whose profits are lower, their effective rate is higher. If you compare this with individual, there is a contradiction. In fact, the corporate, in reality, are paying less and the individuals are paying more. So, I think, we would need to reduce this disparity that exists in the system.

Sir, my other issue is about the personnel of the Income Tax because that is what we are discussing. Transfers and postings of Income Tax Department or for that matter, all the Revenue Departments are always a bone of contention. Why not we come out with a system wherein something like a Board can be there so that there would be total transparency in this process and wherein automatically, all the wrongdoings can be reduced?

Sir, the hon. Finance Minister has set up the Internal Works Study Unit. I would request him to please tell us as to how much progress it has made. I have been going through the Annual Report after Annual Report and I find that this Study Unit is doing study. May be, it is high time for the students to appear for the exam because they have done enough study. It may be really useful to us.

Sir, the Service Sector is now more than 60 per cent of the GDP but the percentage of the Service Tax to the total tax collection is definitely not 60 per cent. So, I think, we really need to look at how the economic growth in terms of various sectors would be captured in terms of Taxation Policy. There is a need to make a distinction between the ones who have traditionally been paying tax and the new ones who are now making profits. How should they not be paying tax at all?

Sir, about the VAT and the Service Tax, the hon. Finance Minister is thinking of brining in some sort of convergence. It is said that from 1st April, 2010, just two years from now, it is going to happen. What is the progress in this regard? I was talking to Finance Ministers of a lot of States and they said that not much progress had been made. If it is so, how could the hon. Finance Minister make it operational in two years time before having a proper spade work done for it? Therefore, I would request the hon. Minister to please tell us in this regard.

Sir, there are so many concerns of the common men, of the people who are suffering in India. Can it be reflected

into the Finance Bill in terms of their getting some relief because many of them are not paying income tax at all? Therefore, there is no question of their getting any relief from it. How can they be taken care of, it is the concern that we should have.

With these few words, I conclude.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN' (Begusarai): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am grateful to you for giving me an opportunity to speak. Finance Bill is basically a consolidated document of speech of Finance Minister during General Budget. The Government present General Budget every year. The Government formulates it's policy keeping in view the democratic set up of the Government and it's responsibility towards the public. Probably this is the last budget of UPA Government. The policy formulated by them during four years is now showing their results because when you formulate some policy it takes two -three years to get result. When UPA Government came into power in the year 2004, if we see the speeches given by Finance Minister at that time, we find the mention of NDA Government.

They are saying that due to the adverse effect of the policies and misdoings of previous Government, they are not able to control the price rise. The prevailing price rise and inflation are the result of the budget presented by the Government since the year 2004. If we look into the history, inflation has broken all records and this is the result of the policies of present Government. Earlier also the country have to face financial crisis of temporary nature and such crisis were controlled within some weeks but the situation of inflation in the country today is beyond control of the Government. An Hon'ble Member was saying about the volatile situation of price Index and consumer Price Index. This situation is a result of long term policies prevailing since the year 2004 and now is at it's peak. Today, our country is facing inflation, price rise and prices of essential commodities are increasing regularly and these all reflects the loopholes in the policy of the Government. The wholesale price index was 6.3 percent in April, 2007, in March 2008 it becomes 6.4 percent and there is no indication that it will come down. However, the Government have taken a number of measures to check the price rise but without any result. The Government have been continuously claiming that they will control inflation and the inflation is coming down, and they will control inflation within one or two months. If you have a look at the statement made by the minister of Finance in this House, every time he said that the Government will check the price rise and control the inflation, the inflation has continued to grow regularly. The reason behind is the total absence of coordination in UPA Government, there is no contradiction among them. There are many differences in the various statements made as Government Level regarding inflation. The Prime Minister has made a statement that price rise could not be checked at the cost of development in the country. The Minister of Finance has said that inflation is a result of changing Global situation. When we were discussing the issue of price rise in this House, the Finance Minister intervened and said that prices of commodities are increasing in our country due to changing global situation. The Minister of Food and Civil Supplies has told that the inflation will be controlled, there is no shortage of foodgrains in our country. He further stated that Government will control inflation within a week. What happened that week? The Chief Minister of Delhi has made a statement in newspapers that it is quite natural that inflation will increase if economy is developing. The Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission has commented that taking stringent measures to check inflation will be against the measures taken for development.

Thereafter Finance Minister had made a statement that the Government will make a sacrifice of development in order to check inflation. If you see all these statements, you will find all of them to be contradictory to each other, there is no correlation of one statement with another. Every person in the Government is interpreting the definition of inflation in his own way and the people of the country have to face the problem. The UPA Government have not enough courage to ask for vote given the kind of policies they formulated during the last four years. All the policies formulated during last four years have failed.

We discussed about the World's economy and price rise. I want to present some figures before you. The price index of major countries of the World during January, 2008 was 4.3 percent in USA, 2.2. percent in England, 3.2 percent in Europe, 0.1 percent less in Japan, 7 percent in China and 5.5 percent in India. As per figures during the last quarter of 2007, it was 3.8 percent in USA, 2.8 percent in Europe. 0.4 percent less in Japan, 6.6 percent in China and 5.7 percent in India. Now, please told me how could you claim that the world economy is affecting our economy. It reveals that there is a huge difference in the situation of economy and inflation of European countries and that prevailing in our country. As per the report of Food and Agriculture Organization and also stated by the Food and Civil Supplies Minister of our country, there is no shortage of foodgrains in our country. The Finance Minister has also stated during his budget speech that there is no shortage. The increase in production of foodgrain during the year 2006 at world level was 4.7 percent.

[Shri Rajiv Ranjan Singh 'Lalan']

Similarly, the increase was 2.6 percent in 2007 and it is expected that it will increase further during the year 2008 and the production of wheat went up by 6.8 percent during 2007-08. Therefore, to say that inflation in world economy is affecting India is not right because there is no food crisis in the world. It is also not true to say that there is shortage of wheat in the world. Then how can you say that it is affecting our country.

As regards industrial production I want to tell about the export. The root cause for price hike lies in the policies of the government. They have given so much exemption in export that during the year 2004-05, it was 30.8 percent, in 2005-06, it was about 20.4 percent and in the year 2006-07, it was 22.6 percent. Even the agriculture products were exported, I am not talking about import. In the year 2004-05, the export was 16.4 percent, in the year 2005-06, it was 14.7 percent and in 2006-07, it was 18.5 percent. You exported large quantity of agriculture products resulting in food crisis in our country. Given such a scenario, there is a feeling that there is price hike in the country and you have to import food grains.

I want to place a fact before the House. We procure wheat at a minimum support price from the farmers. Last year you fixed Rs. 750/- per quintal for wheat and by adding, Rs. 100 you fixed it at Rs. 850/- per quintal. But the farmers refused to give you wheat at this rate. The private players procured the wheat at the rate of Rs. 900-950 per quintal. The farmers sold their product to one who gave them more money. You had already given permission for export so, the private companies exported it openly. Consequently wheat alongwith other food articles were exported to the other countries and in February 2007 you invited tenders to import wheat. In reply to one of my questions Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution Minister had said in the House that in the tender floated in February 2007, Rs. 1200 per quintal was fixed for wheat procurement but you did not procure. After that in July you procured the same at the rate of Rs. 1600 per quintal. In a way it was nothing but a scam. The state governments refused to procure the imported wheat because the wheat grown there is known as 'red wheat' in our country and is meant for cattle feeding.

And by importing that quality of wheat in our country you imposed it on the people of the country that caused the food crisis in the country. You talk of the NDA regime, but there was no food crisis in the country during NBA regime. During that period godowns were overflowing and as a result of it, the government got the surplus food grain thrown in the sea. You blame to the NDA government! It is your polices in the four year for that caused price rise.

I want to tell you about the rice. The government imposed ban on export in October 07 and on 31 October 2007 it lifted the ban by saying that it would put partial ban. Upto 26th January 2008, the export of rice from the country was 51.02 lakhs tonnes. You have exported all the food grains to the foreign countries. No food grain production is taking place in the country while you are focusing on the industrial production. On the one side there is no food grain production and whatever food grain is being grown, you are exporting the same. This is resulting in the price rise.

With comparison to the year 2006-07, the export of the rice in 2008 was two fold. Apart from that I want to say one more thing. Hon'ble Finance Minister, in his budget speech, has said, "There is sufficient food grain production in our country." This statement is being given to calm the resentment of the people of the country. In fact, when the government announced the second agriculture production in March 2008, it was said that in comparison to the year 2007, the Rabi crops were sown in less area in 2008. In the year 2008, the Rabi crops were grown in 487.2 lakh hectares of land while the same was grown in 510.37 lakh hectares of land in the year 2007. When it was sown in less area, how could there be more production. You cannot misguide the mass of the country based on false logics. The people of the country cannot digest your logic. When the crops were planted in less area how could there be more production?

Mr. Chairman, Sir, a question was raised about small-scale industries. The whole economy in the country is based on agriculture. More than 80 percent people depend on the agriculture. After 2004, upto now, all of your policies were meant for increasing industrial production and promoting its exports. You did not pay heed to the agriculture. You did not work for growing agriculture production. Its result is small-scale industries. When the UPA government came into power in 2004, 500 items were reserved for the small-scale industries, now it reduced to 35 items only, and rest items were dereserved for the big industrialists. You are exporting these items through them. You are importing consumer goods that is why you could not control the prices. So, in the present situation, the government can make utmost efforts to check the price rise but cannot control them. With these words I conclude my speech.

16.00 hrs.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV (Patna): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank you for giving me an opportunity to participate in the debate on such an important subject.

Sir, the condition of the country today is not good. The hon'ble Finance Minister presented the budget recently and made several provisions in the budget to protect the interests of common people. He announced to implement several important schemes and fund was allocated through budget to those schemes, which are in public interest. I think better steps have been taken to protect the interests of the farmers. Several such steps were taken that would have impact on people in general. These efforts brought happiness to the common people. Now the budget was to be discussed but there is price rise. The inflation rate has gone up suddenly. It is but natural if there is price rise, the inflation rate will go up. The common people are in distress due to price rise. The present government have taken several measures to check the price hike but till date no positive result could be achieved. I think that the government are trying to check it but what are the reasons for such hike in prices. The prices of all the things have gone up. The prices of edible oils, vegetables and other things among food articles have gone up. The people are in trouble and the government are also trying to check them. Several important decisions have been taken in this regard but the expected result could not be obtained. It is a matter of concerns for us.

India is a country of villages. Eighty percent population of the country resides in villages even today. As long as the farmers, labourers living in villages are not prosperous, the economy of the country will not be vibrant. In order to make the economy of the country strong, we have to make the economic condition of the farmer strong. Today, the production capacity of the farmers is decreasing. People engaged in farming are tending towards other profession and this is the eason that the economy of the country is in danger. As long as the economy of the country is not put in place, the farming sector will not be made strong. The government have invested fund in the agriculture sector especially during the last time. We will have to consider on it.

We shall have to see whether the people working in the fields and farms can become prosperous by the investments that we have made? Only agriculture would provide employment and strengthen our economy. Agriculture has every kind of potential but today investment is decreasing in agricultural sector, the productivity is decreasing and the farmer is passing through a miserable phase on all sides. The farmers are committing suicide in different areas of the state. The decision taken by the Government to waive loans to the tune of about 60 thousand crores is welcome. It is an excellence initiative. I think since the independence of India it is the UPA Government that has benefited the people by taking a formidable and all encompassing step. Any amount of thanks giving on my part to the hon'ble Minister of Finance, hon'ble Prime Minister and the UPA Government for this would not suffice. Apart from this one more step has been taken of which we used to talk and draw the government's attention to off and on. i.e. decreasing the rate of interest on the loans to the farmers as per the recommendation contained in the report submitted by Dr. Swaminathan. The rate of interest was 12 to 13 percent and hon'ble Minister has provided the facility of loan at 7 percent rate of interest. It would bring relief to the farmers. Dr. Swaminathan had recommended 4 percent rate of interest and the Government should aim at bringing this about. You have waived loans to the tune of Rs. 60,000/- crores and the farmers did get some relief in their present circumstances but its benefit is not reaching further. Even today farmers take more loans from private people than from banks. We have raised the issue to waive loans taken from the banks but they take loans from the rich and the traditional money lenders at private level and we have not drawn the attention of the Government towards that. If they may be able to get loans from banks at lower rates of interest then they would not go to traditional money lenders. Hence I think the hon'ble Minister of Finance must think over it. The recommendation of Dr. Swaminathanjee to provide loans at four percent rate of interest must be accepted.

