

LOK SABHA DEBATES

(English Version)

Tenth Session
(Fourteenth Lok Sabha)



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LOK SABHA DEBATES

LOK SABHA

Monday, April 30, 2007/Vaisakha 10, 1929 (Saka)

*The Lok Sabha met at Eleven
of the Clock.*

(Mr. SPEAKER in the Chair)

[Translation]

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA (South Delhi): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have given notice for suspension of Question hour. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I will allow it at 12 noon, I will allow it. I am not minimizing the importance of it.

...*(Interruptions)*

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: I am only saying this much.

[Translation]

Please listen as to why I have given notice for suspension. Nandigram is burning again. ...*(Interruptions)* 24 persons have already been killed in Nandigram. Yesterday also three persons were killed there. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI MADHUSUDAN MISTRY (Sabarkantha): What is going on in Gujarat. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Prof. Malhotra, I will allow you.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I assure you that I will allow you. Let us go through the Question Hour.

...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI MADHUSUDAN MISTRY: What action you are taking in Gujarat. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing more will be recorded now.

...*(Interruptions)**

* Not recorded

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: We are listening, why you have stood up.

...*(Interruptions)*

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: **A situation like that of a civil war has cropped up there.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Prof. Malhotra, I am assuring you.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Do not record anything more. Q. No. 381.

...*(Interruptions)**

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down, Malhotraji, you please speak at 12 O' clock.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Nikhil Kumar to ask the Q. No. 381.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I will allow you to raise it immediately after the Question Hour.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I am requesting the hon. Members to please allow the Question Hour to go on.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY (Berhampore, West Bengal): Sir, Nandigram issue is very important. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down. I have not permitted you Mr. Chowdhury to speak.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: How can I carry on if everybody is speaking from all sides?

...*(Interruptions)*

* Not recorded

** Expunged as ordered by the Chair.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

11.02 hrs.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Nikhil Kumar, Q.No. 381.

Protection of Lions

+

*381. SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR:

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY:

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

(a) whether the carcasses of some lions/Asiatic lions/cubs were recovered recently from the lion sanctuaries in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the effective steps taken by the Union Government for the protection and conservation of lions in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) Yes, Sir. As informed by the State Government of Gujarat, carcasses of 9 lions have been found in Gir Sanctuary area during the month of March 2007. Three of the lions died of natural causes while 6 lions have been killed by the poachers.

(c) Steps taken by the Government for protection and conservation of lions in the country are as follows:

- i. Consequent upon the recent reports of incidences of poaching of lions in Gir area, the Ministry had constituted a Committee on 03.04.2007 comprising of Regional Deputy Director (Northern Region), Regional Deputy Director (Western Region) and Joint Director, Wildlife, in the Ministry, to look into the matters of protection strategies, constraints and to suggest steps for improvement to check recurrence of such incidents in future. The Committee has been asked to submit its report within a month.
- ii. State government has been requested to strengthen the field formations and intensify patrolling in and around Gir protected area.
- iii. Four Wildlife Regional Offices located at Delhi, Mumbai,

Kolkata and Chennai have been alerted for smuggling of any lion parts.

- iv. Legal protection has been provided to wild animals including lions against hunting and commercial exploitation under the provisions of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.
- v. Sensitization courses have been organized for the officers from Para-Military forces, Customs and Revenue Intelligence by Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun.
- vi. Financial and technical assistance is extended to the State government under Centrally Sponsored Scheme, viz. Development of National Parks and Sanctuaries for enhancing the capacity and infrastructure of the state for providing effective protection to wild animals including lions.
- vii. The lion has been included in Schedule I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 thereby affording maximum protection to the species. The Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 has been amended and made more stringent. The punishments in cases of offences have been enhanced. The Act also provides for forfeiture of any equipment, vehicle or weapon that are used for committing wild life offence.
- viii. Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has been empowered under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 to apprehend and prosecute wildlife offenders.

SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I thank you. It is for the first time that a Question of mine is listed at Sl. No. 1 on the list. I congratulate myself.

This is an important matter that in the space of just one month, there has been a poaching of as many as eight lions in the Gir Wildlife Sanctuary. There are two types of lions in the whole world – African and Asiatic lions. We are privileged to be the only ones to provide an abode for Asiatic lions and this is in the Gir Sanctuary. Everything possible should be done to prevent any damage being done to these lions. They face poaching from two types of people - one is criminals who make use of their teeth, their nails and even their skull and the second threat comes to them from poachers in the nearby villages because the cattle of the villagers become a target of the lions.

It is important, therefore, to prevent the poaching of these lions from both these sources because environ-

mental sources including natural resources such as our lions form an integral part of our culture and this has to be preserved. Therefore, through you, I would request the Government to let us know this fact. Has the Committee — which was appointed on 3rd April or 4th April following the incidents of poaching of eight lions in just one month — submitted its report? If it has not submitted its report, then I would request the Government to kindly let us know if there is any arrangement to prevent poaching by the villagers. Is there any proposal to put up some kind of fencing?

MR. SPEAKER: Please do not dilute the thrust of your question.

SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR: I do not want fencing around the whole sanctuary because it is just not possible, but between the sensitive villages in the said areas and the sanctuary. Why is there no such proposal?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Nikhil, you are a policeman, and a well disciplined Member of the House.

SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA: Sir, three incidents of poaching took place in the Gir areas in the month of March. The first incident was on 3rd March, the second incident was on 30th March, and the third incident was on 14th April. In all, 17 lions were found killed in the year 2007. Out of these 17 cases, eight lions were victims of poaching including three inside the National Park and Sanctuary and two outside the National Park and Sanctuary; five lions died their natural death; and four lions died due to drowning in the wells. Three cases against a few persons have been registered, and the cases are with the CB-CID of Gujarat. The Gujarat Government has suspended three personnel, namely, one Ranger and two guards in this matter.

As far as Asiatic Lions are concerned, they are confined in a small protected area in the Gir National Park and Sanctuary, and the adjoining areas. There is a fear that some adverse action, natural calamity or disease may wipe out the whole population.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member wants to know whether the report has been submitted or not.

SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA: This caused concern for the Central Government and the conservationists as there is need for second home for the lions. Hence, the Wildlife Institute of Dehradun was asked to carry out a survey, and they suggested that the Kuno-Palpur Sanctuary in Madhya Pradesh is the best suited place for translocation of these lions.

MR. SPEAKER: He wants to know about the report of the Committee appointed on 3rd April.

SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA: Sir, I am coming to that issue also. As far as the man-animal conflict is concerned, there are 59 hamlets in the protected area, and there are 14 forest-settlement villages. The population of this is around 9,000, and they are living together. As far as their involvement is concerned, the local persons are rarely caught. There are some outsiders and criminal gangs operating in this business. However, the Government is aware of the fact that the livelihood security of the persons residing in and around the National Park and Sanctuary should be ensured. Therefore, there are developmental programmes like eco-development, buffer-area management to be strengthened, etc. so that they get their livelihood secured.

On receiving reports from the Members, the Government of India has decided to appoint a Committee to go to Gir forest to assess the situation on the spot. Three persons were nominated. They were asked to submit the report within a month. Preliminary report reveals that there is a shortage of manpower. In the category of Field Staff, there are 59 vacancies. They also recommended that strict vigil should be paid on the part of the State Government.

MR. SPEAKER: I do not think you need any further information. It is a very exhaustive answer on the subject.

SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR: But the exhaustive answer fails to mention one important point. Is it necessary to have an alternative conservation forest or not for the Gir lions to see that they are not subject to any kind of epidemic? If one epidemic takes place, the entire lion population would be wiped out. That we cannot afford.

MR. SPEAKER: He has indicated an alternative site.

SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR: There is a need for another conservation camp. Is the Government thinking of shifting some of these lions to another location or not?

MR. SPEAKER: He has already stated that.

SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR: He has mentioned about the site. Is the lion population being shifted?

MR. SPEAKER: Are you going to shift the lion population to some other place?

SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA: Yes, Sir. A decision was taken in the Wildlife Board of India that hon. Minister should write to both the Chief Ministers — Gujarat and

Madhya Pradesh. Hon. Minister has written to them. We are trying to persuade them.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Adhir Chowdhury, any question?

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY: India is a signatory of many international Conventions concerning the protection of wildlife in our country but it is regrettable to note that in spite of measures, poaching of wildlife population has been continued in a rampant manner. It appears sometimes to me that we are getting wise after the event. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: We have already taken 13 minutes.

...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY: Some days back the Hon'ble Prime Minister had intervened in the matter of poaching of lions at Sariska Forest in Rajasthan, and a task force was constituted. The Task Force has made a number of recommendations but there are reports of poaching again in Gir forest in Gujarat some days back. We have information from certain sources that a gang involved in Sariska is also functioning there. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: You are going much beyond the scope of the question.

[Translation]

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY: The same gang is poaching in Gir forests. Is this the failure of the State Government since the same syndrome is working in Rajasthan and Gujarat.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: We are not utilizing the time properly.

...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY : After introducing several stringent measures it was claimed that efforts have been made to plug the loopholes in the Wild Life Protection Act, 1972. I would like to ask to how many poachers have been punished by these stringent measures.

[English]

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA): The Government is keen to protect the wildlife, though it is placed in the State List. As my

colleague put it, whether it is tiger or lion or whatever be the wild animal, poaching is taking place often for various reasons. Knowing all these things, the Members of the House are well aware that this is the first time we amended the Wildlife Protection Act wherein we have created a Wildlife Crime Control Bureau consisting of Police, Customs and other officials. They are acting as an authority under the Central Government. Whatever be the directions of the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau, State Governments are bound by it. Comprehensive measures have been taken which would very soon come into existence.

MR. SPEAKER: Not to be recorded.

...*(Interruptions)*

Inter-Linking of Rivers

*382. SHRI HITEN BARMAN: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Committee of Experts on the inter-linking of rivers has considered the recommendations of the previous Task Force on the issue;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Experts Committee on each of the recommendations of the previous Task Force alongwith the decisions taken thereon by the Committee and the Government?

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

Statement

(a) to (c) A Task Force under the Chairmanship of Shri Suresh. P. Prabhu, the then Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha) was constituted during December, 2002 on Inter Linking of Rivers (ILR). The recommendations of Task Force are annexed at Annexure I. The Task Force completed its work and submitted Action Plan-I during April, 2003 giving outline of time schedule for completion of Feasibility Reports, Detailed Project Reports, Estimated Cost, Implementation Schedule, concrete benefits and Advantages of the project. Action plan-II giving alternative options for funding and execution of the projects and suggestion on methods for cost recovery etc. was also submitted during April, 2004. Task Force on Interlinking of Rivers (TF-ILR) was wound up w.e.f. 31.12.2004 on completion of its mandated task. A Special Cell has been constituted to look after the residual routine work of the

* Not recorded

TF-ILR and for taking follow up action on the Interlinking of rivers Programme under the Ministry of Water Resources (MoWR).