Sir, the whole country and the House is concerned about rising prices. We are unable to check the rising prices due to ill effects of forward trading. The exclusion especially of articles of food from forward trading is being talked about, perhaps we have not paid attention towards it. I think we can certainly check the rising prices if we exclude essential items including pulses, edible oil, sugar and coarse grain from forward trading. Hoarders stockpile essential items by purchasing them through forward trading and create artificial shortage. Food grains are available, it is not that foodgrains are not available in the country but hoarders are taking advantage of the availability through forward trading, they create artificial shortage by hoarding foodgrains in their godowns. The prices are skyrocketing due to this. I think this is also one of the reasons for the rising prices. Hence Government should also pay attention towards this and Central Government take effective steps especially to check rising prices with the cooperation of State Governments. Today there is a need to rein in hoarding traders. Though they are making efforts, the State Governments are not extending their support. In some of the States necessary steps have certainly been taken against hoarders. But effective steps are not being taken in all the states of the country due to which Government is not getting cooperation and hoarders are making hay by creating artificial shortage

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of commodities and they are in effect killing common people. That is why I think that Government should amend the laws if there is a need to do so that all these things come under the direct control of the Central Government. If such arrangement is to be made then a large scale campaign should certainly be launched against hoarders in all the states of the country so that people may get rid of the hoarders who are creating artificial shortage of goods and the Govt's intent and line of thinking may become strong.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, through you I would like to draw the attention of hon'ble Minister of Finance that we produce sixty percent of edible oil viz. palm oil etc. in our country but we import forty percent from other countries. Hon'ble Minister of Finance has taken certain steps also to bring down prices. Forty percent of the edible oil being imported in our country has been made tax free. We import forty percent oil from Indonesia and Malaysia. We import about 90 percent of the forty percent from Indonesia and about ten percent of that forty percent is imported from Malaysia. In recent days when he exempted it from taxes they hiked its price there. After that it is your helplessness that the benefit which you intended to get is being taken away by foreign companies from where we import oil. I think we are unable to see the impact of our policy due to this also so that people can get benefit. When the duty was reduced to zero in March 30, 2008, the price of oil increased abroad and the companies of Indonesia got benefit to the tune of about rupees seven thousand crores. Had we used this seven thousand crore rupees on the resources of our countries where we produce only sixty percent of edible oil, and tried to increase production by investing that amount there then farmers would also have stood benefited and we would have progressed towards self reliance.

Sir, I would like to draw your attention towards one more issue. Today we are not paying attention towards increasing production. The farmers of the country are paying less attention towards villages and special attention towards cities and we are unable to benefit by their capacity and potential to increase production.

We shall have to think how to encourage the farmers and how to increase their production capacity. We shall have to certainly make efforts in this direction and take action. If we slowly decrease our production capacity then we shall draw close to starvation in the coming years and our economy will be even more in shambles. I would like hon'ble Minister of Finance to make such policy to take any step so that production capacity of the farmers may increase. For this you should provide them facilities. Make arrangement to increase their capacity for irrigation. Arrangements be made to provide them fertilizers and seeds at fair prices. Today they are not getting remunerative price of their produce.

Sir, through you, I would like to explain through an example that the support price for wheat was increased to one thousand rupees recently but they are not getting the benefit. I would like to draw your attention towards my state Bihar. There farmers are selling at Rs. 940-950 on credit even today. We are importing wheat at about rupees 1450/- per quintal. It is said in my state that farmers are getting sufficient benefit. We are giving them the rate of one thousand rupees per quintal but they are not getting its benefit. Today it appears to me that discrimination is being meted out even in the purchasing of wheat. I do not say that wheat should not be procured from Punjab, Haryana and other States. I would like to inform that 41 lac tonne of wheat was procured from Punjab and 40 lac tonne from Haryana during the last year. I would like to draw your attention towards Bihar. Bihar is a backward state. When you announced to give them the rate of rupees one thousand per quintal, they got encoura-ged. Hon'ble Minister of Finance would be happy to know that a desire is generated in the farmers of Bihar. They have produced wheat on large scale by making arrangements for irrigation and other things. But what they will do by producing wheat when they are not getting the support price offered by the Government. Those who sell their wheat are getting their payment after three to four days. The traders are exploiting them; you bought only eight thousand tonnes of wheat in the State of Bihar. Why any of your agencies is not working there anymore whereas it was decided that the Government of India will purchase wheat through the FCI by way of opening of 240 purchasing centres. Apart from this, it was also decided that the State Government there will purchase wheat or rice, by way of opening two thousand purchasing centres. But nothing like that happened there. No purchasing centres came up there. Both the Union Government and the State Government failed to open purchasing centres. That is why the farmers are compelled to sell their wheat at a very cheap rate. This is a great injustice to them. We are importing wheat at the rate of Rs. 1450 per quintal even though there has been sufficient production of wheat in our country, why are you not providing the indigenous farmer a remunerative price? In my opinion it should certainly be looked into and where there is any discrimination that should be resolved. In States like Bihar, the farmers have fed the whole of the nation by way of providing grain by putting hard labour. I am talking of increasing the production capacity and I feel that Bihar is the only State, where production can be increased sufficiently if proper facilities are provided.

Sir, the North-Bihar faces flood regularly at a large scale and we have always been discussing this matter in the House. The farmers there have a great capacity to produce and the people are very hardworking so the production can be increased substantially but every year damages of lakhs of rupees takes place due to floods.

Mr. Chairman Sir, it causes loss of life and property to the farmers but no proper steps have been taken till date. In the same manner there are many regions in the country where if the farmers get proper facilities, they can be self-reliant by increasing their production capacity and thus, we shall not be dependent on other countries for foodgrains and shall also be able to save ourselves from the rise in prices.

Sir, campaign for creation of special economic zone is going on and is being discussed. Through this, people working in the fields are being deprived of their livelihood. Let the industries be established, nobody will have objection on that. It will also increase the employment and this will strengthen our economy. Through special economic zones, you are buying the fertile land of the farmers and thus depriving them of their livelihood. When the Minister will reply to this debate I would like that he must state the area of arable lands of the farmers which has been purchased by you through special economic zone and how many farmers have been deprived of their livelihood?

Sir, the population of our country is increasing. Rather it is increasing without any control but the land remains the same. We have to produce on the same land and earn our livelihood. All of us know that about 80 per cent of the population depends on agriculture. If we formulate schemes like that and gradually keep on acquiring the fertile land of the farmers, this will further aggravate our problems.

Sir, if you want to establish industries and increase the industrial production in our country, then the industries should be set up on the barren lands. Why do not you develop the barren land for industries? We also have a scheme to convert the barren land into fertile land on a large scale. I would like to know from the Minister about the area of land converted to fertile one under this scheme? If we do not convert the barren land into the fertile land and keep on acquiring fertile land of agriculture for establishing industries, we shall certainly deprive the farmers of their livelihood. The members of the family of the farmer have increased, the number of houses has increased, the population of our country has increased, but there has been no increase in the land. And even that land is being acquired for setting up of industries instead of utilizing it judiciously, from where the food grain will be produced for fulfilling the requirement of the country?

Sir, we have been observing for the last many years that irrigation capacity has not been increased. I would, on the part of my own State, like to draw the attention of the hon'ble Minister that some special programme should be started to enhance the irrigation capacity in the State of Bihar. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, you conclude.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: All the canals, which we have, are in very bad condition. The amount of money required for the construction of canals, is not allotted. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now you conclude.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: If the management of water is properly done, I think that a large quality of grain may be provided in the State of Bihar. This will lead to more agricultural production in the fields of the farmers, the farmers will flourish and Bihar will prosper. As for Bihar, there are not many opportunities of employment there, due to which the inhabitants of Bihar migrate out of State in order to earn their livelihood, and now our people are being beaten up in their adopted States and are subjected to abuse. I would like to request the hon'ble Minister that he should certainly pay his attention to the States like Bihar. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now please conclude.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Sir, you are again and again asking me to conclude my speech. I am the very first member, who is speaking on behalf of my party. No other member was stopped from speaking but you are not allowing me to speak. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Sir, I am concluding.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Today this discussion will go on till six p.m.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Sir, I am concluding. This discussion will also go on tomorrow.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Sir, I think that the Government and the hon'ble Finance Minister should pay their attention to such States where the condition could be improved, the area of arable land could be increased, the production capacity could be increased, the farmers could be prosperous and unemployment could be reduced. I think that the Government should definitely take drastic steps on these fronts. If it happens, a State like Bihar may be able to

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produce such a quantity of food grains diligently on its own that not only can suffice to its own people but also will be in a contribution to solve the problem of food grains in other parts of the country. But for that the Union Government will have to provide a special package to the State of Bihar, only then the economic condition of the States like Bihar could be strengthen.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, through you, I would like to convey it to hon'ble Minister in clear terms that unless and until the farmers of this country are made prosperous, there will not be prosperity in the country. Again, without the development of 70-80% population, the country will not develop.

The gap between rich and poor in the country has gradually widened. I agree that our country has developed a lot. I also accept that our country is now more affluent but the fact is that while rich persons are becoming richer, the poor people are becoming poorer. As long as we do not formulate a policy to fill this gap between the poor and rich, the situation will not change. What are the reasons for such a situation? The only reason behind widespread Naxal movement in our country is dissatisfaction and resentment among certain people. The Government will have to formulate a policy to root out this dissatisfaction and resentment and provide employment opportunities to the poor people so that their purchasing power is increased. The purchasing power of 70-80 per cent common people of the country, must be increased in order to make this country prosperous.

Sir, I will conclude my speech. Hon'ble Lalan ji has made a lengthy speech but he should introspect himself. What his NDA Government did in the year 2003. During the regime of this Government the forward trading policy was started. This is the root of all problems. I understand that during the NDA regime the foodgrains were brought under forward trading. This very step of the Government has created all the problems we are facing today. The traders were permitted to store unlimited stock during the regime of this Government. Today we are facing problem due to such steps taken at that time. The hoarders were given freedom for hoarding. They were permitted for looting and now we have to face its consequences. Therefore, I would like to ask hon'ble Minister of Finance that the law and the policy framed during NDA regime should be changed and amended and the food materials under future trading should be brought in open market and you should take action against hoarders and you should make policies to increase the production capacity of the country and encourage the farmers at the same time. Without taking these steps, in my opinion, you could not make this country prosperous. You should take concrete steps to fill the gap between the poor and the rich. Though 10 to 15 per cent people become more affluent but 85 per cent people are still poor. If we are dreaming about Bharat Nirman, we have to accept that Bharat lives in villages. You should not think of India shining. Those who once run Indian Shining campaign have been voted out. Therefore, if we want to see India as a developed country, we will have to develop villages and empower the poor people. We will have to formulate policy for common people for their upliftment, this is the only way to strengthen our economy and make our country prosperous.

With these words, I support this Bill and conclude.

SHRI REWATI RAMAN SINGH (Allahabad): Mr. Chairman, Sir, we are discussing Finance Bill today. I congratulate Finance Minister of India, Mr. Chidambaram for three reasons. First, probably he has presented Union Budget for sixth time-four time in the UPA Government and two time in the United Front Government. As far as I remember, no other Minister of Finance has presented the Union Budget six time. Secondly our opposition members have left. I remember that the GDP rate which during their regime, was 4.6 per cent, has now gone up to 9.4 per cent. Hon'ble Minister also maintained it for four years, which is almost 8-9 per cent and this year also it is projected at 8.7 per cent. We must congratulate him for this achievement.

Thirdly, we should congratulate him that the tax collection has reached new heights and never before these figures have been achieved. It is true that our foreign reserves are due to remittances, but they are maximum during his period.

Sir, the matter of concern is inflation which is presently 7.33 per cent. He deserves admiration for growth rate but it is a matter of concern that inflation is increasing. The reasons for it are external. The prices of Petroleum products have increased by three and a half times. The price of Palm oil, which we import from Malaysia and Indonesia has increased much. We have to see that even after sixty years of independence, India is an agricultural country and depend on Monsoon. The reason behind this is inadequate investment in agriculture. Even today we are not making adequate investment in this field. In the budget, Minister of Finance has made a provision for irrigation of five-lakh hectare land during 2008-09, which is inadequate because, at present growth rate of agriculture is 2.6 per cent. Unless, we increase it to four per cent, we will not be able to maintain GDP growth. In my opinion without increasing it, we could not make India a prosperous country.

Sir, a member of RJD was speaking, he has left the House. He was saying that there is not any food crisis any where in the world. Sir, food riots are happening in many countries including Egypt. There is no food riot in our country. If you see, the production of wheat in our country was 75.81 million tonnes last year, which is now 76.78 million tonnes. It is a marginal increase. Similarly, if we see the production of rice last year, it was 93.35 million tonne, whereas this year it is 95.68 million tonne. Similarly the production of other cereals has also increased but it is not as much as we expected it to be.

Sir, I would like to tell the Hon'ble Minister that the farmers did not sell their wheat at the rate fixed by you during the last year. This year also it is one thousand rupees. At some places the farmers are selling wheat at throw away prices but most of the farmers whether he is from Punjab, Haryana or Western UP, which are the main States of wheat productions, are not likely to sell wheat at the rate of thousand rupees. They will sell it to the private traders. World price of wheat has increased by 77%. Australia is affected from drought. You will get wheat only in America. America knows that India will have to import wheat to fulfill its requirements so the world prices have increased on their own. I would like to demand that you have announced minimum support price of a thousand rupees but if you also announce bonus of 100-200 rupees you will be able to get adequate quantity of wheat and there will be less need to import wheat form America and other countries. It will also reduce the outgo of foreign exchange.

You will have to consider the fact that until the farmers become self reliant, India will not be strong and also the work of replenishing our agricultural stocks, which we are doing at present through imports, will not get fulfilled.

With your permission I would like to put forward a few more facts. Two countries India and China are vying with each other in economy. We should compare the investments of China and of India – with regard to infrastructure. China has constructed a 24 hour all-weather-road upto our border. Their army can reach to our border within an hour and our army will take around 3-4 days to reach there. It is just an example regarding infrastructure. Hon'ble Minister for Railways has done a good job but still if you look at the speed of the train its average is not more than 45 km, 60 km and 80 km. There is a need to change the railway tracks and they don't have the infrastructure. You will have to provide additional funds for that and allocate the amount from the General budget. When will they do this? We are passing through 21st century. Korea, Vietnam, China are doing this. Thailand is about to take the step but we stand no where in the scenario.

I would also like to say that the amount we need to spend on health and education, too is not being provided within the budget. You have said that by the time the 11th Five Year Plan will draw to a close we will be spending 4% of GDP on education. If you look at the education sector you will find that no doctor is ready to go to a village. You all belong to the villages and I know that most of the members here have a rural background. Why would a doctor go there? There is no central school or modern school and also no arrangement for girl's education that's why they don't go there. You are providing budget for rural health mission but we don't have doctors. There is no para medical force. If the people living in the villages suffer from any serious disease there is no provision for them in the budget. We write to the Hon'ble Prime Minister for help in case of Cancer, heart surgery and kidney replacement but there is no provision in the budget for their treatment. If a poor will suffer from such serious disease either he will depart to his heavenly abode or will be doomed to die a painful death. Ours is welfare state. Even then if you are not being able to provide facilities for the same after sixty years, then is very shameful.

16.39 hrs.

(SHRIMATI KRISHNA TIRATH *in the Chair)*

You have raised the age of old age pension to 65 years. Hon. Chairman, Sir, through you, I would like to remind the Hon'ble Finance Minister, that in many states, people's life expectancy is not 65 years but only around 60 years and 62 years. Will they get pension after their departure to their heavenly abode? I would like to request that the age limit should be reduced to 60 years so that everyone could get the benefit.

[English]

SHRI VIJAYENDRA PAL SINGH (Bhilwara): Madam Chairman, I stand to speak on the Finance Bill 2008-09. The Finance Bill is the third stage of the Budget presentation. The Government presents the Budget normally at the end of February. The Finance Bill, technically speaking, is focussed on the tax proposals, direct, indirect and other taxes.

We start with the General Budget which is the first stage. The second stage is the Demands for Grants and we are today discussing the Finance Bill which is the final stage of the Budget.

Sir, the day the hon. Minister of Finance put forth the Budget to the Parliament, the whole country was listening to

[Shri Vijayendra Pal Singh]

you, and with what you had to say, you became one of the most popular man that day. There were reports that you made everybody happy – the kisans, people thought, were happy, the senior citizen were happy, and the women also thought that they have been given something by the hon. Minister of Finance. There were reports in every clipping and in the newspapers saying, 'everybody loves Chidambaram'. Today, the position is not the same. ...*(Interruptions)*

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Any doubt!

SHRI VIJAYENDRA PAL SINGH: Whatever you had given to the *Aam Admi* and now the same *Aam Admi* is very disappointed with you. He blames you that whatever was given has been taken away by the price rise and the inflation. Now, you can blame any and everybody. You can blame the world phenomena, the global price rise, the price rise of the oil and what not.

Madam, talking to the Finance Minister, I must say that there are ways and means like many other countries are having. They have been able to insulate themselves from this price rise. If there were ways and means of doing it, you were the Finance Minister when we had the Asian giants melt down also. It could be in a different context. But that is the time that India was insulated and we felt that we are insulated and we did not have the same problem like the Asian giants. Here, we are in a different position.

Madam, somebody very rightly talked about the monsoon also. We have had a good monsoon also. If we did not have three-four years of consecutive good monsoons, I think the position would have been even worse. That has to be thought about and I think you must talk about it today. Do not blame; it is easy to blame other people. One does not blame oneself. If you can do something, please do it. The country is looking towards you and to the UPA Government.

Madam, now, I would like to come to the tax proposals. I would like to talk firstly about the service tax. It is the biggest collection today. You have very rightly put forth that the collection of the service tax has really gone up. There are 92 services or more which are being covered in the service tax. But there is some sort of confusion. You must clarify that. There are anomalies. The business auxiliary services what are they, what do they all cover and what it does not cover? Then, the biggest problem today is that there was a time we thought that people are getting more honest and the black money is really being contained. The service tax has again started the race in the black money and this has to be looked into because there is double taxation in the rentals which are coming and people are not liking it.

You pay a tax. The Service Tax, which is twelve-and-a-half per cent, again comes in the Income-tax. You pay it there again. So, these are the anomalies. These are the things that you must look into. Otherwise, the race in the black money will again start and we will have problems in that.

You have always talked about simplifying the Income-Tax and Service-Tax Forms. But they are not Saral any more. We tried to make a Saral Form. The NDA Government tried to do it. You said that you are going to make Saral even more simplified. That Saral has become more and more confusing. Today, there are 8 Forms with 20 pages of it.... *(Interruptions)* In the IT returns, there are 8 forms with 20 pages. Now you say that the Annexures are not required to be put with that. It is very good. But then, you do not have computerization in all the zones. That means, they have to be verified. It is taking so long a time that it becomes very difficult. Also, because of the verification which is not being done, refunds are not coming in time. That must also be looked into and streamlined. That is also the case with the Service Tax reforms. They are not simple to put forth.

Let me also talk about the BCTT – the Banking Cash Transaction Tax for withdrawal of money from the bank. If there is a provision like Section 40 (a) (iii), cash payment exceeding Rs.20,000, that is understood. These are causing hardships. Now, you are saying that you are going to withdraw this by 2009. What does it mean? Why have you these two? How are you gaining from it? If you are not gaining from it, why do you leave it till 2009? Why can you not do it today itself?

Some proposals and amendments have been made for the charitable purposes. What you have said is that under the charitable purposes, there are a lot of Charities which do business; they are not Charitable Trusts any more and they have to be amended. Can you at least take out the Boarding Schools? They are providing dresses, food, stay and all that should be excluded from that. Please consider that because that is very important. I think I have covered all the points that I have. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: The Boarding School falls under the first part of the definition of Education. It does not fall under the last part. There is no confusion. Please see that. There are two parts of the definition. Education falls under the first part which is not being amended.

SHRI VIJAYENDRA PAL SINGH: I thank you very much for the clarification. There are only two more points that I want to cover.

One is Tax Holiday for the hotels in the area where there is UNESCO recognition. Why only the UNESCO-recognised sites have been chosen for it? In Rajasthan, we have a lot of tourism potential. We have a lot of other problems. We are a landlocked State. If tourism can be given a boost, that will help. Rural tourism in Rajasthan is coming up in a very big way. I would want you to kindly look into rural tourism, give a Tax Holiday for rural tourism. Also, I think, in the NCR Region, the Commonwealth Games are going to take place. If that is also going to be given an exemption and Tax Holiday, please give it to Rajasthan also. *...(Interruptions)*

I have one last point to make. You have given Rs.50 crore only for saving the tiger. I think the sum of Rs.50 crore is not good enough because there are 28 Project Tigers. That has been a big worry for the hon. Prime Minister as well. I hope from Rs.50 crore for saving tiger, you can raise it to at least Rs.200 crore.

With these words, I conclude.

[Translation]

*SHRI K.C. PALLANI SHAMY (Karur): Let me thank the chair for giving me an opportunity to speak on the Finance Bill for the year 2008-09. On Behalf of Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, let me reflect the views and demands of the Government of Tamil Nadu led by our leader Dr. Kalaignar Karunnanidhi and ably assisted by able lieutinents especially our Thalapathi Stalin. Let me share some of my points too on this Bill.

On the one side it is heartening that the growth rate of our Gross Domestic Product is moving up. On the other side there is a cause for anxiety induced by the spiralling up of prices.

Amidst this, Hon. Members are expressing their concern, reservations, oppositions and expectations both on tax revenue of the Union Government and on the new tax proposals. It is estimated that the proposed tax revenue would be Rs.6,02,935/- crores. This is about 13% increase than the previous year. Of the total receipt of the Government, corporation tax fetches 24 percent, income tax earns 15 percent, customs mobilises 13 percent, excise tax provides 15 percent and service tax helps to collect 7 percent.

There are views and counterviews about the service taxes. They are directly passed on to the public. There is a view that there must be a cushion. It is suggested that there must be a tax on the nett profit made in the service sector. There must be a fair deal. Without giving rise to a spurt in inflation and without affecting the interests of the public the controversy over service tax must be settled. I hope our able Finance Minister Shri Chidambaram would manage with the adeptness of rope walk in a circus ensuring the earning of better revenue for the Government and good name for the United Progressive Alliance.

India and other countries are producing the yarn or filament needed for the manufacturing of masquito nets. But Bangladesh manages to send across to India the yarn adopting the means of undercutting and under invoicing. Due to this the basic material for masquito nets received from Bangladesh causes loss to the manufacturers in India. Centre must impose a ban on this unfair trade practice.

Cotton garments and finished products exported from cotton goods centres like Karur attract commissions paid to foreign agents. Now the trading community especially the exporters have got 'notices' from the Government to pay service tax on such commissions paid. A demand like this made all on a sudden now for the past four years with retrospective effect is causing anxiety. This is a taxation on turn over already accounted for. This will affect current business activity. Hence I urge upon the centre to rescind this move. In future, if it is to levied, let it be on commission paid beyond ten percent and more.

Tamil Nadu has attracted Foreign Direct Investment out surpassing the total FDI that was made there in the last sixteen years. Such states that manage the finances well in building infrastructure and administer well to ensure peace and conducive atmosphere with efficient management of finance and administration must be rewarded with matching grants. The central grant on this count is a mere Rs. 5576 crores. This may be enhanced taking in to consideration the aspects like 76% of spending on salaries and pension from its own tax income and the need to reduce and redraw the tax rate on higher tax loans. It is estimated that the revenue expenditure of the Government of Tamil Nadu would be at Rs.51,400 crores. In the meantime the possible impact of 6th Pay Commission is looming large. Considering these aspects and also the fact that measures aimed at poverty eradication and lifting up the poor are managed will in Tamil Nadu, let there be liberal enhanced sharing of tax revenue. With this plea let me conclude expressing my support to this Finance Bill.

* English translation of the speech orignially delivered in Tamil.