MoWR has also constituted a Committee of environmentalists, social scientists and other experts on interlinking of rivers with a view to make the process of proceeding on ILR consultative on 28.12.2004. The role of Committee is advisory in nature and it is required to render its advice to the government from time to time on its terms of reference (ToR). ToR of this Committee are given at Annexure-II. Three meetings of the Committee were held on 18.01.2005, 28.10.2005 and 4.9.2006. During these meetings, experts gave various suggestions on ToR for preparation of Detailed Project Reports (DPR) & modalities for preparation of DPR of Ken - Betwa Link and on ToR for its comprehensive Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). The ToR for the preparation of DPR of Ken-Betwa link has been approved by the Government incorporating the views of the Committee of experts. Also, Ministry of Environment and Forests has conveyed its approval on the ToR for EIA studies of this link on 10th April, 2007.

Annexure-I

- (i) Task Force got prepared Terms of Reference (TOR) for preparation of Detailed Project Reports (DPR) through M/s Engineers India Ltd. (EIL) for providing guidance on norms of appraisal of individual project.
- (ii) On the issue of suitable mechanism for bringing out speedy consensus amongst the States, Task Force has suggested Meeting at the highest level to agree after the technical-level discussions with emphasis that outstanding issues should be such that they can be addressed in IPR stage.
- (iii) The TF-ILR has stated that the peninsular links are the right component to begin with. Top priority links identified by TF-ILR are:

(a) Ken-Betwa link	UP & MP
(b) Parbati-Kalisindh-Chambal link	MP & Rajasthan
- (iv) On this basis of report of IIM, Ahmedabad, a two tier institutional/organizational setup has been suggested for the implementation of the programme on Interlinking of Rivers (ILR) along with a Council – "National River Water Development Council (NRWD)" to act as the apex body of the proposed setup. The National Authority for Interlinking of Rivers (NAILR) is proposed as the first tier of the proposed two tier organizational structure and the regional or

branch offices or subsidiaries would act as "Link Instrument" and are proposed as the second tier of the organizational setup.

- (v) TF-ILR consulted ICICI for funding options. ICICI has proposed that funding should be partly through public, public-private and private inputs. The exact requirement on realistic basis will be available only after the preparation of Detailed Project Report (DPR) of all the links.

Based on NWDA studies National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) has estimated that the cost of ILR project would be Rs. 4,44,331.20 crore which is 21-22% lower than the present rough estimate. NCAER is of the view that the programme would take nearly 35-40 years. However, with use of modern construction and Remote Sensing techniques, the programme at best could be completed in 25 years.

- (vi) A Working Group on International dimensions constituted by Task Force on ILR has also suggested that at the present juncture, it is too early, to pursue the matter further at high political levels with the Nepal government. Regarding Bangladesh, it has been suggested that Dhaka will continue to raise the ILR issue in Joint River Commission and possibly in other bilateral fora. India should respond by reiterating the line taken in the JRC i.e., ILR is a concept, not a single project.

Terms of Reference:

The Committee will advise the Government on the following aspects of the proposed project.

- Environmental and socio-economic issues covered in the Term of Reference (TOR) for preparation of Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) finalized by the Task Force.
- Rehabilitation & Resettlement package for the persons affected by ILR programme keeping in view the national R&R policy and structure of the agency for its implementation.
- Additional studies needed to be carried out, to address any other concerns in the ILR Programme.
- Impacts of proposed inter basin transfer of water links on settlements, occupations and other socio-economic activities, while preparing the DPRs.
- Adoption of appropriate measures for optimum utilizations of transferred water especially in the water short basins while preparing the various DPRs.

- Consideration of the above issue/aspects so as to cover the impact studies of intra-state river linking proposals while preparing their DPRs.

SHRI HITEN BARMAN: The concept of interlinking river project is to link the Himalayan region with the peninsular region - that is to link water supply from the northern rivers to southern rivers by a chain supply system. The northern river basin has Brahmaputra, Ganga and others, which have a different character from the peninsular rivers. Those rivers change the course every year, after every one or two kilometres; and it also carries a lot of sand and silt while flowing.

MR. SPEAKER: What is your question? Please put your question.

SHRI HITEN BARMAN: I am putting the question.

The rivers of the northern basin related to international matter; the project passes through agricultural, forest and tea-garden lands. This project is not feasible, not economically viable, and it is impractical. I want to know from the Government, through you Sir, what is the quantum of land that is acquired for this project and what is the plan of rehabilitation of displaced persons.

PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ: I was preparing myself to welcome the question. The hon. Member has gone into some details which are not connected with the Main Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Quite right.

PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ: There was the recommendation of the Task Force earlier; then a Committee of Experts and Environmentalists had been constituted. The Main Question is about that Committee.

MR. SPEAKER: You are right.

PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ: As per the Himalayan component of the interlinking river project, this is not on priority. The Ministry concentrated on the peninsular situation where there is a lot of hope. Ken-Betwa portion has already been done; DPR is under preparation. Soon, the nation will hear that Ken-Betwa is progressing; and its progress will be reported. There are other situations in the peninsular region. As per the Himalayan component, there were some inherent difficulties. But I am happy that now it is possible and it will be comfortable to deal with our neighbouring countries in the north and certainly this component will also be in focus.

SHRI HITEN BARMAN: In our country, since 1951,

out of the 1300 irrigation projects, 400 are pending for want of money. May I know from the hon. Minister why the Government is not trying to complete the pending irrigation projects instead of interlinking river projects, which is likely to consume Rs.4,44,331.20 crores?

MR. SPEAKER: Is it connected with the Main Question?

PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ: This also is not connected with the Main Question. The hon. Member had raised a very important question on interlinking of rivers. The Main Question is on the Committee of Experts and Environmentalists; whether the Committee has gone into the terms of references prepared by the Task Force earlier, etc. The hon. Member asked about irrigation, which is a separate question. We have a question on AIBP today; this question can be tackled there.

[Translation]

SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to say that Rajasthan gets only one percent of total water of the country's rivers and situation of Rajasthan is worst in regard to water. I want to know from the hon'ble Minister as to which of the rivers are proposed to be connected and when this work will be completed because there is acute problem of potable water in Rajasthan.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: The Main Question is on the report of the Expert Committee.

PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ: The question of the hon. Member is specific to Rajasthan. As reported to the House, the Ministry is concentrating its attention to the priority determined by the Task Force in 2004. So, Ken-Betwa link is on top priority. Its DPR has been taken up. We are working very hard for Parbati-Kalisindh-Chambal, which is between Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. Hon. Member will be happy that apart from CWC, Secretary level exchange of documents, etc. have taken place. I wrote to the Chief Ministers personally and I talked to them that they must do something to bring some hope to this region. A draft MoU has already been exchange; it is available to both the Governments and they are committed to do something on this Parbati-Kalisindh-Chambal link.

They have the technical advice available from my Ministry. This will be the second situation of hope for the country. Yes, Rajasthan deserves better and this situation will bring a lot of hope to Rajasthan. Attention is being given on priority to Parbati-Kalisindh-Chambal link.

[Translation]

SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL: Mr. Speaker, Sir. Through you, I would like to know state that the committee has reported that.

[English]

"The Council of Applied Economic Research has estimated the cost of ILR project will be Rs.4,44,331.2 crore which is 20-21 per cent low than the present estimate."

[Translation]

I would like to state that this recommendation tries to linking of rivers through task force. My specific question is whether Maharashtra will be benefited from it? Another issue is river linking project means providing water where there is scarcity as water flows to downward States. So it may not be feasible to provide water to upper reach States as there is some sort of scarcity of water at the point of origin of the river. Therefore the committee has made some recommendations for this. Have any orders been issued or will be issued to National Water Development Authority. The Government of India had formulated a policy in 2002 for the formation of inter-state river linking project for all the States within 2 years. I would like to know about the number of States where River Linking Project has been prepared.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: This is not a debate. Put a specific question.

[Translation]

PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ: Sir, interlinking project is a very important project in itself but it is a difficult task. It is easy to say but very difficult to perform. But we have prepared 14 link feasibility report for Peninsular South and Task force was asked to accord priority to Ken-Betwa Link, Parwati-Kalisindh-Chambal link and we have added three more projects and we are giving full attention to Paninsula which include Maharashtra also. Narmada-Partapi link is between Gujarat and Maharashtra.

[English]

The MoU has now been sent to both the Governments. This is one of the five link which we have chosen for pointed attention.

SHRI ABU AYES MONDAL: I would like to know from

the hon. Minister, the present status of the rivers Manas-Sankosh-Tista-Ganga link in the Himalayan component.

MR. SPEAKER: That is not related to the Main Question.

PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ: If the hon. Member takes it up with me I can make him available that information.

SHRI A. KRISHNASWAMY: Sir, the House is very well aware that Tamil Nadu is one of the water scarcity States in the country. Our hon. Chief Minister has also raised this issue in the National Development Council meeting. It has been mentioned in the reply that there is a component to begin with all the peninsular rivers. They have also identified two rivers that is, UP-MP and MP-Rajasthan. I would like to know from the Minister why the peninsular rivers of the Southern States have not been identified. When will it be identified and implemented also.

PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ: As I was saying earlier, after the Task Force was wound up, the hon. Prime Minister took a meeting in October, 2004 and among other decisions a high-level Committee of experts was constituted to make the process of proceeding on interlinking of rivers consultative. Later the Ministry tried its hard, consulted the Committee also. We now have five priority links. They are: Ken-Betwa link in UP and MP. Parbati-Kalisindh-Chambal link in Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan, Par-Tapi-Narmada link in Gujarat and Maharashtra, Damanganga-Pinjal link in Gujarat and Maharashtra and Godavari (Polavaram)-Krishna, (Vijaywada) link involving Orissa, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Chhattisgarh. As far as Tamil Nadu is concerned, I would say that the State will also have to pursue because ultimately it is the State subject. The Ministry is prepared to consider and render assistance. Here I would like to say one thing. For instance, in Tamil Nadu, Pamba Achankovil-Vaipar link project involves Tamil Nadu and Kerala. Now, Tamil Nadu says that you do it early but Kerala has strong objection to it. So, we have to respect the aspirations of the States, their demands and their requirements. We can proceed further only when they are in agreement with each other.

MR. SPEAKER: If the hon. Minister is so concerned to go beyond the question then, all these supplementaries will come. Every State has some problem.

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Task Force was constituted in December, 2002. The Action Plans I and II were submitted to the Government in April 2003 and April 2004 respectively. Already the Task Force has identified two links. But water is a State subject. The Action Plans are already with the Government of

India, The Standing Committee on Water Resources has recommended that it should be included in the Concurrent List. On the basis of the recommendation of the Committee, has the Government of India convened any meeting of all the Chief Ministers to arrive at a consensus or not? Otherwise, how is it possible to inter-link all the rivers without any consensus of the State Chief Ministers? This is a good project because through inter-linking of rivers, you can solve unemployment problems, provide drinking water and you can also provide water for irrigation. These three objectives could be fulfilled by inter-linking of rivers.

MR. SPEAKER: Any matter relating to water resources cannot come under this question. I would not allow this. You are a senior Member. You cannot just put any question you like.

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU: I would like to know whether any meeting of the Chief Ministers has been convened or not. If it has been convened, what is the result of that?

MR. SPEAKER: This is not right. I do not think it arises out of this question. I would not allow this. So many hon. Members want to ask so many questions.

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU: Sir, the Minister is interested to give reply.

MR. SPEAKER: Do you want to answer?

PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ: Sir, I would answer very briefly.

MR. SPEAKER: The trouble is that you know everything about this subject.

PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ: Sir, the hon. Member will be pleasantly surprised to know that I am trying to organize a meeting of the hon. Chief Ministers with the hon. Prime Minister on several water related issues. The progress of the project regarding inter-linking of rivers will be reported at that time. So any Chief Minister is welcome to make any suggestion.

SHRI K. FRANCIS GEORGE: Sir, the hon. Minister has already referred to Pamba Achankovil-Vaipar link project. In fact, the Kerala Government had objected to it on the basis of the fact that lakhs of people are living in the downstream areas of Pamba-Achankovil rivers. So, it will affect their drinking water and irrigation needs. The Kerala Government had submitted two mini-hydro projects connected with these two Pamba and Achankovil rivers. This particular inter-basin transfer of water will affect lakhs and lakhs of people and it will also affect the wetland system of Kuttanad.

MR. SPEAKER: I am sorry. I disallow this question.

SHRI K. FRANCIS GEORGE: Sir, this is a matter concerning us. It is very vital. But you are not allowing this question. If we cannot raise this matter here in this House, where else can we raise it?

MR. SPEAKER: You cannot argue with the Chair.

SHRI K. FRANCIS GEORGE: Sir, none of our business can be raised in this House. We cannot even open our mouth in this House.

MR. SPEAKER: What do you meant?

SHRI K. FRANCIS GEORGE: Sir, I am not complaining against you.

MR. SPEAKER: Can you raise any subject?

SHRI K. FRANCIS GEORGE: Sir, any matter concerning our people and our State, if we stand up and open our mouth, somebody will obstruct and we are not permitted to speak at all.

MR. SPEAKER: Very well. I will ask somebody else to take the Chair today.

SHRI K. FRANCIS GEORGE: Sir, I am sorry. I am sitting down.

MR. SPEAKER: You please see what has been recorded. You please see yourself what have you said. This is a matter about a particular Expert Committee. Everybody is asking anything not connected with this question. Very well, hon. Minister could answer if it relates to the question.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Krishnadas, I do not need your help.

PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ: Sir, he is expressing his opinion on the project. It is his opinion. But we cannot discuss it here. I have said that the two States have different points of views. We will proceed further only when two states agree among themselves.

MR. SPEAKER: If I say that then all sorts of allegations are made against the Chair.

Nine supplementaries have already been put. Out of that, five of them were beyond the purview of the main Question.

SHRI K. FRANCIS GEORGE: Sir, if I have made any

allegation against the Chair, then I am sorry. I apologize for that.

MR. SPEAKER: Only one and a half question has been discussed in half an hour's time. I do not know who you are serving.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJNARAYAN BUDHOLIA: Sir, when the hon. Chief Ministers of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh signed an agreement to link Ken-Betwa rivers, under the interlinking of rivers plan, there was an all round euphoria in both the States, with the expectation that it would benefit both the States. However, experts expressed the view that interlinking of these rivers may cause severe loss due to floods and droughts in Banda, Hamirpur and Mahoba districts of Uttar Pradesh. I would like to know the stand of the hon. Minister on this regard. Also, I would like to know when the interlinking work of Ken and Betwa rivers will begin and when it will be completed and what is its estimated cost.

PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ: Sir, I would like to inform the hon. Member that Ken-Betwa is a successful Project. Both the States have reached an agreement and terms of reference have been finalised, which is a very difficult task. DPR is going to be prepared. Ken-Betwa would be the first project to interlink two rivers. It would provide relief to both Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh. It is the first project, the DPR of which is under process. It would take another one year since preparation of DPR is a very difficult work. Its terms of reference have been finalised. The Committee has done a very good work. At present, the environmental aspect has been addressed. Because, in such projects taking environmental aspect into consideration is very important. The terms of reference in this regard have been approved by the Environment and Forests Ministry and received. The Environment and Forests Ministry wrote to us on 17th April that linking of Ken and Betwa rivers would solve the irrigation problem in Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh giving much relief.

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the debate regarding inter-linking of rivers has been going on for a pretty long time. During the NDA regime, a committee was constituted under the chairmanship of Shri Suresh Prabhu. It had received numerous proposals, which have been included in the annexure. Mr. Speaker, Sir, after going through this paper, it seems the objective of the Union Government to inter-link the rivers would not be accomplished unless the talks with Nepal and Bangladesh are successful. The hon. Minister stated that he has written

to the Chief Ministers to work on it at their own levels. Some States like West Bengal, Bihar, Assam and Uttar Pradesh experience both floods and droughts. In pursuance of letter of the hon. Minister, the Chief Minister of Bihar has prepared a separate proposal to inter-link rivers in Bihar. Through you, I would like to know whether the Union Government would extend financial help to Bihar to assist the State in implementing the proposal prepared by it so as to interlink the rivers in Bihar?

PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ: Sir, the task force completed its work on 31st December, 2004. It also prepared the terms of reference and also outlined the future course of action. In it, the Task Force accorded priority to linking of Ken-Betwa and Parvati-Kalisindh-Chambal link, as it was feasible. Hence, our attention was paid to it. Later, the Ministry added three more links. Regarding your concern for the Himalayan component in the North, he would be happy to know that I had been to Bhutan and Nepal has also invited me.

Regarding the issue of financial assistance raised by him, I would like to inform that we are yet to receive the proposals from Bihar. Shri Jai Prakashji is concentrating on this aspect.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Q. No. 383 - Shri Vijay Kumar Khandelwal - *not present*.

Shri Kailash Meghwal - *not present*.

Q. No. 384 - Shri Rayapati Sambasiva Rao - *not present*.

Shri Ganesh Singh - *not present*.

Q. No. 385 - Shrimati Kalpna Ramesh Narhire - *not present*.

Shri Srichand Kriplani - *not present*.

Q. No. 386 - Shri Kashiram Rana - *not present*.

Shrimati Sangeeta Kumari Singh Deo - *not present*.

Q. No. 387 - Shri Ravi Prakash Verma - *not present*.

Shri Sugrib Singh - *not present*.

Q. No. 388 - Shri Dharmendra Pradhan - *not present*.

Shri Kiren Rijju - *not present*.

Q. No. 389 - Shri Chengara Surendran - *not present*.

Q. No. 390 - Shri L. Rajagopal - *not present*.

Q. No. 391 - Shrimati P. Satheedevi - *not present*.

Q. No. 392 - Dr. Satyanarayan Jatiya.

We will have a lot of time for supplementaries on this Question.

Are we not inviting some critical comments from the people of India?

[Translation]

Items Distributed under PDS

*392. DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA:
SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE:

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

(a) the details regarding foodgrains and other items distributed under Public Distribution System (PDS), Targetted Public Distribution System (TPDS) and Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) during the last three months, alongwith the quantum thereof, month-wise and State-wise;

(b) the number of families covered under the said schemes alongwith the number out of those that were actually benefited from this distribution during the said period, State-wise; and

(c) the Central Issue Price and the final selling price of each of the said commodities during the said period, State-wise?

[English]

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) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) Statements on quantum of allocation of foodgrains, sugar and subsidized kerosene oil (SKO) for the

months of January, February and March, 2007 month-wise and State-wise are enclosed as Annexe I, II, III, IV and V. Allocation of the Subsidised Kerosene Oil (SKO) is made by Central Government to different States/UTs on a quarterly basis for distribution under TPDS.

(b) The total number of families as per Planning Commission's poverty estimates of 1993-94 and Registrar General's population projection (as on 1.3.2000) were: Above Poverty Line-11.52 crore; Below Poverty Line- 4.02 crore; Antyodaya Anna Yojana- 2.50 crore totalling to 18.04 crore households. The number of actual beneficiaries depends upon the quantum of offtake of foodgrains and other items and their distribution through the FPSs to the beneficiaries by the State/UT Governments.

(c) The statements of Central Issue, Price and Issue Price of foodgrains under TPDS for BPL and APL families in the states are enclosed as Annexe VI and VII.

The foodgrains issued to the beneficiaries under AAY are at the rate of Rs.2/- per kg. for wheat and Rs.3/- per kg. for rice. The States/UTs are required to bear the distribution cost and make available foodgrains to the beneficiaries at the above price fixed by the Government of India.

The retail issue price of levy sugar under TPDS in the country is Rs. 13.50 per Kg. since 1.3.2002.

PDS kerosene oil is being subsidized by the Central Government and the PSU Oil Companies by about Rs.16 per litre. While the oil companies determine the prices of PDS kerosene up to the storage depot, the respective State Governments fix the final retail selling price to the end consumer. Presently, the depot price applicable for Delhi market is Rs.8356 per Kilo Litre and the retail selling price at Delhi is Rs. 9.09 per litre.

Annexure-I

State-Wise details of the wheat allocated under Targetted Public Distribution System (Including AAY)

(in thousand tonnes)

S.No.	State/UT	January, 2007				February, 2007				March, 2007			
		AAY	BPL	APL	Total	AAY	BPL	APL	Total	AAY	BPL	APL	Total
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1	Andhra Pradesh	0.000	0.000	2.754	2.754	0.000	0.000	2.754	2.754	0.000	0.000	2.754	2.754
2	Arunachal Pradesh	0.000	0.256	0.530	0.786	0.000	0.256	0.530	0.786	0.000	0.256	0.530	0.786