[English]

SHRI NAVEEN JINDAL (Kurukshetra): Madam, I thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak on the Finance Bill, 2008. I support the Finance Bill and in doing so, I have sufficient reasons which I would mention in detail before this august House, through you.

Madam, one of the most welcome aspects of the Finance Bill and the Budget is that it has put no new tax burden so far as direct taxes are concerned. On the contrary, it has provided tax relief to men, women and senior citizens. That is why, everybody has applauded the Finance Minister. He has put more money in people's hands and thus added to their purchasing power. As a consequence, the demand for goods will surely go up leading to an overall boom in the economy.

I am sure that the whole House will commend the efforts made by the hon. Finance Minister and his team to achieve unprecedented success in tax collection. The tax collection has been increasing every year since Shri Chidambaram has taken charge of the Finance Ministry. On several occasions, the collection has gone beyond the anticipated targets. For example, the tax collection during 2007-08 is likely to exceed the revised target of Rs. 3.08 lakh crore. This is mainly due to the awareness created among the tax payers through publicity campaign. If rules and regulations are further simplified, I have no doubt that the tax payers, particularly the small and medium ones, will come forward to pay the taxes and boost the tax collection in a big way. The growing tax collection is also an indication of the phenomenal growth in trade and business. It is a sure sign that our economy is poised for continued high growth. The credit for this goes to our Finance Minister for the well thought out steps taken from time to time.

Madam, I compliment the hon. Finance Minister for paying special attention to the setting up of hospitals in tier I and tier II cities and availability of medicines at cheaper rates. In the Finance Bill, 2008, he has reduced the customs duty on several life-saving drugs and their bulk drug ingredients from 10 to 5 per cent. The excise duty on all goods produced in the pharmaceutical sector has been slashed from 16 to 8 per cent. The hon. Finance Minister has gone a step ahead and given a five year tax holiday to set up hospitals in tier I and tier II cities. This will give a big fillip to the healthcare sector as several big players would like to set up hospitals in smaller towns.

In the rural and semi-urban areas of our country, lakhs of poor farmers and workers take loans from unorganized sources and by doing so, they, sometimes, expose themselves to exploitation by some unscrupulous persons. I would like to remind the hon. Finance Minister that in order to protect the innocent poor people from such exploitation, he took a unique initiative. As the Finance Minister during 1996-98, he announced in his Budget Speech that Local Area Banks will be set up to provide loans to the people in rural and semi-urban areas in an organized manner in order to promote their viable economic activities. It was a very thoughtful scheme and people greeted it with great enthusiasm. In August, 1996, the Reserve Bank of India approved that Local Area Banks may be opened in the private sector. However, in 2003 the Reserve Bank of India decided not to permit the opening of such banks due to some structural shortcomings in the scheme. Fortunately we have Shri Chidambaram as our Finance Minister again and I would like to suggest that he may once again take the initiative to revive this scheme of setting up Local Area Banks.

17.00 hrs.

If there were any weaknesses in the structure of these banks, they can be resolved.

Madam, the Government has announced to waive the loan amounting to Rs.60,000 crore taken by the farmers, who are having not more than two hectares of land, from the financial institutions up to 31st march, 2007. However, I will impress upon the hon. Finance Minister to increase this ceiling of land from two hectares, keeping in view the land productivity, land falling in flood prone areas, desert land, land having no irrigation facilities, etc. Similarly, the cut off date of 31st March 2007 also needs to be revised keeping in view the cropping cycles in the country.

Madam, I would like to thank the hon. Finance Minister for a request that all the sportspersons had made to him to exempt the air weapons from customs duty. Air weapons were attracting almost 35 per cent customs duty and this time it was completely exempted. This would go a long way in promoting the sport of shooting in the country because India does have a tremendous potential in the international arena when it comes to shooting.

Sports in India need a very big boost. Every time in the Olympics or in the international arena when we perform badly, we do some soul searching, but we have not really done enough to promote the cause of sports in the country, especially, the Olympics. I have been requesting time and again that the Government must come out with incentives for corporates, both in the public sector and the private sector, which come forward to help Olympic sports. The Government

must give them 150 per cent tax exemption. Today also, whatever expenditure the companies make, they are given 100 per cent tax exemption. But that is not enough. That has not motivated enough companies to come forward. So, I would like to request that 150 per cent tax exemption must be given to companies coming forward to promote Olympic sports and to sponsor Olympians because if we do not do that then, ultimately, again we will be feeling bad if we do not perform well in the international arena.

Madam, I had earlier suggested to the hon. Finance Minister that in our duty free shops at the Indian Airports, they were not accepting the Indian rupee, but this was allowed later on and I thank the hon. Finance Minister for that. But recently, I just found out about a week ago that they accept the Indian rupee only from Indians and when the foreigners are going back after their visit to India, whatever Indian rupee is left with them and if they want to spend that money in the duty free shops they are not allowed to do that. It is very funny actually. They then shout at the duty free shops asking why do they not accept their own Indian rupee. I would like to request the hon. Minister to take care of this issue.

Another small issue is that now since the Indian rupee has been made convertible on the current account, still when Indians going abroad want to get foreign currency, they have to fill up long forms whereas in other countries, for smaller amounts this kind of form filling is not required. I would request the hon. Finance Minister to make it simpler.

My last point is regarding the Sixth Pay Commission. The recommendations have been received by the Govt. and I understand that a Committee headed by the Cabinet Secretary is going into the grievances and reactions of different categories of employees. I would urge here that special attention must be paid to the demands put forth by our valiant armed forces, para-military forces, and our police force because they are the ones because of whose efforts our country is safe today. So, we must give due consideration to their needs.

Madam, I thank you for giving me this opportunity. With these words, I once again support the Finance Bill, 2008.

[Translation]

SHRI HANSRAJ G. AHIR (Chandrapur): Madam Chairman, today Finance bill is being discussed in this House and it has been placed in the House for approval. Before me several speakers have expressed their views in this regard. I would, specifically, like to put forward the emotions of the farmers before the Government. The Government has declared to waive off the loan of farmers during the year 2008-09 and has presented a data of approximately 4 crores of farmers being benefitted from this. It could be correct as farmers having land upto 5 acres have been included in it and the farmers are likely to get benefit of waiving off of loans to the tune of 60 thousand crores of rupees. I would like to give the example of Maharashtra in this regard. The Government has announced that the farmers who have taken loan upto 29 February 2008 will be benefited from this. I would like to bring into the notice of Hon'ble Minister that the poor farmers who have taken loan before 29 February 2008 from the banks are not being benefited from this worthy campaign and announcement of the Government. Out of 1 crore 21 lakh and 4 thousand farmers in Maharashtra who have taken loan only 43 lakh and 41 thousand are likely to get benefit. I would like to bring into the notice of Hon'ble Minister that farmers of Vidarbha who committed suicide compelled the Government to take this decision of waiving off the loans.

Several farmers committed suicide due to which even the Hon'ble Prime Minister made visits to some parts of Vidarbha and announced the package but this also could not stop the farmers from committing suicides. Fortunately, the Government has announced waiving off of the loans in this budget. In Maharashtra 43 lakh and 41 thousand farmers will get the benefit of waiving off of the loans. There are 10 lakh and 30 thousand farmers in Vidarbha whose loans to the tune of 16 thousand and 30 crore rupees only will be waived off. In Western Maharashtra loan of 10,244 crore rupees will be waived off. I am furnishing this data as here only two hectares is in question. In Western Maharashtra the farmers who grow/cultivate only fruits like grapes, bananas and pomegranate are given 1 lakh rupees for cultivation of grapes on 1 hectare and 80,000 rupees for the cultivation of pomegranate. But the farmers in Vidharba who cultivate paddy, cotton or soyabeen are given loans upto Rs. 5000/- Rs. 8000 only. In this way there is no farmer in Vidharbha having outstanding loan to the tune of more than Rs. 50,000. This is the reason, I a n providing data so that it may be clean that the farmers who have committed suicides in Vidarbha did not get any benefit from the waiving off of the loans. It also include other farmers having 15 or 20 acres of land. They have also committed suicide. It is a serious matter. Farmers of Vidarbha committed suicide leading to the waiving off of the loans. I would like to claim that it was this that drew the attention of the whole country. Hon'ble Finance Minister should pay attention to raise the ceiling. The loans had been waived by the Government of V.P. Singhji, no ceiling was there for the area of land at that time.

[Shri Hansraj G. Ahir]

It was the amount of loan which was taken into consideration. It could have been followed as an example e.g. if the loans up to Rs one lakh could be waived then the farmers of Vidarbha would have been benefited. The Government should consider it because farmers are committing suicide in Vidarbha.

Last week hon'ble Minister of Finance, during question hour, had explaining the causes of inflation. The reason is that we have to import many things. He mentioned pulses and edible oil in this regard. I, through you, would like to draw the attention of hon'ble Minister of Finance. Several hon'ble Members have also said that we import edible oil and pulses from countries like Malaysia, Indonesia and Australia etc. which is causing inflation leading to price rise. I am referring to it because the palm oil which we import into our country, may be cultivated on large scale in our country itself. A private organization has conducted a survey in the country in this regard and its report is submitted to our Minister of Finance. It is mentioned in the report that palm tree is grown at seaside in Malaysia and Indonesia. In our country there is ten lakh hectare of land where we can grow palm trees and cater to our need of edible oil. But no attention is paid towards this when the budget is prepared. That is why, I want to say that attention should be paid to these things to make our country self-reliant. The discussion is not about the increased prices of food grains and edible oils, the prices of every commodities are rising in the country. Today the prices of cement and iron have increased very much. But what we do in this regard. We receive nothing from the industrialists whom we allot blocks of iron ore and limestone. We give them stone at the rate of three paise, five paise per k.g. but we purchase stone from them at the rate of rupees fifty per k.g. We do not have any control over them, therefore, I would like to request hon'ble Minister of Finance that at least to formulate a law that we have all the things having not only their sale price but also their production cost printed on them. For example they can show the cost incurred by the industry on one tonne iron or one tonne cement. If we print production cost on articles, I believe that we shall be able to check the rising prices and the country grappling with soaring prices will get relieved and people will be benefited.

Madam, with these words I conclude.

[English]

SHRI K. FRANCIS GEORGE (Idduki): Madam Chairman, the General Budget for 2008-09 has been receiving a lot of praises and criticisms mainly, I believe, due to various proposals that have been announced by the hon. Finance Minister relating to the farm sector. So, the critics and the admirers have both found good and fault with the waiver of agricultural debts to the tune of Rs.60,000 crore.

Madam, for the first time in the post-Independent India, the hon. Finance Minister has taken a rightful decision and said that the waiver is only the repayment of the debt that the country owes to the farmers. The point is whether the Government and the hon. Finance Minister have taken a decision to really repay the debt that the country owes to the farmers, who have contributed significantly in the development of this country for the past six decades.

Madam, the waiver that has been announced is to the tune of Rs.60,000 crore. But Dr. Radhakrishna Committee, which was entrusted with the task of finding out the problems that were there in the farm sector, had itself found that the agricultural debt amounted to Rs. 1,30,000 crore. Everybody knows that only 27 per cent amongst the farming community can have an access to institutional credit, and the rest, the majority, that is, more than 70 per cent of the farming community depends on the moneylenders. This factor is not at all taken care of in this announcement.

Waiver is specifically for loans classified under the head "Agricultural Loans." In fact, I can tell you from my experience in Kerala especially for the Cooperative Sector that 90 per cent of the loans are availed by the farmers under the heads, namely, Household Needs, Medical Treatment, Funeral Expenses and also for Repayment of Earlier Loans.

When we made a study of four Cooperative Banks in our rural areas we found that they had given a credit amounting to around Rs. 40 crore to Rs. 45 crore. Out of that, the credit, which comes under the head "Agricultural Loans", is only Rs. 2.75 crore. The whole amount of Rs. 40 crore to Rs. 45 crore was availed by the farmers and there is no industrial activity, not much of trading activity in that area; it is purely a village area. The farmers were compelled to take these loans under various heads due to their distress position in the farming sector. Therefore, if we do not address those loans too, how can we save the farmers from the debt trap that they are already in?