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
3	Assam	0.000	0.000	18.697	18.697	0.000	0.000	18.697	18.697	0.000	0.000	18.697	18.697
4	Bihar	21.004	50.308	1.034	72.346	21.004	50.308	1.034	72.346	33.788	37.524	1.034	72.346
5	Chhattisgarh	0.000	2.610	3.104	5.714	0.000	2.610	3.104	5.714	0.000	2.610	3.104	5.714
6	Delhi	1.388	8.660	18.346	28.394	1.388	8.660	18.346	28.394	1.388	8.660	18.346	28.394
7	Goa	0.000	0.000	0.201	0.0201	0.000	0.000	0.201	0.201	0.000	0.000	0.201	0.201
8	Gujarat	15.373	21.377	6.402	43.152	15.373	21.377	6.402	43.152	15.373	21.377	6.402	43.152
9	Haryana	10.235	11.591	7.421	29.247	10.235	11.591	7.421	29.247	10.235	11.591	7.421	29.247
10	Himachal Pradesh	2.957	1.153	6.748	10.858	2.957	1.153	6.748	10.858	2.957	1.153	6.748	10.858
11	Jammu and Kashmir	1.762	4.181	11.193	17.136	1.762	4.181	11.193	17.136	1.762	4.181	11.193	17.136
12	Jharkhand	9.921	15.289	1.375	26.585	9.921	15.289	1.375	26.585	9.921	15.289	1.375	26.585
13	Karnataka	7.282	11.712	7.734	26.728	7.282	11.712	7.734	26.728	7.282	11.712	7.734	26.728
14	Kerala	0.000	6.963	11.777	18.740	0.000	6.963	11.777	18.740	0.000	6.963	11.777	18.740
15	Madhya Pradesh	46.179	61.510	4.740	112.429	46.179	61.510	4.740	112.429	46.179	61.510	4.740	112.429
16	Maharashtra	35.205	82.299	5.154	122.658	35.205	82.299	5.154	122.658	35.205	82.299	5.154	122.658
17	Manipur	0.000	0.106	0.500	0.606	0.000	0.106	0.500	0.606	0.000	0.106	0.500	0.606
18	Meghalaya	0.000	0.000	0.430	0.430	0.000	0.000	0.430	0.430	0.000	0.000	0.430	0.430
19	Mizoram	0.000	0.000	0.624	0.624	0.000	0.000	0.624	0.624	0.000	0.000	0.624	0.624
20	Nagaland	0.326	0.517	1.873	2.716	0.326	0.5171	1.873	2.716	0.326	0.517	1.873	2.716
21	Orissa	0.000	0.000	7.793	7.793	0.000	0.000	7.793	7.793	0.000	0.000	7.793	7.793
22	Punjab	3.904	5.912	1.306	11.122	3.904	5.912	1.306	11.122	5.041	4.775	1.306	11.122
23	Rajasthan	31.410	35.735	16.959	84.104	31.410	35.735	16.9591	84.104	31.410	35.735	16.959	84.104
24	Sikkim	0.000	0.000	0.245	0.245	0.000	0.000	0.245	0.245	0.000	0.000	0.245	0.245
25	Tamil Nadu	0.000	0.000	3.783	3.783	0.000	0.000	3.783	3.783	0.000	0.000	3.783	3.783
26	Tripura	0.000	0.000	1.337	1.337	0.000	0.000	1.337	1.337	0.000	0.000	1.337	1.337
27	Uttaranchal	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.582	4.043	1.586	7.191
28	Uttar Pradesh	47.156	75.862	1.451	124.469	47.156	75.862	1.451	124.469	47.156	75.862	1.451	124.469
29	West Bengal	22.716	49.758	49.040	121.514	22.716	49.758	49.040	121.514	22.716	49.758	49.040	121.514
30	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	0.021	0.061	0.247	0.329	0.021	0.061	0.247	0.329	0.021	0.061	0.247	0.329
31	Chandigarh	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
32	Dadar and Nagar Haveli	0.013	0.016	0.015	0.044	0.013	0.016	0.015	0.044	0.013	0.016	0.015	0.044
33	Daman and Diu	0.005	0.007	0.000	0.012	0.005	0.007	0.000	0.012	0.005	0.007	0.000	0.012
34	Lakshadweep	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
35	Pondicherry	0.000	0.000	0.100	0.100	0.000	0.000	0.100	0.100	0.000	0.000	0.100	0.100
Total		256.857	445.883	192.913	895.653	256.857	445.883	192.913	895.653	272.360	436.005	194.479	902.844

Annexure-II

State-wise details of the rice allocated under Targetted Public Distribution System (including AAY)

(in thousand tonnes)

S.No.	State/UT	January, 2007				February, 2007				March, 2007			
		AAY	BPL	APL	Total	AAY	BPL	APL	Total	AAY	BPL	APL	Total
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1	Andhra Pradesh	54.524	87.674	176.089	318.287	54.524	87.674	176.089	318.287	54.524	87.674	176.089	318.287
2	Arunachal Pradesh	1.331	1.871	4.474	7.676	1.331	1.871	4.474	7.676	1.331	1.871	4.474	7.676
3	Assam	24.518	39.725	57.467	121.710	24.518	39.725	57.467	121.710	24.518	39.725	57.467	121.710
4	Bihar	31.507	125.497	91.350	248.354	31.507	125.497	91.350	248.354	31.507	125.497	91.350	248.354
5	Chhattisgarh	25.162	37.864	61.005	124.031	25.162	37.864	61.005	124.031	25.162	37.864	61.005	124.031
6	Delhi	0.555	3.712	24.913	29.180	0.555	3.712	24.913	29.180	0.555	3.712	24.913	29.180
7	Goa	0.509	0.455	6.664	7.628	0.509	0.455	6.664	7.628	0.509	0.455	6.664	7.628
8	Gujarat	12.967	24.487	88.079	125.533	12.967	24.487	88.079	125.533	12.967	24.487	88.079	125.533
9	Haryana	0.000	5.790	24.770	30.560	0.000	5.790	24.770	30.560	0.000	5.790	24.770	30.560
10	Himachal Pradesh	3.942	2.074	16.144	22.160	3.942	2.074	16.144	22.160	3.942	2.074	16.144	22.160
11	Jammu and Kashmir	7.187	12.627	26.117	45.931	7.187	12.627	26.117	45.931	7.187	12.627	26.117	45.931
12	Jharkhand	15.518	43.063	12.618	71.199	15.518	43.063	12.618	71.199	15.518	43.063	12.618	71.199
13	Karnataka	34.709	55.820	119.868	210.397	34.709	55.820	119.868	210.397	34.709	55.820	119.868	210.397
14	Kerala	20.855	26.566	113.420	160.841	20.855	26.566	113.420	160.841	20.855	26.566	113.420	160.841
15	Madhya Pradesh	8.578	28.106	58.570	95.254	8.578	28.106	58.570	95.254	8.578	28.106	58.570	95.254
16	Maharashtra	34.230	76.958	137.488	248.676	34.230	76.958	137.488	248.676	34.230	76.958	137.488	248.676
17	Manipur	1.765	3.940	2.769	8.474	1.765	3.940	2.769	8.474	1.765	3.940	2.769	8.474
18	Meghalaya	1.946	4.459	3.104	9.509	1.946	4.459	3.104	9.509	1.946	4.459	3.104	9.509
19	Mizoram	0.910	1.470	2.841	5.221	0.910	1.470	2.841	5.221	0.910	1.470	2.841	5.221
20	Nagaland	1.338	2.159	4.369	7.866	1.338	2.159	4.369	7.866	1.338	2.159	4.369	7.866
21	Orissa	44.260	97.131	56.938	198.329	44.260	97.131	56.938	198.329	44.260	97.131	56.938	198.329
22	Punjab	0.955	5.607	36.831	43.393	1.239	5.323	36.831	43.393	1.239	5.323	36.831	43.393
23	Rajasthan	1.069	16.871	67.578	85.518	1.069	16.871	67.578	85.518	1.069	16.871	67.578	85.518
24	Sikkim	0.578	0.942	1.906	3.426	0.578	0.942	1.906	3.426	0.578	0.942	1.906	3.426
25	Tamil Nadu	65.262	104.936	305.665	475.863	65.262	104.936	305.665	475.863	65.262	104.936	305.665	475.863
26	Tripura	2.378	7.947	13.599	23.924	2.378	7.947	13.599	23.924	2.378	7.947	13.599	23.924
27	Uttaranchal	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	3.711	8.095	17.664	29.470
28	Uttar Pradesh	96.134	154.613	270.585	521.332	96.134	154.613	270.585	521.332	96.134	154.613	270.585	521.332

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
29	West Bengal	29.091	79.707	228.928	337.726	29.091	79.707	228.928	337.726	29.091	79.707	228.928	337.726
30	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	0.129	0.359	1.439	1.927	0.129	0.359	1.439	1.927	0.129	0.359	1.439	1.927
31	Chandigarh	0.074	0.211	1.887	2.172	0.074	0.211	1.887	2.172	0.074	0.211	1.887	2.172
32	Dadar and Nagar Haveli	0.170	0.361	0.466	0.997	0.170	0.361	0.466	0.997	0.170	0.361	0.466	0.997
33	Daman and Diu	0.048	0.080	0.698	0.826	0.048	0.080	0.698	0.826	0.048	0.080	0.698	0.826
34	Lakshadweep	0.013	0.080	0.280	0.313	0.013	0.020	0.280	0.313	0.013	0.020	0.280	0.313
35	Pondicherry	1.129	1.797	4.000	6.926	1.129	1.797	4.000	6.926	1.129	1.797	4.000	6.926
Total		523.341	1054.899	2022.919	3601.159	523.625	1084.615	2022.919	3601.159	527.336	1062.710	2040.583	3630.629

Annexure-III**Additional Allocation of wheat to States under APL Category for the months January 2007 to March 2007**

(In Tonnes)

Sl. No.	States/UTs	January, 2007	February, 2007	March, 2007
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Andhra Pradesh	4000	4000	4000
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	300	300	300
3.	Assam	3000	3000	3000
4.	Bihar	2000	2000	2000
5.	Chhattisgarh	Nil	Nil	Nil
6.	Delhi	10000	10000	10000
7.	Goa	500	500	500
8.	Gujarat	5000	5000	5000
9.	Haryana	1500	1500	1500
10.	Himachal Pradesh#	3500+ 3000*	3500+ 3000*	3500+ 3000*
11.	Jammu and Kashmir	5000	5000	5000
12.	Jharkhand	2000	-2000	2000
13.	Karnataka	5000	5000	5000
14.	Kerala	8000	-8000	8000

* An additional adhoc allocation of 3000 Tonnes of wheat during the month of January, February & March, 2007

1	2	3	4	5
15.	Madhya Pradesh	5000	5000	5000
16.	Maharashtra	10000	10000	10000
17.	Manipur	300	300	300
18.	Meghalaya	300	300	300
19.	Mizoram	300	300	300
20.	Nagaland	300	300	300
21.	Orissa	4000	4000	4000
22.	Punjab	12000	12000	12000
23.	Rajasthan	6000	6000	6000
24.	Sikkim	300	300	300
25.	Tamil Nadu	6250	6250	6250
26.	Tripura	800	800	800
27.	Uttar Pradesh	5000	5000	5000
28.	Uttaranchal	5000+ 5000**	5000+ 5000**	5000+ 5000**
29.	West Bengal	5000	5000	5000
30.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	300	300	300
31.	Dadar and Nagar Haveli	50	50	50
32.	Pondicherry	150	150	150
33.	Chandigarh	50	50	50
34.	Lakshadweep	50	50	50
35.	Daman and Diu	50	50	50
Total		1,19,000	1,19,000	1,19,000

** An additional adhoc allocation of 5000 Tonnes of wheat during the month of January, February & March, 2007

Annexure-IV

Month-wise/State-wise allocation of levy sugar during January, February and March 2007

(Qty. in Tonnes)

Sl. No.	States/UTs	January, 2007	February, 2007	March, 2007
1	2	3	4	5
1	Andhra Pradesh	9727.2	9727.2	9727.2
2	Arunachal Pradesh	842.5	842.5	842.5
3	Assam	19162.1	18438.1	18438.1
4	Bihar	7041.7	7041.7	7041.7
5	Chhattisgarh	2480	2480	2480
6	Delhi	2826.8	2826.8	2826.8
7	Goa	120	120	120
8	Gujarat	5876.2	5876.2	5876.2
9	Haryana	959.8	959.8	959.8
10	Himachal Pradesh	3803	4303	4703
11	Jammu and Kashmir	7167	7601	7167
12	Jharkhand	13.3	13.3	13.3
13	Karnataka	5325	5325	5325
14	Kerala	4113.2	4113.2	4113.2
15	Madhya Pradesh	12509.4	12509.4	12509.4
16	Maharashtra	10000	10000	10000
17	Manipur	1807.9	1807.9	1807.9
18	Meghalaya	1727.9	1727.9	1727.9
19	Mizoram	691.6	691.6	691.6
20	Nagaland	1204.4	1204.4	1204
21	Orissa	8732.8	9732.8	8732.8
22	Punjab	1141	1141	1141
23	Rajasthan	3122.4	3122.4	3122.4
24	Sikkim	391	391	391