The hon. Finance Minister has set a target of Rs. 2,80,000 crore on agricultural credit for 2008-09. The hon. Minister has very proudly announced that the last year's target was exceeded; that may be right. But the point is that how much of this was disbursed as new credit. The majority

must have gone as book adjustments. So, achievement of target does not reflect the real position.

I again speak of Kerala situation. There has been an Arrears Clearance Campaign in the Cooperative Sector recently. So, the majority of the loans were renewed, and those who were faithful to the banks, those who had very faithfully repaid the loans would be left out of this waiver scheme. Therefore, how are we going to help the farmers by a pronouncement of this nature? That is a very critical issue. Therefore, I would request the hon. Finance Minister that he should revisit those areas.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

SHRI K. FRANCIS GEORGE: Is my time over?

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Yes.

SHRI K. FRANCIS GEORGE: I am just concluding.

Madam, I would just restrict myself to the farm sector.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Kindly give crisp points.

SHRI K. FRANCIS GEORGE: Okay. I would request that special attention must be given to pepper. It is subjected to stiff international competition, especially from Vietnam and the South East Asian nations.

We should also have a scheme for protection of seeds. Recently, we read in the newspapers that there is a particular scheme called Seed Walt in Norway to protect all kinds of seeds throughout the world for the future generations. We should have some kind of a scheme of that nature.

Of course, we are demanding that the interest rates on the agricultural loans should be reduced to four per cent but nothing much has been done on that count. There is very little about post-harvest operations, organic farming, research etc., in the Budget Speech.

Madam, as far as the National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme is concerned, I would request the hon. Minister to effectively implement this very good programme. Work done on marginal and small farmers holdings also should be included under this programme.

When the Central Sales Tax is going to be reduced to two per cent, the States are going to suffer. I would request the hon. Minister that the Centre should compensate to the States for the loss, which they are going to suffer out of this reduction of the Central Sales Tax to two per cent.

The National Saving Scheme has been very popular for pensioners, for foreign returnees and for the general public. But since last several years, due to the non-revision of the interest and the MIS bonus, there are no takers for the National Savings Scheme now.

In fact, the Scheduled Commercial Banks have come out with short-term attractive financial schemes but not by the National Service Scheme. I would request the Finance Minister to really think about it to bring the National Service Scheme into the forefront again.

Also, in the last year's Budget 2007-08, a levy of service tax of 12.8 per cent has been imposed on income of immovable property, including buildings. The Central Excise Department is now demanding service tax from Local Self-Government institutions on the rental of the buildings owned by the Local Self-Government institutions. These buildings have been constructed by the LSGs by availing loans from HUDCO and other financial institutions. If tax is levied on the rental, on this income, the Local Self-Government institutions will be very much affected. Their income will be affected. So, I would request the Government to really, seriously think about it. When we speak about devolving powers and empowering the Local Self-Governments, we should not be taxing them actually.

Since there is no time left, I would like to conclude. I would request the hon. Finance Minister to seriously think about all these things.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Now, Prof. Ramadass, you can speak for only five minutes.

PROF. M. RAMADASS (Pondicherry): Madam, on behalf of our Party, PMK, I rise to support the Finance Bill, 2008.

At the outset, I wish to compliment and congratulate the UPA Government headed by Dr. Manmohan Singh, a world renowned economist, and its Finance Minister, Mr. P. Chidambaram for presenting a Finance Bill which is in consonance with the macro needs of the country today. This Finance Bill, the fourth in succession, continues the efforts of the Government to provide stability to the tax system of the country.

Many people should know that from 1991, historically, if we see, the Indian economy as well as the tax system in the country were in doldrums in 1991 because of the fiscal profligacy, lower taxes and higher expenditure which led to fiscal crisis, economic crisis in 1991. It was destined to Dr. Manmohan Singh, who happened to be the Finance Minister at that point of time, to reverse the trend and to bring about fiscal consolidation and fiscal stability. It is in the footsteps of

[Prof. M. Ramadass]

Dr. Manmohan Singh that Mr. P. Chidambaram has now undertaken this task, and the Finance Bill of this year is one more step towards strengthening the tax system.

I see a number of positive benefits or positive aspects in this Finance Bill. Our friends from the BJP were criticizing the Finance Bill on various erroneous considerations. They do not realize that when they left this Government, the tax GDP ratio in the country was just only 9.2 per cent. But look at the tax GDP ratio today. It is about 13 per cent which is something unheard of in the fiscal history of India. Now, this is a remarkable and commendable achievement of the UPA Government, and it has been done through the various tax proposals that we have brought.

No doubt today India has a very sound system characterized by tax compliance, higher efficiency in tax collections, higher tax revenue and better tax administration. We have tried to remove most of the loopholes in the tax system today. Therefore, the provisions relating to the tax system are all commendable as of today. Now, one of the admirable features of this Tax Bill, the Finance Bill is that we have been able to increase the tax revenue of the Government manifold, and to substantiate this, I would like to give only a figure. In 2006-07, the total tax revenue was Rs. 4,73,512 crore and today it has been increased to 6,87,715 crore. This, no doubt, has increased the tax GDP ratio to 13 per cent.

On the one hand when the tax revenue is increasing, on the other hand we have taken up a number of economy measures or expenditure compressing measures which have brought complete fiscal consolidation today, which was a great problem for the Indian economy 15 years ago.

Today, what is the revenue deficit in proportion to GDP? It has come down to one per cent and by 2009, we would be able to completely wipe out revenue deficit, which would be a salient achievement of this Government. This is what a Finance Bill is supposed to do. It is not about loan waiver; it is not about inflation; it is not about farmers' problems; and it is not about farmers' suicides; a Finance Bill has to be concerned with the provisions in the Finance Bill.

I am talking about the Finance Bill. I want to give both sides of the Finance Bill. So, kindly give me some time. With this request, I will proceed. In the FRBM Act, we said that we would reduce fiscal deficit to 3.5 per cent, but this year itself we are reaching the target and going ahead of the target by bringing it to three per cent. It is because of the fiscal consolidation efforts that we have made. Not only we have made fiscal consolidation, hon. Finance Minister has created a fiscal space where he has set aside an amount of money which can be used to meet any kind of financial eventualities or contingencies in the future. He is very confident to manage any situation, whether it is concerning import or exports, oil or other things. He will be able to manage them because of the fiscal consolidation effort, which is the result of sound tax proposals he has brought in the last year's Finance Bill and in this year's Finance Bill. He will also bring such proposals in the next year's Finance Bill. Therefore, the era of financial instability and fiscal deficit is over as far as India is concerned. We can definitely say this. Perhaps the BJP may try to revert it, if by God's grace, they come to power. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO (Kalahandi): Madam, I would like to submit that I have heard the speeches of the Communist Members of Parliament and Members from the Treasury Benches. It seems that they are running with the hare and hunting with the hounds. ... *(Interruptions)*

PROF. M. RAMADASS: No. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO: You are running with the hare and hunting with the hounds. Sometimes, you are supporting and sometimes you are not supporting. ...*(Interruptions)*

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Please do not interrupt.

...*(Interruptions)*

PROF. M. RAMADASS: Madam, I am an objective evaluator of the Finance Bill. I commend wherever commendation is required. Let anybody say in this House whether this country has seen this kind of fiscal consolidation so far. If any Member challenges me, I am prepared to discuss with him. I am giving the facts. It is not that I am supporting or opposing.

The tax system in this country has been regressive for a very long time in the sense that the tax system was relying more on indirect taxes rather than direct taxes, but an important character of the tax system in the country today is that this year has been a landmark year where direct taxes are contributing 53 per cent of the total tax revenue in the country and 47 per cent taxes are coming by way of indirect taxes. Therefore, our tax system today has become more and more progressive.

Another anomaly which we have found in the case of service tax is that in the years 1994, 1995, 1996 and all that, not even a single pie was being derived from service sector though it was contributing 55 per cent to the GDP of the

country, but today we are getting about Rs. 64,460 crore by way of Service Tax. That is another remarkable achievement.

We are giving five-year tax holiday to hospitals, which will contribute to hospital service reaching the people. In the case of 2-star, 3-star and 4-star hotels, we are giving income-tax exemptions if they are established in certain selected districts. I would only request the hon. Finance Minister to include Puducherry as one among the districts eligible for such an exemption.

I would also bring it to the notice of the House that the cost of tax collection in this country today is one of the lowest in the world. We are incurring a cost of 60 paise to collect Rs. 100, which is one of the lowest in the world.

The general CENVAT has been reduced from 16 per cent to 14 per cent, which will have a soothing effect on the prices in the country. Also, the customs duties and excise duties have been reduced considerably. This will reduce the cost of production of the commodities and thereby, the cost-push tendencies would be reduced and it should have a soothing effect on the inflationary pressures. Having consideration with all this, I welcome this Bill.

There are one or two points which I would like to bring to the notice of the Government. Puducherry has moved to VAT system and this has reduced our revenue, but you are keeping the Central Sales Tax also there at two per cent.

This seems to be incompatible as this imposes more burden on the people there. Therefore, I would request the Government to withdraw this amount.

SHRI K. FRANCIS GEORGE (Idduki): Madam, I would like to make a point here. Pondicherry has not implemented the uniform VAT rate, which has been proposed by the VAT Empowered Committee. Now, they have low VAT rates at Mahi, which affects income of a State like Kerala. *...(Interruptions)*

PROF. M. RAMADASS: No, we have adopted it now.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Please do not disturb each other.

...(Interruptions)

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Please do not record anything except the speech of Prof. Ramadass.

(Interruptions) ... *

PROF. M. RAMADASS: We have shifted to Value Added Tax (VAT) one year ago and we are experiencing considerable loss of revenue, and the presence of Central Sales Tax (CST) is not consistent with the VAT. Therefore, I would request the Government to abolish the CST as far as Pondicherry is concerned.

A part of the revenue of the Service Tax, as we have already decided, has to be shared with the States. The States are in stringent financial situation, and the Government is now mopping up about Rs. 64,000 crore.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: You have put forth all the points very nicely. Please conclude now.

PROF. M. RAMADASS: A part of this must be given to the States like Tamil Nadu where we require more funds from the Government also.

Finally, as regards the Commodity Transaction Tax, the Government should carefully analyze with the help of an expert committee whether this tax is acting against the prices or motivating the hedgers and hoarders to go in for taxes. The commodities are already subject to VAT, and then there is octro*i, mandi* tax and many other taxes that are imposed on the commodities. The Commodities Transaction Tax is there to fuel the inflationary forces simply because the traders are hoarding these commodities to avoid this tax.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Prof. Ramadass, thank you very much.

PROF. M. RAMADASS: Therefore, the Government should consider the possibility of withdrawing this tax.

With these few suggestions, I once again compliment the Finance Minister. The UPA Government should come back to power and present a very nice Finance Bill, so that the Indian economy will have better prospects in future for financial stability.

SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL (Buldhana): Thank you, Madam. Definitely, I will not misuse the opportunity given to me by you. I will highlight only one point, which my colleague Shri Ahir had raised earlier. I am representing Buldhana constituency, which is a part of Vidarbha. Unfortunately, Vidarbha is known for suicides by farmers, and nearly 191 farmers have committed suicide in the six districts of Vidarbha after the declaration of the loan waiver scheme in the Budget. The reason is that there is a ceiling of 5 acres and 2 hectares in the loan waiver scheme. But the land ceiling of the farmers of Vidarbha is above 5 acres. Their produce is very less, and their loan amount is also very less. It is not more than Rs. 5,000 per acre – as has been stated by my colleague Shri Ahir – as against in some

*Not recorded.

[Shri Anandrao Vithoba Adsul]

other areas. I will not specify the areas, but the loan that the farmers have taken from the banks is between Rs. 80,000 and Rs. 1 lakh per acre in other areas as against in Vidarbha, which is not more than Rs. 5,000 per acre. This is the reason that the land holding is high, that is, more than 5 acres. Therefore, the loan amount is less, and the produce is less. Hence, they are not benefited by this loan waiver scheme as nearly 67 per cent of the farmers are not getting its benefits.

There are so many other points to be mentioned, but I will raise only this particular point during the opportunity given to me by you. I would request that this point should be considered, namely, that the land holdings should be increased, at least, up to 15 acres or amount-wise up to Rs. 50,000 should be there in it. Thereafter, they will get the benefits, and the cases of suicide by farmers in my area, particularly, will stop.

SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN (Palani): Thank you, Madam. I rise to support the Finance Bill for the year 2008-2009 on behalf of my Congress Party, and on behalf of my leader Shrimati Sonia Gandhi.

First of all, I would like to congratulate and thank our hon. Finance Minister, Shri P. Chidambaram, for presenting an agriculture-oriented Budget. It is undisputable that agriculture is the largest source of livelihood in our country. The farmers were crying for Budgetary support, and the loan waiver – to the tune of Rs. 60,000 crore – is a helping hand to the poor and marginal farmers.

In the year 1947, only a few Indian villages had banking facilities. Based on All India Rural Credit Survey, the Reserve Bank of India directed all other banks to open branches in rural areas and to provide loans to the farmers. In 1955, the Imperial Bank of India, which later became the State Bank of India, opened 400 branches in rural areas in order to facilitate credit to agriculturists. Very recently, the State Bank of India opened its 10,000th Branch in Tamil Nadu. The same was inaugurated by the hon. Finance Minister Shri. P. Chidambaram.

Fourteen large commercial banks were nationalized and named as NABARD. It was established by an Act of Parliament during the year 1982 to facilitate credit for agriculturists. During 1990, the number of Rural Banks in the country was only 700 and now it has risen to 3,500. After nationalization of banks by our great leader, Shrimati Indira Gandhi, the activities of moneylenders reduced significantly and the agriculturists flourished well. After Narasimhan Committee Report, the banking industry was not able to help agriculturists in an extensive manner.

After assumption of UPA Government at the Centre during the year 2004, our Government has created Farm Credit Package to help the farmers of this country. For agriculturists, financial inflow went up from 52% in 2005 to 56% in 2006. Even after all these steps, poor farmers particularly dry land holders are not able to reach banking institutions for getting loan. Then they are opting for the private moneylenders and borrowing at higher interest. The Planning Commission has appointed Raghuram Rajan Committee to suggest financial sector reforms. The above Committee has submitted its Report very recently. As per the Report, "nearly three quarters of farm households have no access to formal sources of credit leaving the rural poor especially vulnerable to becoming victims of moneylenders. Loans taken by those in the bottom quarter of the income distribution are from informal lenders at interest rates of above 36% per annum, well above the mandated lending rate of banks". This is the prevailing situation throughout the country. Even today, 75 per cent of the farmers of Vidarbha region are not aware of the Debt Relief Scheme announced by our Government.

I humbly request the hon. Finance Minister to take steps to direct banking sector to provide loans to all poor dry land farmers.

Our Government's Debt Relief Package is only to the poor and small farmers who are having one to two hectares of lands. Actually in rural areas most of the farmers who are possessing three to five hectares of dry lands are living in debt. For getting debt relief benefit to the farmers who are possessing land up to five hectares, a scheme should be drawn and they should be brought out of their debt.

I want to bring certain facts about Section 40A(3) of Income Tax Act. This Section provides that any expenditure incurred in respect of which payment is made in a sum exceeding Rs.20,000 otherwise than by an Account Payee Cheque drawn on a bank or by an account payee draft, shall not be allowed as a deduction. Except in major cities, purchases, expenses, freight charges have to be paid in cash. Particularly lorry drivers, village people for agricultural products and producers, sales in Market Committee, etc. has to be paid compulsory on the same date by cash amount of Rs.20,000. Hence, the above ceiling may be increased to Rs.50,000.

Furthermore, now it is proposed that the date of return of income for the 44 AB cases is 30th September, 2008. I

humbly request the hon. Finance Minister that *status quo* to be maintained as on 31st October, 2008.

Our Income Tax Act of 1961 is obsolete and many of the provisions contained in the Act have become redundant. It should be redrafted with a new Act with simplified procedures and more assessee friendly.

I further submit that the Tax Holiday for the Petroleum Sector should be restored to save the oil companies in our country.

The present Income Tax Return Forms are cumbersome unlike earlier Saral forms. It should be simplified for the convenience of all kinds of assessees.

Now we are imposing 12 per cent Service Tax in a number of sectors. It is an unnecessary burden to the poor consumers of this country. Hence I humbly request the hon. Finance Minister that the items which come under the purview of 12 per cent Service Tax net should be reviewed and the things which are having direct impact on the common man should be brought down to for per cent, or altogether the Service Tax on those items should be withdrawn.

The Value Added Tax, Fringe Benefit Tax and Dividend Distribution Tax are the main reasons for recent hike in inflation rate. Hence, all these taxes should be reviewed and suitably amended.

Most of the families are depending on the income of single individual. For assessing his income for income-tax purposes, some relaxation should be given. I request the hon. Minister that a survey should be taken up for finding out single income families and more tax benefits should be extended to them.

Furthermore, I want to bring certain facts about the income-tax raids conducted by the income-tax officials to this august House. In some of the cases, during raids, they are seizing huge amounts but they are not revealing entire amounts and things which are confiscated on raids. It creates unnecessary bad name to the Department and loss of revenue to the Government. A strict scrutiny is necessary in this regard.

Respected Madam, in my constituency, particularly in Kangayam in Erode district, nearly 70 coconut oil manufacturing mills are running. They are producing coconut oil by purchasing edible grade Copra from about nearly 5 lakh coconut growing farmers in Pollachi, Pudukottai, Peravurani, Thanjavur and some places in Coimbatore District. The oil manufactured by them is used traditionally for cooking and for edible preparation. The cooking oil itself is not hair oil as such. The Central Excise Department under the Ministry of Finance proposed to levy Central Excise Duty on the coconut oil packing as "unperfumed hair oil/cosmetic and medicine" as coconut oil usage is predominantly for hair oil purposes. The Department came to the conclusion that the coconut oil packed in bottle and pouches less than one litre is used for hair oil purposes. But it is not true. Major sale of coconut oil are being sold in Kerala, Tamil Nadu are used for cooking purposes only. Further, the manufacturer does not have any control over the usage of oil by the consumer. Added with such a situation, if Central Excise Duty is leviable, it will be a severe blow to the industry and coconut growing farmers at large.

Hence, I request the Hon'ble Finance Minister to kindly intervene and direct the Central Excise authorities not to impose Central Excise for the coconut oil.

The small scale industries throughout the country are facing great hardship due to the steep hike in the price of raw materials, especially steel and aluminum to the tune of 60 per cent within a period of three months. The above industries have no option but to close down their industries, due to which lakhs of employees will become jobless. Hence, I urge upon the Finance Minister to take necessary steps to save these industries.

With these words, I am concluding my speech and supporting the Finance Bill for the year 2008-09.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE (Pandharpur): Madam Chairman, I on behalf of my party, rise to support the Finance Bill introduced by Chidambaramji. Here figures are being given that growth of GDP was 9.2 percent in the year 2003-04, but it has gone up to 12.5 percent after formation of our Government. It is a very good progress. But we have to say that the growth in the GDP has not helped the common man in any way. I support the Finance Bill but I have not come here to support the soaring prices. Chidambaram Sahab is a good Finance Minister. We have to see how the rising prices can be checked. The logic, prices are rising throughout the world so it should also go up in our country, can not be tendered. Condition prevailing in other countries are different because they are developed countries. When prices go up in our country, it affects 80 percent of the people. The remaining 20 percent affluent people are not affected by the rising prices. Now-a-days newspapers are reporting that Anil Ambani and Mukesh Ambani are the wealthiest persons. We say what is the good of a man becoming so rich? Here everybody should be rich. Now the wealth of Anil Ambani and Mukesh Ambani should be distributed among all.

[Shri Ramdas Athawale]

There is a need to remove poverty by giving financial assistance to the poor. Their father did an excellent job. He came to Mumbai from Junagarh and made excellent progress living in poverty. Our economy should be able to create such environment so that everybody could prosper. The waiver of loans of the farmers is a revolutionary step. When drought hit our State we requested Atalji to give funds for Maharashtra, he gave us only Rs. 50/- crore, but when Manmohan Singh ji visited Vidarbha he gave us a package of Rs. 3750/- crore and now the loans of farmers wroth Rs. 60,000/- crore is to be waived of. But the suicide of farmers is not due to bank loans but due to the loans from Mahajans. Therefore, my demand is that there is a need to waive of that loans also. Similarly, the limit of five acre fixed in this regard needs to be increased upto 20 acres. The Government should consider to waive of the loan of farmers with a holding of 20 acres. Many announcements are made for the people belonging to a scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. When Indira Gandhi was the Prime Minister she had prepared special component plan and tribal sub-plan for tribals. The population of Scheduled Caste is 16.2 percent and Scheduled Tribes is 8.2 percent. So the 24.4 percent budget allocation should be for the people belonging to scheduled caste and scheduled tribes. Madam Chairman, you also fall under this category, at present you are in the Chair so please give instruction to the Government in this regard. Rs. 2000/- crore has been allocated for the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, but rupees two lakh crores need to be allocated in the budget keeping our population in view. There is a need to allocate rupees two lakh crores if the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes and people living below poverty line are to be raised above poverty line. The rupees 2000/- crore allocated is not sufficient. On the one side there are large number of landless people in our country and on the other side 20 crore acres of land is vacant, hence, my demand is to distribute five-ten acres of land to each of these landless people. A social security law to provide pension, heath care facilities and protection to thirty seven and half crore people needs to be formulated at the earliest. Regarding price rise, my demand is to provide edible oil, rice, wheat, jawar, bajara etc. to BPL people through rationing shops and the APL people who have come to the level of BPL should also be provided these articles through rationing shops. The funds were given to construct Baba Saheb Bhim Rao Ambedkar Memorial at 26 Alipur Road at the time of Atalji with a view to get Dalit votes, but the funds given by you was not yours but of the country. Hence, my demand is to provide Rs. 50 crore to Ambedkar Memorial and there is a need to provide Rs. 100/- crore for Baba Saheb's Chaitya Bhumi Samadhi located in Mumbai. Along with this a University, teaching Bhudhist philosophy, should be set up in each State and in the vicinity of Delhi because elements spreading unrest are increasing in the country, therefore, they need to be tought Budhism. The people sitting in the opposition are more in need of Budhism but they talk more about Ram Mandir. Kalyan Singhji is saying in Mumbai that Muslims should forget Babri mosque.

I want to tell Kalyan Singhji, and the people sitting in the opposition and VHP that they should forget construction of Ram Temple at Ayodhya. Taking not much time I just want to say that the Finance Bill introduced by Finance Minister Chidmanbaramji should be passed otherwise no one will get salary. In order to run this country, this finance Bill should be passed. I fully support this finance Bill. This will be catalyst for our progress and it will boost the economy of our country.

[English]

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN (Chirayinkil): Madam, we are at the final stage of the Budget proposals.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: The time at our disposal is very short. Kindly give good suggestions only.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: This is a peculiar situation wherein we have not discussed many of the Demands for Grants. We have discussed only four Demands for Grants of Ministries viz. Home, Defence, Rural Development and Information and Broadcasting. All the other Demands have been guillotined and passed. This is a case wherein the Government has the privilege of getting a very golden opportunity to pass the Budget. By this Bill we are authorizing the Government to make payment from the Consolidated Fund of India. We are doing this without discussion because we did not discuss any other matter. We did not discuss the policy decisions regarding labour, agriculture or even food. Now, we are at stage where we are authorizing them payment from the Consolidated Fund of India. Probably this will be the last chance for the 14th Lok Sabha to have such a discussion. Next Parliament will discuss matters in detail next year, not now. I would like to make certain suggestions.

I have read in newspapers today that one Mr. Mittal is the richest person in Europe. Sometime back we had also read that Ambani and others are the richest persons in the world. So, we can be proud of having the richest persons in the world. There is another survey by the UN. That is, India is having the largest number of people living below poverty line. We are having crores of people living below poverty line and our per capita income is deplorably lower but still

we say that the benefits of liberalization should go to the poor. Our hon. Prime Minister, who is also the author of the liberalization policy, always says that the benefits of liberalization should go to the poor. This is how it has gone to the poor!

We are discussing this at a time when unprecedented inflation is there in our country. We are discussing the Budget at a time when the price rise is un-precedent in the country. This is the situation under which we are discussing the Budget. All our expectations about the growth of GDP have failed. All our expectations with regard to price control have also failed. We are now facing a very big crisis in the economic activities. In that situation I would like to suggest something at least for the poor.