1	2	3	4	5
25	Tamil Nadu	10012.3	10012.3	10012.3
26	Tripura	2718.6	2718.6	2719
27	Uttar Pradesh	35574.3	27997.3	27997.3
28	Uttarakhand	6313.7	5922.7	5922.7
29	West Bengal	14218.8	14218.8	14218.2
30	Andaman and Nicobar Island	389	389	389
31	Chandigarh	62.3	62.3	62.3
32	Dadar and Nagar Haveli	48.7	48.7	48.7
33	Daman and Diu	11	11	11
34	Lakshadweep	115	115	115
35	Pondicherry	178	178	178
Total		180427.9	173669.9	172635.3

Annexure-V

State-wise quantity of PDS SKO allocated during the 4th quarter, 2006-07

Name of States/UTs	4th Quarter of 2006-07 (January to March, 2007)
1	2
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	1454
Andhra Pradesh	129290
Arunachal Pradesh	2315
Assam	64502
Bihar	161858
Chandigarh	3267
Chhattisgarh	36735
Dadra and Nagar Haveli	696
Daman and Diu	530
Delhi	42121
Goa	4803
Gujarat	185940
Haryana	36405
Himachal Pradesh	12635

1	2
Jammu and Kashmir	21733
Jharkhand	52794
Karnataka	115370
Kerala	54077
Lakshadweep	000
Madhya Pradesh	122153
Maharashtra	319219
Manipur	4977
Meghalaya	5101
Mizoram	1555
Nagaland	3328
Orissa	78745
Pondicherry	3065
Punjab	59298
Rajasthan	99729
Sikkim	1396
Tamil Nadu	139733
Tripura	7708
Uttar Pradesh	310443
Uttarakhand	22463
West Bengal	188026
Total	2293464

Annexure-VI**Central Issue Price of Foodgrains**

(Rupees. Per quintal)

Rice

Period	APL		BPL	AAY
	Common	Grade "A"	Common/ Grade "A"	
12.7.2001 to 31.3.2002	795 (\$)	830	565	300
1.4.2002 to 30.6.2002	695 (\$)	730	565	300
1.7.2002 to Till Date	795 (\$)	830	565	300

Wheat

Period	APL	BPL	AAY
12.7.2001 to 31. 3.2002	610	415	200
1.4.2002 to 30.6.2002	510	415	200
1.7.2002 to Till Date	610	415	200

\$ Applicable only to J&K, HP, NE States, Sikkim and Uttaranchal

Coarse Grains

	APL	BPL	AAY
	*70%	*50%	Rs.200/- per quintal

(*) percent of economic cost which varies from State to State.

Annexure-VII**Issue Prices at Fair Price Shops in States/UTs**

(As reported by each State/UT from time to time)

(Rs. Per Kg.)

Sl.No.	States	BPL		APL			Reported Vide letter dated
		Wheat	Rice	Wheat	Common **	Rice Gr. A	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	Andhra Pradesh*	7.00	5.25	7.00	-	9.00	10.9.2006
2	Arunachal Pradesh	4.65	6.15	6.60	7.45	8.80	4.2.2003

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
3	Assam #	-	6.27-6.67	6.76-7.01	7.69-7.95	9.17-9.43	17.2.2003 & 10.9.06
4	Bihar	4.73	6.29	6.62	8.62	9.22	27.12.2002 & 10.9.06
5	Chhattisgarh	4.75	6.25	6.81		9.04	14.9.06
6	Delhi	4.65	6.15	6.80	-	9.00	29.9.2006
7	Goa	-	6.15	6.60	-	8.95	16.10.2002
8	Gujarat *	2.00	3.00	7.00		10.00	25.9.2002
9	Haryana	4.84	6.40	6.86	-	9.15	30.11.2005
10	Himachal Pradesh	5.25@	7.00	7.28-7.50	9.20-9.55	9.60-9.95	7.10.2002 @ 31. 10.04
11	Jammu and Kashmir #	4.75	6.25	6.60	8.60	9.00	24.10.2002
12	Jharkhand	4.62	6.15	6.10	-	8.30	3.1.2003
13	Karnataka*	3.00@	3.00@	6.70	-	9.00	31.7.2002 @ Sept., 04
14	Kerala	3.00	3.00	6.70	-	8.90	10.9.06
15	Madhya Pradesh #	5.00	6.50	7.00	-	9.20	29.7.2002
16	Maharashtra #	5.00	6.00	7.00	-	9.50	6.10.2004
17	Manipur	-	6.21	6.33	-	8.95	16.11.2002
18	Meghalaya #	-	6.15	6.60-7.00	-	8.30-8.80	10.9.06
19	Mizoram	-	6.15	7.78	-	9.50	10.9.06
20	Nagaland	4.75	6.15	6.70 (Atta)	-	8.90	4.2.2003
21	Orissa	-	6.30-4.75	7.00	-	9.30	10.9.06
22	Punjab	4.54	6.12	6.59	-	8.90	16.9.06
23	Rajasthan	4.70	6.30	6.80	-	9.00	11.8.2005
24	Sikkim	-	4.00	6.75	-	9.00	10.9.06
25	Tamil Nadu *	7.50	6.00	7.50	-	6.00	12.11.2002
26	Tripura	8.75	6.15	8.75	8.65	9.50	19.9.2002
		(wholemeal Atta)		(wholemeal Atta)			& 10.9.06
27	Uttar Pradesh	4.65	6.15	6.60	-	8.45	10.9.2006
28	Uttaranchal	4.65	6.15	6.60@	8.45	8.80	21.12.2002 @10.9.06

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
29	West Bengal	4.65	6.15	6.75	9.00		12.3.2003
30	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	4.45	6.05	6.50	-	8.80	8.10.2002
31	Chandigarh	4.50	6.02	6.54	-	8.79	1.1.2003
32	Dadar and Nagar Haveli	4.65	6.00	6.50	-	8.50	9.10.2002
33	Daman and Diu	5.00	6.40	6.70 (Daman)	-	9.00 (Daman)	4.4.2003
				7.20 (Diu)	-	9.55 (Diu)	
34	Lakshadweep	-	6.15	6.60	-	8.80	11.11.2002
35	Pondicherry	-	4.00(upto 20Kgs) 6.00 (beyond 20 Kgs upto 35 Kg.)	6.80	-	9.00	3.8.2004 & 2.6.06

* Additional subsidy borne by State Government. ** Applicable only to J&K, H.P and hilly areas of North Eastern States including Sikkim and UP. # - Differs from area to area @ dates from which the rate are applicable.

[Translation]

DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, Public Distribution system is an important system, through which foodgrains are provided to the weaker sections of the society. It is a great relief to them. Due to non-arrival of the fixed quota for this purpose the targeted masses are deprived of foodgrains. Therefore, the Union Government should find ways and means to provide foodgrains and other items under PDS regularly. What steps have the Government taken to streamline list of beneficiaries under the Public Distribution System. 'Antyodya Ann Yojana' etc., and What would be the prices fixed so that there is no price rise?

DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, although a detailed reply has been given, yet I would like to inform that the central issue price especially for the poor, has not been raised since 2000. The rates today are the same as they prevailed during 2000. After the UPA Government came to power, the number of families, under the 'Antyodya Ann Yojana' has increased by one crore. At present the number of APL families is 11.52 crore and that of BPL families is 4.02 crore. The number of families under 'Antyodya Ann Yojana' earlier was 1.5 crore. After the UPA Government came to power it was raised to 2.5 crore. A total of 18.04 crore families are covered under the Public Distribution System. If an average family consists of 5.5 members, the total number of persons covered under the Public Distribution System stands above 90 crore and they are being provided foodgrains.

It may have happened that due to shortage of wheat last time, we may have compensated them by rice. But there was no cut as such. For the APL families, we have reduced it from 35 kg to 20 kg. No cuts have been effected for the BPL and the 'Antyodya Ann Yojana' families. We have only effected a rationalization.

DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, as the Minister said, due to the shortage of wheat, supply was cut. Wheat eating and rice eating people cannot be expected to change their eating habits overnight. If you supply rice to wheat eating people, it will fall into wrong hands. Therefore, my question is as to what measures will be taken to ensure all these things and make a reserve for this? My next question is that the procurement being made this year is not taking place, hence what measures will be taken to meet this? I would like to ask as to what steps will be taken to meet the required demand so that the supply of foodgrains is ensured properly?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is a fact that to meet the demand of rice at places of its requirement rice should be supplied and to meet the demand of wheat at places of its requirement only what should be supplied. Wheat has been compensated by rice only in those States which are essentially rice eating States.

Sir, as regards the question of procurement, though

it is not related to the question, I would like to state that the procurement position is critical. Our country has produced more wheat in the last three-four years. This year the production of wheat is 73.6 lakh million tonnes in comparison to last year's production of 69 lakh million tonnes.

[English]

The production is 73.5 million tonnes as against last year's production of 69 million tonnes.

[Translation]

Therefore, there is no shortfall in production, field is good and crop is also good. But it a campaign was launched that wheat should not be distributed to public distribution system and procuring agencies of the Government. It had certain impact. The total procurement so far is of 71-72 lakh million tonnes which is 6-7 lakh tonnes less as comparison to last year's procurement.

Sir, it is evident that this is the first occasion when this year the procurement price of wheat is being given at Rs. 850/- per quintal as against Rs. 700/- per quintal. Earlier we used to witness an increase of Rs. 10 to 15 per quintal only. We have never seen such an increase before. Price is being given more this year, but still difficulty is being faced in procuring wheat. Whatever procurement is being received, is coming from Haryana and Punjab only. As regards other States, particularly Uttar Pradesh, which is the largest producer of wheat, we are not getting any help from them. The situation is the same with Rajasthan. They had good wheat crop this year, but despite that no procurement is being made from there. Madhya Pradesh is also no exception. They have also had good crop, but as regards procurement, Not a good response is being received from them.

Sir, if the situation continues like this, we cannot shy away from our responsibility concerning public distribution. To meet the requirement and as regards ensuring food security, if there is a need to import, we will do that also. We have made our preparations to import, but our every effort is to procure wheat, even at higher rates, in the country itself. But till we get full quota of procurement and solve the question of food security, we will have to import wheat from anywhere in the world, and provide foodgrains to common man.

DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to know from the hon'ble Minister, whether he will consider procuring wheat from within the country by further increasing the support price?

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, that is why, this year, we are procuring wheat by increasing the price by Rs. 150/- per quintal. Never before this the wheat price was fixed at this rate.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Chandrakant Khaire — not present.

Shri N.N. Krishnadas.

SHRI N.N. KRISHNADAS: Recently the Government of India have decided to drastically cut short the quota of the commodities which are provided to the States for distribution through the Public Distribution System. Everybody is aware that in the whole of the country, in Kerala the Public Distribution System functions better. But unfortunately the Government have decided to drastically reduce the quota of several commodities, especially wheat, sugar and rice.

Yesterday, some television channels had shown that very low quality wheat has been distributed to Kerala. Some ration shops of the Capital city of Trivandrum were shown in the television channels.

May I know from the hon. Minister whether he would restore the reduced quota meant for the Public Distribution System in Kerala? Will the Government examine and ensure that the commodities distributed there are of better quality?