You treat the cooperative banks at par with the commercial banks. It is very unfortunate. The cooperative banks do yeomen service to the rural folk. They are doing service in the developmental activities also. Cooperative banks do not function for profit motive alone. They function for the benefits of the society. But unfortunately you are cruel enough to take away the income tax benefit which was available to them. Without any heart you have taken away the income tax benefit from them. Income tax is levied on the cooperative banks at par with the commercial banks. Is it proper? You must think about it twice before you get the authorisation. Now there were States like Kerala whose revenue came from sales tax. Our 40 per cent of revenue came from sales tax. What is the position now? Since ours is a consumer State, the Value Added Tax will not help us. Kerala State will not get much from Value Added Tax. But you did not compensate the State the loss incurred by the State on account of foregoing the income from the sales tax. It is a poor country and ours is a consumer State. So, Value Added Tax will not help us. That is another aspect which you will have to bear in mind.

There is another thing. Through the National Savings Scheme, our poor women and poor people in village folk had some earning. You have cut that interest rate. You have slashed the interest rate. I do not know for what purpose. The National Saving Scheme was for the benefit of power people and women. They were getting some income and also the senior citizens were benefited by the National Savings Scheme. You always say that the benefit should go to the poor but at the same time, you are taking away the interest accrued through the National Savings Scheme.

Another point is regarding pension benefits. You have taken away all the benefits. You have taken away the interest of the senior citizens. Is it proper? In Kerala, there is one Kudumbasri Project which includes self-employment scheme for women and everything is there. But you are discouraging it. All these banks are not prepared to give loans to the Kudumbasri Project. Is it proper? Is it the way that you are giving benefits through liberalisation to the poor people? You are cutting the benefits of Kudumbasri Project. All the scheduled banks refuse to give it loan. They would give loans to some other people and not to the Kudumbasri Project which is meant for poor people. Is it the way the benefits should go to the poor man? That is what is happening in our State. You are also putting the money of the pension scheme into the capital market but with what result? The poor man will be put to starvation.

Now the recommendations of the Sixth Pay Commission are to be implemented. You have appointed a committee. The States will be put to difficulties when it is implemented. The States like Tamil Nadu, Kerala and others will find it difficult to cope with the situation because the State service people will demand respective increments in their emoluments. Can you help them? Is there any provision for this?

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Shri Radhakrishnanji, you asked for two minutes but you have taken six minutes.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: So you please keep in mind that you will keep a very vigilant attitude towards this matter.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Shri Radhakrishnanji, you asked for two minutes but you have taken six minutes. Please conclude now.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: I am concluding. Please bear in mind that you do not deprive these poor people of the benefits which they are getting.

With these words, I conclude.

SHRIMATI K. RANI (Rasipuram): Madam, it is my proud privilege to participate in the discussion on the Finance Bill, 2008-09. I thank the hon. Finance Minister for allocating more money for the rural development, education, health, drinking water facilities, for the studies of students who belong to Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe communities, for the agricultural farmers, etc.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Shrimati Rani, please wait. Hon. Members, it is 6 o'clock now and I have a list of four more speakers. If the House agrees, the time could be extended by half-an-hour.

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: Yes.

18.00 hrs.

SHRIMATI K. RANI: Madam, Bharat Nirman is a flagship programme of the UPA Government. I am pleased to state that under the Rural Electrification programme of this Government 42 villages are being electrified each day.

Education and health are the twin pillars of this country. This Government has made huge allocations for these two sectors and has laid stress to improve upon the quality of education and health of the people. The hon. Finance Minister has allocated 20 per cent more of the amount than what was allocated last year for these two sectors. Education is very important for people belonging to the Minorities, and OBCs. Those belonging to these categories and want to come up in their lives cannot afford money for good education. The hon. Finance Minister also has allocated funds for scholarships to be awarded to the students belonging to the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes. Also, this Government is extending 27 per cent reservation for the students belonging to these categories in higher and professional education. This Government is making a good effort to establish *Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas* for students belonging to the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes. In fact, this Government has proposed to establish 20 such vidyalayas in places where there is a larger concentration of people belonging to these communities. The hon. Finance Minister has allocated a sum of Rs. 130 crore for this purpose.

Drinking water is a problem all over the country, especially in the Southern States. To tackle this problem of drinking water, our Government has proposed to set up a de-salination plant in Chennai and for this programme the hon. Finance Minister has allocated a sum of Rs. 300 crore.

Madam, agriculture is the backbone of this country. If agriculture will grow, then our economy also will grow. So, the Government has come up with an elaborate scheme in this Budget and has allocated a sum of Rs. 60,000 crore. This scheme has been devised to see that our farmers do not commit suicide and lead a better life. Never in the political history of any country has such a thing ever happened in such a grand scale.

Madam, poultry is a very popular avocation in my constituency. Most of the poultry farmers have taken loans from their sources and I would request the hon. Minister to waive of the interest component of the loan for the two years and this would help the poultry owners a great deal. I would also like to request the Government about the fact poultry should be accorded the status as given to the agriculture sector and to the industrial sector.

Madam, I may point out here that hon. Members have raised issues about price rise of essential commodities. The Government is not a silent spectator of this. I am concerned about the common man and the poor man of this country, but I am sure steps have been taken to tackle this problem.

With these words, I support the Finance Bill.

DR. K.S. MANOJ (Alleppey): Sir, the Preamble to our Constitution envisages that ours is a socialist and a democratic country. Our policies, or even the Budget should be in line with that objective of attaining a socialist nature. But from what we see in our policies and what we find in the Budget, it is unlikely that we would achieve that objective of having a socialist nature in our country. Nothing has been done to achieve that. We have heard the other day the hon. Finance Minister saying that we have achieved a 8.8 per cent growth rate in the last Plan period. But that growth has not percolated to the *aam admi.* There is a widening gap between the rich and the poor.

The minimum daily wage of an average Indian citizen is very low whereas the corporate bodies, the professionals and others who are working in the IT sector are enormously paid. The minimum wages of the poor man should be fixed at a little bit higher level and, in the National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme itself, the minimum wage should be fixed at a higher level.

In the Budget, it is boasted that Rs. 60,000 crores have been allocated for the waiver of loans by farmers, and nearly 3 crore farmers are benefited by this Rs. 60,000 crore. This is a very paltry amount compared to the benefit given to the big multinational companies. In the last Session, I got a reply from the hon. Finance Minister that the tax exemption as regards dividend given to big companies and the tax holidays given to them amount to nearly Rs. 50,000 crores. And compared to the number of persons benefited by this Rs. 60,000 crores, I can say that it is a very minimum amount. The number of farmers benefited by that Rs. 60,000 crore is three crore. Madam, on comparison, you may yourself find that the benefits to the poor farmers amounts to a very meagre amount. But the UPA Government is boasting that they are giving Rs. 60,000 crore to the poor farmers.

In the Budget itself, we find that there is no hike in the corporate tax. They are left free. There is some hike in the direct taxation.

As regards tax exemption, there is a proposal to give exemption in the excise duty for the drugs treating AIDS or HIV patients. I would suggest one thing here. India is becoming the capital of diabetics. A good number of patients

are taking insulin. I would suggest that the excise duty exemption should be given to insulin also.

Since hon. Member, Shri Varkala Radhakrishnan has mentioned some points, I would not like to repeat them. As regards the waiver scheme, in the Vidarbha region, agricultural loans are waived off through a special package by restructuring or rescheduling of loans by banks since 2004 and 2006. Recently, in Kerala, the cooperative banks have formed a separate scheme for the waiver which enables them to repay the amount. And many have repaid the amount. This waiver announced in Budget should be applicable to those who have paid the amount to the banks also.

Regarding the employees provident fund and pension, the employees are getting a very meagre amount as pension. Minimum pension is Rs. 230 and the maximum pension is Rs. 500. In the regulations of EPF, 1995, there was a scheme for commutation. As per that scheme, after 100 months of commutation, they will get the basic amount. But this is not being reinstituted now. They should be given the actual amount after commutation. Since already 100 months have been completed, they should get the actual amount as pension.

In States, there are State Finance Corporations. These State Finance Corporations are giving loans to Small, Micro and Medium Enterprises. But they are getting re-financed from SIDBI. So, the rate of interest is nearly 14 to 15 per cent. If the Government could finance the KSFC directly, they can finance the SMEs at a very low rate. Most of these SMEs are operating under self-employment schemes. So, the Government should consider financing them directly or if it is through SIDBI, the State Finance Corporation should give it at a lower rate of interest.

As regards co-operative banks, section 80(p) should not be made applicable to them. In scheduled banks, tax exemption is given for depositors for a five year period. This facility should be extended to the depositors of the cooperative banks also.

Lastly, regarding the Central Sales Tax, the revenue loss to the States, as a result of reduction in Sales Tax from three per cent to two percent, should be adequately compensated by giving them sufficient funds.

There should be a Price Stabilisation Fund for the agricultural produces. Now, it is not there. The Minimum Support Price and the Price Stabilisation Fund should be there for agricultural produces.

With these few words, I conclude my speech.

SHRIMATI JHANSI LAKSHMI BOTCHA (Bobbili): Thank you Madam Chairman. I rise to support the Finance Bill 2008 presented by the hon. Finance Minister.

I congratulate the hon. Finance Minister for achieving the tax to GDP ratio to 12 per cent by the end of 2007-08 from 9.2 per cent during 2003-04. This was made possible as we set to achieve the Budget Estimates of indirect taxes and exceed the Budget Estimates of direct taxes.

I welcome the indirect tax proposal on customs duties, excise and service tax and direct tax proposals on income tax. The increase in basic exemption limit for personal income tax limit is a welcome step. This will definitely lead to broad tax base and voluntary compliance will also increase. It is a welcome step of reducing customs duty on steel, melting scrap and aluminium scrap from five per cent to nil. Reduction in customs duty on certain specified life saving drugs from ten per cent to five per cent is also welcome.

I congratulate the hon. Finance Minister for exempting the anti-AIDS drugs from excise duty.

As India is an IT hub, I would request the hon. Finance Minister to withdraw hike in the excise duty from eight to twelve per cent on packaged software.

I also welcome the service tax dispute resolution scheme as announced in the Finance Bill 2008-09. As service sector is poised to become major revenue earning sector for the Government, this scheme will help in resolving the disputes and speed up service tax collection.

Excluding the crèche facilities, sponsorship of an employee-sportsperson, organizing sports events for employees and guest houses from the purview of the FBT, the Fringe Benefit Tax, is a welcome step. The FBT on ESoP has been made taxable from the date of investing. In this connection, I suggest it should be from the date of allotment since share prices move up and down from the date of investing to allotment and employees do not get shares on the date of investing.

Granting tax holiday for new hospitals outside the urban agglomeration will help in improving health infrastructure in the country. New tax holiday for new hotels to be established in district having "World Heritage Sites" will definitely boost tourism in the coming ten to fifteen years.

While agreeing to the hon. Finance Minister's tax proposal, I would suggest that the Minister should take the passing of the Finance Bill in the House as another opportunity to streamline the tax base of direct and indirect taxes to tackle the price rise and inflation. The new proposals should bring down the prices of essential commodities, petroleum products, steel and cement.

[Shrimati Jhansi Lakshmi Botcha]

I want to offer some suggestions for the kind consideration of the hon. Finance Minister.

I also thank the hon. Finance Minister for focusing on gender budgeting cells taking the total number to 54. Now, Rs. 11,146 crore has been provided for 100 per cent women-specific schemes and Rs. 16,202 crore for schemes where, at least, 30 per cent is for women-specific programmes. With the provision of this amount, I am sure, the lot of the women would improve in the hinterland.

The Janashree Bima Yojana for 30 lakh SHGs credit linked to banks, together with the Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana would definitely herald a new deal for women by providing them life and health cover. I thank the hon. Minister of Finance for paying attention to SHGs women. Here I would request the hon. Minister of Finance to exempt from tax net all products produced by SHG groups for at least 20 years from the present seven year period. This will go a long way in promoting entrepreneurship in women especially in rural areas.

So far as agricultural credit is concerned, I suggest to the hon. Minister of Finance to open more Regional Rural Banks. For 2008-09, the hon. Minister of Finance has set a target of Rs. 2,80,000 crore. I am sure he will achieve it. If necessary, he can always come to the House for providing additional budget for this purpose. Regarding short-term crop loans, the interest rate of seven per cent per annum, if possible should be brought down to four per cent.