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR: The quota in respect of people who are Below the Poverty Line (BPL) has not been changed at all. AAY category's quota is at all not changed. There is a reduction definitely in Above the Poverty Line (APL) section. We have studied as to what was the off-take of the last three years. The off-take was not there. That is why we have taken the average off-take of the last three years and we have made the same allocation. It is because there is a serious question of diversion. In fact, certain studies were made and those studies are also indicating that essentially APL quota has been substantially diverted in open market.

SHRI N.N. KRISHNADAS: In Kerala it is not done. ...[Interruptions]

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR: I am saying country as a whole. I am not saying about Kerala. Kerala is one of the States where there is a very effective Public Distribution system. That is why I have no complaint about that particular State. I am just making a general statement. Here, the Kerala situation is little different. There is no

problem and there is no complaint from the Government of Kerala about AAY as well as about BPL. But definitely there is an additional demand for APL quota. We are ready to give a serious thought about wheat.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI KIRAN MAHESHWARI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, this is a very important question. In this regard, I would like to invite the attention of the hon'ble Minister, through you, that on the one hand, in his reply he said that this year production of wheat was the highest, which is a matter of pleasure for all of us. Secondly, he said we have fixed the support price at Rs. 850 from Rs. 700 per quintal. On the one hand it is being said that production of wheat is very high, the price has been increased from Rs. 700 to Rs. 850 for which this Government are being applauded that they have increased much and it was never done before. It is being said to we are facing shortage of wheat, we are not getting the required quota of BPL and APL wheat. He is also saying that if required, he will make import of wheat, as has been done earlier. We want to give Rs. 850 per quintal for wheat to our farmers. We want to supply imported wheat. Imported wheat will cost Rs. 1100 and Rs. 1200 per quintal. Today wheat available in the market costs Rs. 13 to Rs. 14 per kilogram. Through you, I would like to ask the hon'ble Minister that as we are paying less price for wheat to our farmers, do we want to increase the price of wheat to our farmers? Our farmers are committing suicide. Therefore, I would like to remind that he wants to import wheat. He alleges that Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh are not cooperating because they are not procuring. A farmer who sells wheat in the open market gets higher prices, whereas the Government pay less prices to them. Therefore, I would like to ask if the Government want to import wheat, why don't it procure from our farmers by paying them more? This is my question.

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR: I made it clear that the previous Government used to raise the price @ Rs. 10 per year.

[English]

As against ten rupees rise for wheat, we have given Rs. 150/-. So definitely the approach has been changed and a pro-farming policy has been adopted. But, ultimately, the Food Corporation of India has limited machinery. Unless and until the Food and Civil Supplies Departments of the State Governments come forward to support procurement, I do not think that we will be able to procure. The States which I have mentioned, altogether, have not

procured even 25,000 tonnes. This is the position prevailing. Even in the case of State like Uttar Pradesh where there is a highest area and highest crop, but there is no procurement. Likewise, in the case of Madhya Pradesh, it is somewhat 2,000 to 3,000 crore. Whatever requirements which I am getting from these Governments per month, even they are not ready to procure their own requirements. This is not the way to treat such an important issue. I can understand that there might be differences here and there, but one should not bring differences in the area of food security.

[English]

SHRIMATI KIRAN MAHESHWARI: The hon. Minister did not reply the question I asked. The question is to increase the support prices by the Government.

MR. SPEAKER: It has been increased by Rs. 150.

SHRI AJIT KUMAR SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to say that the supply under PDS so far is mainly of coarse grains i.e. wheat and rice. Are the Government considering to include pulses under PDS keeping in view the price of pulses?

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR: Sir, as regards pulses, it is never covered under Public Distribution Network. There are some difficulties in that. Therefore, some organizations have been authorized to import pulses. The organisation which is managed by the Member, who has raised this question, has been assigned the responsibility of importing, and he paid attention to it, I would like to thank him for that.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Q. 393- Shri K.C. Singh Baba – not present.

Q. 394- Shri Ramji Lal Suman

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Ramji Lal Suman. Are you ready with your supplementary?

[Translation]

Subsidy for Export of Sugar

+

*394. SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN:

DR. CHINTA MOHAN:

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

(a) the surplus stocks of sugar recorded in the country during the current year;

(b) the quantum of sugar likely to be exported therefrom;

(c) whether the Government proposes to provide subsidy for export of sugar; and

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

[English]

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) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) The production of sugar in the current sugar season 2006-07 is provisionally estimated to be over 250 lac tons. Taking into account the carry over stocks of about 44 lac tons from the previous sugar season 2005-06, the total availability of sugar in this sugar season would be about 294 lac tons, as against the estimated consumption of about 190 lac tons. After meeting the three months' buffer requirement of 48 lac tons, the surplus stock of sugar is estimated to be over 56 lac tons in this sugar season. Out of this surplus stock, about 15 lac tons of sugar is likely to be exported during this sugar season. However this will depend on global market conditions.

(c) and (d) The Government have decided to provide export assistance to defray the cost of internal transport and freight charges, marketing and handling charges at a flat rate of Rs. 1350 per ton on export of domestically manufactured sugar from sugar factories located in the coastal States and at the flat rate of Rs. 1450 per ton from sugar factories located in other than the coastal States. Exports made under Open General License (OGL) only (and not under 'advance license') on or after 19th April, 2007 and upto 18th April, 2008 or till further orders, whichever is earlier, would be eligible for this assistance. Further, the amount so received is also to be used for payment of cane price including cane price arrears of previous sugar season(s) to sugarcane farmers. The Government have decided to give export assistance to sugar factories as realization from export of sugar was less than the ex-factory levy sugar prices and at that level of export realization, sugar factories were not in a position to pay the Statutory Minimum Price (SMP) of sugar fixed by the Central Government.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Minister replied that during the current sugar season of

2006-07, the final estimate of sugar production is 250 lakh tonnes. Keeping in view the carry over stock of about 40 lakh tones of sugar from the previous season of 2005-06, the total non availability during the current season would be about 294 lakh tonnes.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: You need not read the entire answer.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, during October 2006, the carry over stock of sugar in the country was about 44 lakh tonnes. The present estimated availability is 294 lakh tonnes. And the estimated domestic consumption is around 190 lakh tonnes. It simply means that we produce more than the domestic consumption. Since sugar production was excess this year and we already had a carry over stock from the previous year, so the Government decided to go in for export of sugar. I would like to inform, through you that since the sugar prices at the international market is very low, so the Government is subsidizing the export. But, the subsidy available to the overseas consumers is not available to the domestic consumers.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to know through you, from the Government that since the sugar prices at the international markets are low and the Government is giving subsidy to the foreign consumers, why don't we give incentives to the farmers to go in for ethanol production instead of sugar? If we give subsidy to farmers to produce ethanol it would certainly benefit the consumers of our country. What steps are being taken by the Government to go in for an alternative production, in view of sugar prices being low?

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: It shows how experienced you are as a Member of Parliament that without knowing the answer, you have put the supplementary!

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): Sir, it is true that this year, there is a surplus production. As the hon. Member has rightly mentioned, as against the requirement of 190 lakh tonnes, the production is going to somewhat near 280 plus lakh tonnes with a carry-over of the last stock of 300 lakh tonnes. That is why, there is a surplus. What is the alternative before us? The alternative before us is that we have to enter the international market. But the

international market prices are also not congenial to us. Our producers are not in a position to compete with a number of other countries which are also bringing their stuff to the international market. One of the reasons is that our transport cost is quite high. That is why, the Government took a conscious decision to provide Rs.1350 per tonne as transport subsidy to certain States which are somewhat near the Sea. Those States like Bihar and Uttar Pradesh are away from the Sea Port. For them, we have given an additional sum of Rs.100 and the total is Rs.1450 per tonne. So, this is the position in which we are now.

Now, there is a suggestion saying why not we think about ethanol. Yes, certain sugar mills have started production of ethanol. But, to be frank, for ethanol, you have to compete with Brazil. And, Brazil is a country which is providing sugarcane for the manufacturers of ethanol at Rs.40 per quintal.

In India, our farmers are getting the price ranging from Rs. 80 to Rs. 110 per quintal. There is wide difference in the price. That is why, our manufacturers are not in a position to compete with Brazil. That is the position.

Then, there are three types of juices. The secondary juice has low quality of sugar. So, there is a thinking whether we should allow the mills to convert or use this secondary juice for manufacturing of ethanol. But there are very few units which have got ethanol manufacturing plants. That is why, the Government of India has decided to provide monetary support at the rate of 4 per cent interest to the mills to set up ethanol manufacturing plants. This issue cannot be solved in one day, but the process has started.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister's reply is correct.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Dr. Chinta Mohan — not present

[Translation]

SHRI SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, as we are talking about exporting sugar the domestic price of sugar is rising. I would like to know from the Minister, the steps being taken to bring down the price of sugar? What steps are being taken to bring down the price of sugar instead of exporting it?

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR: It seems that you have not been to the market for a long time. Sugar prices have come down to such levels which was not seen during past several years.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Q. No. 395 - Shri Mohan Rawale — not present

Q. No. 396 - Shri Jasubhai Dhanabhai Barad — not present

Shri Sai Pratap — not present

Q. No. 397 - Shri Anantkumar Hegde — not present

Q. No. 398 - Shri Rajiv Ranjan Singh 'Lalan'

[Translation]

Export of Pulses after the Ban

*398. SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH "LALAN":
SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY:

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

(a) whether the pulses are being exported from the country even after the ban was imposed on its export on June 22, 2006 in view of its shortage in the country; and

(b) if so, the details thereof indicating the quantum exported till-date, month-wise between January and June 2006?

[English]

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

Statement

(a) Yes Sir. Certain quantities of pulses were exported as per the transitional arrangements provided in para 1.5 of Foreign Trade Policy till 9.3.2007, under provision given for export of pulses to Bhutan and Sri Lanka, under permission given for export of kabuli chana and against advance licence/Authorisation issued prior to 22.6.2006 till 19.4.2007.

(b) Data relating to month-wise exports of pulses during the period January, 2006 to April, 2007 are given below:

Month	Quantity (in tonnes)
1	2
January, 2006	27693
February, 2006	24120

1	2
March, 2006	45029
April, 2006	31358
May, 2006	44704
June, 2006	38965
July, 2006	13765
August, 2006	21579
September, 2006	17906
October, 2006	13091
November, 2006	18990
December, 2006	12255
January, 2007	10819
February, 2007	9288
March, 2007	11200
April, 2007	7148

[Translation]

SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN': Mr. Speaker, Sir, in reply to a question, a little while ago, the hon'ble Minister referred to shortage of pulses and said that the Government is considering its export. The Government's reply is stunning. The emphasis is on exports. The country is facing a shortage of pulses, yet the Government is exporting it. I would like to know whether the Government have made an estimate regarding the total domestic demand of pulses, our total production, and steps being taken to bridge the supply demand gap?

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to clarify that exports have not been allowed since June 2006.