The hon. Minister of Finance is going to introduce a crop insurance scheme for commercial crops, tea, chilli, ginger, etc., from next year. Due to unseasonal rains in Andhra Pradesh and other parts of the country, farmers have suffered huge losses. I wonder whether it would be possible for the hon. Minister of Finance to advance the scheme in the current year itself.

Regarding the Public Distribution System, the Government wants to deliver subsidies to the target group through smart cards. It is a smart move. They will introduce, on a pilot basis in Haryana and Chandigarh. After it is successful, the Government can think of introducing it in all over the country. I request the hon. Minister of Finance to strengthen the PDS, with his tax exemption proposals to this sector.

Thanks to the hon. Minister of Finance for providing Backward Regions Grant Fund. Please allot funds in the urban areas as rural areas have already been allotted funds. So, please allot funds to the urban areas and to small and medium towns where there is a concentration of more developmental activities.

So far as Industrial Training Institutes are concerned, the hon. Minister of Finance has set apart Rs. 750 crore for upgrading 300 more ITIs. In this connection, I would like to point out that our ITIs are offering skill training in 30 trades whereas in China they are offering training in 300 trades. The concerned Ministry needs to go into this; and if necessary depute some experts to study the number of trades that country is offering. Then, we can think of taking that country's help.

Before I conclude, I want to say a few words about inflation. With inflation continuing to torment the Government, the hon. Minister of Finance has initiated a probe against the steel and cement cartels. We may soon see temporary drop in prices as the industry and the Government cooperate with each other to ease the inflation figure. I think, we are reacting in panicky to food prices and the panic is justified as food takes up almost 75 per cent of the available income for 50 per cent of the population. According to some experts, even if prices drop in May and June, it may not solve the problem. Food prices will remain a crucial issue for the Government. But there is a good message from the third advance estimates of food production. The aggregate production will touch a record high of 227.32 million tonnes, 10 MT more than the final estimate for last year. Domestic production of the two principal staples, rice and wheat, are expected to set new records. Wheat production estimated at 76.78 MT while rice output, at 95.68 MT. Several other crops of maize, pulses, tur and urad are also estimated to touch new highs. Thanks to the UPA Government for higher production, favourable weather conditions, good monsoon and distribution of quality seeds. I am sure these results would definitely dent the inflation and provide relief to the common and middle classes. The Government should come down heavily on hoarders who are creating artificial scarcity to effect inflationary pressures.

I congratulate the Government for achieving the record output. I am sure the GDP growth rate would hover around nine per cent. I look forward to pat the Government again for its all round development.

Thank you once again. Madam, I whole-heartedly support the Finance Bill.

[Translation]

SHRI HARIBHAU RATHOD (Yavatmal): Madam, today we have discussion on the finance bill for the year 2008-09. Several honourable members have given their suggestions

regarding loan waiver, I will also give some suggestion in this regard, I will not consume much time. ...*(Interruptions)*

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Mr. Rathod please conclude our speech by suggesting some points.

SHRI HARIBHAU RATHOD: Shri Sharad Pawar visited Maharashtra. There he had said about the loan waiver that there could be no change in it. When I raised the matter in Parliament yesterday, the Finance Minister said that he was considering some changes in the criteria.

Madam Chairman, there is much scope of improvement in it. Honourable Sonia Gandhiji while visiting Maharashtra had also advocated it. So, there is confusion among the farmers. Now, two months have already passed but no instructions have been issued in this regard. After one month, the farmers will seek loans for fertilizers, seeds and other articles for using in farming but as there is no such arrangement in this regard, hence there is situation of confusion.

Madam, we always demand that loans meant for farming be available at the rate of four percent but the same is not done. If NABARD gives loans at the rate of five percent, the interest rate in Maharashtra goes up to 13-14 percent. There, the State adds three percent as expenditure from its side. In this way the district Central Co-operative banks also add three per cent. Afterward, the societies add 2-3 percent more expenditure and it rises to 13.-14 percent. There should be some check of Central Government. The Central Government should ensure that the loans to the farmers be given at the minimum rate of interest. Of course, this is a system but the State Government, cooperative banks and societies are imposing 3-3 percent interest on it. It is not justified. In this way they are exploiting the farmers. This must be stopped.

Madam, the second thing, I want to mention is about minimum support price. The minimum support price for the paddy is Rs. 650 per quintal while for wheat it is Rs. 1000 per quintal. Earlier there was very little price difference between these two foodgrains. For example if the paddy price was Rs. 650 per quintal, the price of wheat would have been Rs. 700 per quintal, but now there is much difference between the prices.

Madam, cotton is grown on a large scale in our area. The cotton growing farmers, whether they belong to Andhra Pradesh, or Karnataka or Maharashtra, only they are committing suicide. We have been demanding that custom duty on import of cotton should be increased but why the Government do not pay heed to it is not clear. If the same is increased, there will be a tremendous effect of it. The farmer will get justified price for their production and can take loans at justified rate of interest. All the things will be possible if only the Government pay special attention towards them.

Madam, I have a suggestion about price rise. Earlier we often used to say – Congress is with common man, but now Congress is with price rise. I want to put only one suggestion and want to tell that earlier onion put us to cry, but now the prices of all the things ranging from wheat to steel have increased. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI MADHUSUDAN MISTRY (Sabarkantha): At present, we have discussion on the finance bill and not on price-rise.

SHRI HARIBHAU RATHOD: There is no difference in price and finance. Your policies have put the country in this condition. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Nothing will go on record.

...*(Interruptions)**

[Translation]

SHRI HARIBHAU RATHOD: The price rise is due to your faulty policies. You will face the consequence later on. I have told you that we have lost power due to rise in price of onion. The prices of all the things have increased much during your tenure. ...*(Interruptions)*

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Mr. Haribhau Rathod, the onion does not kill anyone.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI HARIBHAU RATHOD: All right, Madam, I want to say one important thing. We always talk about scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, OBC and minority. I have been talking about denotified nomadic tribes for the last four years. The population of the section is 15 crores in the country. Hon'ble Jawahar Lal Nehru made separate provisions for those people. But the budget had become extinct since 1957. I am repeatedly saying it but nothing has been done. This has come under your appraisal and the planning department has also recommended that the very section should be focused but no provision has been made for the same in the budget.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Now, speak on the last point and conclude your speech.

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* Not recorded.

SHRI HARIBHAU RATHOD: The last point is that you only sell dreams to the poor. I have carried last year budget speech with me. It says that you are doing much for the disabled persons but the provision of Rs. 1800 crores have not been made for them so far and the Finance Minister has not mentioned about them in his budget. Please stop selling dreams. Mere selling dreams to the poor will not serve the purpose, there are many poor people in the country. BPL cards have not been issued to crores of people.

Thanks for giving me the time.

SHRI HARISINH CHAVDA (Banaskantha): Madam Chairman, I rise to support the Bill moved by the Minister of Finance.

The hon'ble Minister has taken commendable steps for the farmers, ladies and senior citizens. Today in the morning, I was coming by train. The train had stopped at the station before New Delhi Station. There, I saw 2-4 small children who were picking up and eating waste food that was thrown by the passengers from the train. What arrangement has been made for them? Whether this problem will be solved from this Budget? Once, I had gone to Baroda where one morning, I saw some people were eating out of the waste food that was thrown from a hotel. Unless this situation is changed in the country, this Budget is meaningless. The Government should evolve such a situation in the country that after independence not even a single person is forced to eat waste food.

Why the Government had to give Rs. 60 thousand crores to farmers, why we have to do so? Presently, farmers are getting remunerative price for their produce and the farmers are happy, however some people are unhappy that the market price of wheat has gone to thousand rupees. If the irrigation water, fertilizer and pesticides are provided free of cost to the farmers then the farmers will not require any Government's assistance. If every facility is provided to them then they will not need single paisa, they will not require even loan. We have to make such situation in the country. We should be helpful to farmers.

Pandit Jawahar Lai Nehru ji had said that we would bring socialism by adopting a socialistic pattern, however, today the Government is providing assistance to hoteliers and industrialists. These hoteliers who are already rich and influential are being made richer and richer by the Government. What we have to do? Today what is the condition of farmers, Harijans, Dalits and poor people in rural areas? Unless we think about the poor people and their condition is not improved, our independence is useless, there is no meaning of this independence. Such arrangement should be evolved in the country where everybody may live with dignity. Presently, our social system is such that the son of a collector will be a collector and son of a peon will become a peon, what will he do. If anyone is sick then where will he go? Doctor will demand two lakh rupees for operation. From where will be bring that much of money, he will have to die. Those who have money will live. It is the responsibility of the Government that not a single person should suffer. The Budget should be such that it may provide all type of facility to every citizen of the country and adverse condition may not arise. The children of every poor person should get the education facility that is available to the child of the President. The type of facility that is available to the children of Dhirubhai Ambani and the hon'ble President should be made available to the children of poorest person of this country. As long as these measures are not implemented, we are not independent. What do we do, how is our education, what kind of people are coming out from our educational system, who are involved in 'Kabootarbaji', how is our education, what will we do in the country, what business do we develop, such thing would not work in the country.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: You please speak on the Finance Bill.

SHRI HARISINH CHAVDA: Madam Chairman, this is the foundation of the Finance Bill. Unless we ponder over all these things and will not take decision in this regard, it will not work, Certainly there will be addiction. We should impose restriction on those factories which produce Gutkha etc., these factories should be closed. Distillery where bottling of liquor is done should also be closed then everything will be all right. So, I would like to submit that the provision should be made in such a way, the administration should be such that even he poorest of the poor people of this country may also be happy.

[English]

MADAM CHAIRMAN: The time is 6.30 P.M. now. One more speaker is there. Can we extend the time by five minutes? So, he is our last speaker now – Shri Tufani Saroj.

[Translation]

SHRI TUFANI SAROJ (Saidpur): The budget has been presented by hon'ble Minister of Finance and the UPA, by announcing the loan waiver scheme for the farmers is busy in slogan shouting and publicizing about the announcement all over the country, however, it will be clear in future as to how many farmers will be benefited by this scheme and

how many farmers will be deprived of its benefits. The basic problems of farmers have been discussed in this budget not only today but several times in the House. Farmers are continuously committing suicide. Why they are doing so – because farmers are not getting remunerative price of their produce. He is spending seven hundred rupees to produce one quintal of wheat. He is not getting even fifty percent profit out of it. In order to get 50% profit the Government should announce the support price of wheat and paddy at the rate of at least fourteen to fifteen hundred rupees per quintal. Today farmers are avoiding agriculture profession. He is not interested in agriculture.

Madam, if you go to villages today you will find that nobody is ready to marry their children in the families of even those farmers who have 20 acres of land. People are preferring to marry their children in the family of even small businessmen but the farmed who have 20 acres of land fail to find brides for their sons. The Government didn't pay attention as to what support price should be given to farmers for their produce, so that they may tend towards agriculture. We should keep in mind that the development of our country depends on agriculture. If the farmers are economically sound only then the country will be strong.

The farmers somehow used to construct their houses by saving their hard earned money. Few months back the rate of iron was Rs. 2700 per quintal but today it is Rs. 4,800 to Rs. 5000/- per quintal. There is no possibility of decline in its rate. Today farmers are not able to construct their houses. Farmer is facing this problem.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: You please give your suggestions in points as to what the hon'ble Finance Minister should do.

SHRI TUFANI SAROJ: The hon'ble Finance Minister should reduce the prices of iron. The price of iron should be reduced to Rs. 2700 that was the price of iron four months back thereby reducing the increased amount. The support price of wheat and paddy should be paid at the rate of Rs. 2000 to the farmers so that they may tend to agriculture and may not shun it and continue doing farming. The problem of the country will be solved only when farmers will do farming, otherwise problem will keep on increasing.

With these words, I conclude and extend my thanks to you for giving me time to speak.

[English]

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Now the discussion on the Finance Bill is over and the Finance Minister will reply tomorrow. The House stands adjourned to meet tomorrow at 11.00 am.

18.33 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Tuesday, April 29, 2008/Vaisakha 9, 1930 (Saka).

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