[English]

The export of pulses has been banned. So, there is no question of exporting pulses. The thing is, though there was a ban, it was brought to the notice of the Government that there were few parties who have manipulated the records and they have exported. So, the entire matter has been handed over to the CBI for investigation. It looks like, from preliminary investigation, that there are three companies who have either closed the record or I do not know what happened exactly, because that is in the process

of investigation. But it looks like they have exported some of the things and their licences have been cancelled.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN': Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is a serious matter that some companies have exported pulses by manipulating rules and provisions of the country, when the country is facing a shortage. The Government has revealed that a CBI inquiry has been ordered. I would like to know whether the Government would take stern action immediately against such persons, so that there is no recurrence of such things in the future and the steps being taken to check such a mess up.

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR: If the companies under investigation are found guilty and if it is established, after the investigations

[English]

they will be permanently banned from any export business, plus criminal action will be taken against them.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[Translation]

Reimbursement of Expenses on ESI

*383. SHRI VIJAY KUMAR KHANDELWAL:
SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL:

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

(a) the criteria for the reimbursement of expenses incurred by the State Governments on the Employees' State Insurance Services (ESISs);

(b) whether any discussion was held and decision taken in the Board of Trustees meeting of the Employees State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) on the reimbursement of expenses incurred over the prescribed ceiling to the State Governments;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the follow-up action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) to (d) The expenditure incurred by the State Government on provision of medical care services is reimbursed to the State Governments by ESIC on the basis of prescribed ceiling of Rs. 1000/- per Insured Person

per annum. The ESI Corporation in its meeting held on 23.12.2006 approved the enhancement of ceiling on medical care from Rs. 900/- per Insured Person per annum to Rs. 1,000/- per Insured Person per annum with effect from 01.04.2007. In addition to Rs. 1,000/-, the ESI Corporation has also decided to give an incentive of Rs. 50/- per Insured Person per annum to the State Governments on fulfilling the stipulated terms and conditions for improvement of medical scheme. There was no discussion in the meeting of the ESI Corporation held on 23.12.2006 regarding reimbursement of expenses over the prescribed ceiling. The instructions conveying the enhancement of ceiling to State Governments have been issued by the ESI Corporation on 24.01.2007.

[English]

Benefits under the AIBP

*384. SHRI RAYAPATI SAMBASIVA RAO:

SHRI GANESH SINGH:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state the details of the benefits that accrued since the inception of the Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme

(AIBP) in terms of the total irrigation potential created, State-wise and the total cost of projects implemented so far?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ): The irrigation potential created through AIBP assisted major and medium projects up to March 2006 is 37.4 Lakh ha. State wise details are given in Statement-I. Total irrigation potential created through surface minor irrigation schemes up to March 2006 is 1.52 Lakh ha. The State wise details are given in Statement-II. Target of creation of irrigation potential through AIBP assisted projects for the year 2006-07 is 9 Lakh ha.

Total estimated cost of the AIBP components of major and medium projects included in the programme up to March 2006 is Rs.54097.4 crore against which, expenditure incurred up to March 2006 is Rs.33610.9 crore. The State-wise details are given in the enclosed Statement-I

Total estimated cost of the surface minor irrigation schemes included in AIBP up to March, 2006 is Rs.1272.9 crore against which expenditure incurred up to March, 2006 is Rs.702.4 crore. The State-wise details are given in the enclosed Statement-II.

Statement-I

State wise details of estimated cost, expenditure incurred and potential created for major and medium projects assisted under AIBP

(Cost in Rs. crore, Potential in Thousand hectare)

Sl.No.	Name of State	Latest Estimated Cost of whole project	Latest Estimated Cost of AIBP Components	Total Expenditure on AIBP upto March 2006	Potential created upto March, 2006
1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Andhra Pradesh	14499.092	5834.3700	2152.3220	229.3100
2	Assam	879.728	586.3550	310.0333	69.2610
3	Bihar	2238.545	1715.2310	1510.7697	346.4590
4	Chhattisgarh	3208.7900	610.6200	512.7171	93.9500
5	Goa	967.0140	252.1100	214.6372	9.7460
6	Gujarat	48599.0700	13654.0540	8238.4790	426.3250
7	Haryana	2164.3600	245.1060	204.7660	109.0860
8	Himachal Pradesh	261.9900	258.3600	128.9530	2.6550
9	Jammu and Kashmir	358.3140	200.0680	146.4720	14.4460
10	Jharkhand	507.3030	279.1530	220.2758	13.0300

1	2	3	4	5	6
11	Karnataka	11834.9000	5340.5600	3950.7670	388.9250
12	Kerala	1179.0000	360.9650	263.1750	34.2900
13	Madhya Pradesh	17091.9200	4796.865	3356.7530	105.1480
14	Maharashtra	14678.8070	4447.2960	2284.9981	207.7840
15	Manipur	702.3200	489.9600	370.1980	0.0000
16	Meghalaya	61.9700	44.4900	5.4280	0.0000
17	Orissa	11583.1600	2642.7270	1570.7149	100.7890
18	Punjab	8376.5300	1289.2340	933.6270	116.1560
19	Rajasthan	7846.1400	4495.4320	2524.3260	413.5440
20	Tripura	178.0000	91.7200	71.6245	6.6990
21	Tamil Nadu	1143.3000	0	10.5100	0.0000
22	Uttar Pradesh/ Uttaranchal	12466.6700	5086.8800	4270.1988	980.1580
23	West Bengal	2182.4650	1375.8820	359.1426	74.5400
Grand Total		162861.3880	54097.4380	33610.8880	3742.2990

Statement-II

*State wise details of estimated cost, expenditure incurred and potential created
from Surface Minor Irrigation Schemes (upto March, 2006)*

Sl.No.	State	Estimated Cost (Rs. in crore)	Potential Created (in '000 ha)	Expenditure incurred by states (Rs. in crore)
1	2	3	4	5
A. Special Category States				
1	Arunachal Pradesh	140.43	28.074	105.9934
2	Assam	136.2498	16.783	64.04
3	Manipur	42.94	6.5	18.98
4	Meghalaya	22.08	3.636	19.629
5	Mizoram	46.68	3.682	41.6533
6	Nagaland	56.1603	22.31	51.7752
7	Sikkim	14.19	2.433	9.43
8	Tripura	172.56	31.397	130.554
9	Himachal Pradesh	61.59	5.48	32.8524

1	2	3	4	5
10	Jammu and Kashmir	59.9901	0.193	38.5949
11	Orissa (KBK)	82.9206	6.391	60.565
12	Uttaranchal	437.145	25.636	128.33351
Total		1272.9358	152.515	702.40071

[Translation]

Foreign aided Irrigation Projects

*385. SHRIMATI KALPNA RAMESH NARHIRE:

SHRI SRICHAND KRIPLANI:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the number of irrigation projects under implementation with foreign funding in the country alongwith the funding agencies; State-wise;

(b) the action plan of the Government for completing and making operational the said projects, State-wise; and

(c) the details of the action taken by the Union Government to improve irrigation projects, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ): (a) List of irrigation projects of various

States under implementation with foreign funding is given in the enclosed statement.

(b) The projects with external assistance are implemented as per the mutually agreed project document which includes detailed action plan.

(c) Irrigation being a state subject, irrigation projects are conceived, planned and implemented by the State Governments as per their own priority. However, Government of India provides central assistance to the State Governments for completion of on-going irrigation projects under the Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme (AIBP). Further, a pilot scheme titled "National Project for Repair, Renovation and Restoration of Water Bodies directly linked to Agriculture" has been approved by Government of India in January 2005. Government of India also provides support under centrally sponsored scheme for Command Area Development and Water Management.

Statement

Details of Irrigation Projects Under Implementation with Foreign Assistance

Sl. No.	Name of Projects	State	Funding Agency
1	2	3	4
1	Karnataka Community Based Tank Management Project	Karnataka	World Bank
2	Madhya Pradesh Water Sector Restructuring Project	Madhya Pradesh	World Bank
3	Maharashtra Water Sector Improvement Project	Maharashtra	World Bank
4	Minor Irrigation Project	Maharashtra	Kfw, Germany
5	Rajasthan Water Sector Restructuring Project	Rajasthan	World Bank
6	Rajasthan Minor Irrigation Improvement Project	Rajasthan	JBIC, Japan
7	UP Water Sector Restructuring Project	Uttar Pradesh	World Bank

1	2	3	4
8	Chhattisgarh Irrigation Development Sector Project	Chhattisgarh	Asian Development Bank
9	Modernization of Kurnool-Cuddapah Canal (Tranche-II)	Andhra Pradesh	JBIC, Japan
10	Andhra Pradesh Irrigation and Livelihood Improvement Project	Andhra Pradesh	JBIC, Japan
11	Rengali Irrigation Project (Tranche-II)	Orissa	JBIC, Japan
12	Rural Water Supply & Minor Irrigation (Technical Assistance)	Himachal Pradesh	GTZ, Germany
13	Tamil Nadu Irrigated Agriculture Modernisation and Water Bodies Restoration and Management	Tamil Nadu	World Bank

New Consumer Policy*[English]****386. SHRI KASHIRAM RANA:****SHRIMATI SANGEETA KUMARI SINGH DEO:**

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

(a) the progress made with regard to the formulation of the New Consumer Policy so far;

(b) whether consultations have been held with the Ministries/Departments and other stake holders concerned in this regard,

(c) if so, the details thereof and the decisions taken thereon; and

(d) the time by which it is likely to be finalised?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b) The Department of Consumer Affairs has prepared a Draft National Consumer Policy document after consultation and discussion with all the stakeholders. These include voluntary consumer organizations, Central Ministries/Departments, Union Territories and State Governments. Process for its formal approval and adoption has commenced for obtaining final views of the Central Ministries/Departments to whom the document has been circulated on 22.11.2006.

(c) Decision will be made after obtaining the final views of the Central Ministries/Departments.

(d) In view of (c) above, the time frame for finalizing this policy cannot be indicated.

Quality of Industrial Training Institutes***387. SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA:****SHRI SUGRIB SINGH:**

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

(a) whether the quality of Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) continue to deteriorate in the country as reported in *The Times of India* dated March 26, 2007;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and the reaction of the Government in this regard;

(c) whether the Government has approved 107 trades, out of which these institutes offer only 2 to 38 trades;

(d) if so, the reasons for not offering the remaining other trades by these ITIs; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government to improve the deteriorating conditions of these ITIs in the Country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) and (b) The State Govts. are responsible for the implementation of the Craftsmen Training Scheme in Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs)/ Industrial Training Centres (ITCs) set up in the respective states. The ITIs are under the financial and administrative control of the respective State Govts. A concern has been expressed by various quarters in the recent past about mismatch between the kinds of skills required by the industry and those supplied by the Vocational Training System primarily because of non-availability of adequate financial resources with the State Govts.

(c) and (d) Although 107 approved trades are available for imparting training, the selection of trade by ITI depends upon the requirement of the industry in that region. ITIs are free to conduct training in any number of approved trades but due to requirement of the industry and employability of trainees, State Govts take a view on the basis of their perception on the requirements and their ability to conduct training in the trades chosen.

(e) In order to improve the Vocational Training System, the following initiatives have been taken by the Government to improve the quality of training:

- In the last ten years, course curricula of 46 trades have been revised, 47 new trades introduced in consultation with the Industry and 11 trades for which demand did not exist have been deleted.
- A scheme of upgrading Govt. 500 ITIs in a phased manner has been initiated in 2005-06. Under the scheme 100 ITIs each has been taken up in the 2005-06 and 2006-07. Assistance of World Bank has been sought for funding the upgradation of ITIs from 2006-07 onwards.
- The remaining 1396 Govt. ITIs are proposed to be upgraded in a Public-Private Partnership mode at a cost of Rs. 2.5 crores per ITI as interest free loan to the States in the next 5 years as per announcement made by Finance Minister in his Budget speech in 2007-08.
- A Centrally Sponsored Scheme for establishment of 22 new ITIs and upgradation of 35 existing ITIs is currently under progress in the North-East region of the country and one new women ITI is being set up and 37 existing ITIs are also being upgraded in the State of Jammu & Kashmir under this scheme.

[Translation]

Ganga at Risk

*388. SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN:

SHRI KIREN RIJU:

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

(a) whether the river Ganga has been included as one of the world's top ten rivers facing the greatest risk in a report by the World Environment Organisation;

(b) if so, the details thereof including the suggestions made in this regard;

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government with a view to keeping the natural sources clean and safe and the outcome of such steps taken so far?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) The Government is not aware of the existence of any organization by name of World Environment Organisation. As for the referred-to report which includes the river Ganga amongst the world's top ten rivers at risk, the Government is aware of a publication brought out by the World Wide Fund for Nature, an International Non-Government Organisation, which includes the river Ganga as one of the world's ten rivers facing risk. The Central Government is not aware of the data-base and the methodology adopted by the said NGO for making this Report. The Central Government has taken appropriate initiatives, and is committed to continue efforts towards conservation of natural resources. The report profiles the biodiversity of river Ganga and perceives over extraction of water for agriculture and excessive water diversions affecting natural flows as major threats to the river. The report suggests, among others, improving efficiency in water use and irrigation of crops, end to perverse subsidies, capping of water extraction levels, further community education & awareness, and an integrated river basin management.

(c) and (d) The Central Government is seized of the problems stated in the WWF Report. The various national interests merit to be balanced in the process of formulation of strategy to deal with the problems stated in the Report.

As for the problem of abstraction of groundwater, and the need to optimize use of surface water, the Central Water Commission (CWC) under the Ministry of Water Resources pursues an approach for integrated and coordinated development of surface and groundwater resources and their conjunctive use. The CWC has formulated a National Perspective Plan for water resources development in the country that envisages inter-linking of rivers for transfer of water from surplus basins to water deficit basins for optimum utilization of water in the country.

The Ministry of Water Resources has taken both promotional and regulatory measures to conserve the surface and groundwater. The promotional measures comprise, providing technical guidance on rain water harvesting to various State Government as well as private agencies, Group Housing Societies, Resident Welfare Associations etc. requesting Central Ministries/Departments to provide roof top rain water harvesting structures in the

building under their control; issue of directions to States to adopt artificial recharge to groundwater/ promote rain water harvesting and to ensure inclusion of roof top rain water harvesting in the building bye-laws; circulation of a Manual/ Guide on Artificial Recharge to Groundwater to the States/ UTs to enable them to formulate area specific artificial recharge schemes to check the declining trend of ground water levels; construction of exploratory wells tapping arsenic free aquifer zones by the Central Ground Water Board in arsenic infested areas and handing them over to the State Governments for utilization; and circulation of a concept report titled 'Master Plan for Artificial Recharge to Ground Water' to all the States/UTs identifying areas requiring artificial recharge of ground water in the country and to take measures for its implementation. The regulatory measures include notification by Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA) of certain over-exploited areas in the country for regulation of ground-water development and management, and notification for registration in various States of groundwater abstraction structures, which showed a very steep decline in ground water levels and require action for regulation.

Under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of National River Conservation Plan (NRCP) of the Ministry of Environment & Forests, various works are undertaken for pollution abatement in major rivers including Ganga through interception and diversion of sewage for its treatment and construction of Sewage Treatment Plants and Low Cost Sanitation. The NRCP presently covers 34 major rivers in 160 towns spread over 20 States. Under the Ganga Action Plan (GAP) Phase I & II, 1743 mld. (million litres per day) of sewage treatment capacity has been created so far. With the pollution abatement works completed so far under Ganga Action Plan, the water quality of the river Ganga has shown improvement at major locations over its pre-GAP quality as per the Water Quality Monitoring (WQM) undertaken by independent reputed institutions like Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd. (BHEL), Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Kanpur and Indian Toxicological Research Centre (ITRC), Lucknow. Presently there are 158 Water Quality Monitoring locations where the water quality of rivers is monitored by the Ministry through reputed independent institutions. The data is disseminated through six monthly bulletins to all the concerned agencies. Besides, the Central Pollution Control Board conducts Water Quality Monitoring at 898 locations on rivers and other water bodies in addition to monitoring of groundwater quality in 321 locations. An independent study of the Ganga

Action Plan undertaken by Harvard Institute of International Development in 1995-97, in collaboration with reputed national institutes concluded that the GAP-I has delivered significant benefits to India; both users and non-users have benefited from it and; in terms of both the cost and time taken and GAP compares favourably with those of the other major rivers of the world like Thames, Rhine and Danube.

Under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of National Lake Conservation Plan of the Ministry of Environment & Forests, works for conservation and rejuvenation of major lakes are undertaken. The Plan presently covers 46 lakes in 13 States. Further, the Wetland Conservation Programme is another flagship scheme of the Ministry' under which works for catchment area treatment, biodiversity conservation, siltation control etc. of National Wetlands are undertaken. Presently 94 Wetlands are covered under this programme.

The National Environment Policy, 2006 also advocates an integrated approach to management of river basins by the concerned river authorities, ensuring maintenance of adequate flows, and adherence to water quality standards throughout their course in all seasons.

[English]

Merger of FACT with other Companies

*389. SHRI CHENGARA SURENDRAN: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government has any proposal to merge Fertilizers and Chemicals Travancore Limited (FACT) with other companies; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the steps initiated to revive the organisation?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STEEL (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) and (b): A proposal to either merge Fertilizers And Chemicals Travancore Limited (FACT) with or make it a subsidiary of a well run fertilizer PSU is under examination of the Government. No decision has yet been taken.

On 30.3.2006, a financial package for revival was sanctioned to the Fertilizers And Chemicals Travancore Limited (FACT) which was made effective from 31.3.2005. By this, the company could reduce its losses and could

come out of the purview of BIFR. However, the company is still incurring losses of about Rs. 10-12 crore per month. The Government is exploring viable options for sustaining the operations of the company.

Increase in Allocation of Fertilizers

*390. SHRI L. RAJAGOPAL:

SHRI ANANTA NAYAK:

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been an increase in the Central allocation of fertilizers to the States during 2006-07;

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

(c) whether there is scarcity of fertilizer in some States despite the increase in the allocations;

(d) if so, the demand, supply and consumption of fertilizers recorded during the said period, State-wise;

(e) whether the Government has decided to bear the transportation and distribution cost of Urea to make available Urea to the farmers in the ongoing Rabi season;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) the details of the recommendations made by the Alag Committee in this regard and the recommendations that have been accepted and implemented?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STEEL (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN):

(a) The Department of Fertilizers oversees the supply of Urea, Di-ammonium Phosphate (DAP) and Muriate of Potash (MOP) as per the requirement assessed by the Department of Agriculture & Cooperation, Ministry of Agriculture.

(b) and (d) The state-wise details of demand, availability and sales of fertilizers in 2006-07 and 2005-06 are given in the statement I & II respectively.

(c) No Sir, sufficient availability of fertilizers was ensured by the Department of Fertilizers in each of the months in Kharif and Rabi 2006-07 at the state level. However, shortages at the local levels were reported in some states. Urea is the only fertilizer whose movement and distribution is under the partial control of the Government of India (GOI). GOI is responsible for supplying

urea up to the state level. It is the responsibility of the state governments to ensure distribution of fertilizers as per local demand within the state.

(e) and (f) As per the new pricing policy, the transportation and distribution cost of Urea will be reimbursed as follows:

- (i) Primary Freight will be reimbursed on the basis of actual leads for rail movement;
- (ii) Reimbursement of railway freight will be as per the actual expenditure;
- (iii) For the road component of the primary freight, road leads will be as per actual distance to the primary godown and per tonne Km. rates will be escalated by the composite road transport index [weighted average of the Wholesale Price Indices (WPIs) of HSD oil, Motor Tyres, Truck Chassis and All Commodities];
- (iv) One time enhancement of 33% will be granted on the road component of primary freight to offset the impact of Supreme Court directed maximum truckload limit of 9 MT on road vehicles;
- (v) Tariff Commission will be requested to fix average leads and per tonne km base rates for road transportation in the case of secondary movement. These rates will be escalated by WPI (composite road transport index) every year;
- (vi) Pending finalization of leads and rates by the Tariff Commission, secondary freight which was frozen at 2002-03 rates during Stages I & II of NPS will be escalated by the increase/decrease in WPI (composite index) since 2002-03;
- (vii) The Freight computed and paid as per the policy shall not exceed the actual freight expenditure incurred by the units; and
- (viii) The existing scheme for special freight subsidy will continue for supplies to the North Eastern States and Jammu and Kashmir

(g) Recommendations made by the Alag Committee in this regard and the recommendations that has been implemented are given in the enclosed statement-III.

Statement-I

State-wise Requirement, Availability and Sales of UREA, DAP & MOP – 1st April 06 To 31st March 2007

Product	Urea			DAP			MOP			Qty. in (LMTs)
	Req. 1st April 06 to 31st March 2007	Cum. Avail. 1st April 06 to 31st March 2007	Cum. Sales 1st April 06 to 31st March 2007	Req. 1st April 06 to 31st March 2007	Cum. Avail. 1st April 06 to 31st March 2007	Cum. Sales 1st April 06 to 31st March 2007	Req. 1st April 06 to 31st March 2007	Cum. Avail. 1st April 06 to 31st March 2007	Cum. Sales 1st April 06 to 31st March 2007	
Andhra Pradesh	27.00	24.52	22.13	6.69	6.15	5.97	5.21	3.90	3.72	
Karnataka	11.20	11.55	10.92	5.00	5.25	4.88	3.90	3.14	2.76	
Kerala	1.46	1.33	1.27	0.17	0.23	0.23	1.40	1.13	1.12	
Tamil Nadu	10.00	9.59	9.18	3.85	3.98	3.84	4.85	3.48	3.48	
Gujarat	15.00	15.22	15.03	5.75	5.79	4.56	1.65	1.46	1.42	
Madhya Pradesh	12.10	13.89	13.16	6.20	5.76	4.96	0.50	0.75	0.67	
Chhattisgarh	4.90	5.93	5.53	1.38	1.59	1.27	0.52	0.67	0.59	
Maharashtra	19.00	20.70	19.87	6.25	7.06	6.49	3.00	2.48	2.34	
Rajasthan	13.20	12.80	12.26	5.60	4.30	4.05	0.22	0.07	0.07	
Haryana	17.50	18.04	17.33	5.60	5.04	4.46	0.40	0.32	0.23	
Punjab	25.00	26.16	25.74	7.90	7.60	7.12	0.90	0.52	0.47	
Jammu and Kashmir	1.42	1.15	1.05	0.71	0.55	0.51	0.21	0.10	0.10	
Uttar Pradesh	50.00	53.50	51.83	14.50	14.42	12.94	2.30	1.34	1.22	
Uttaranchal	1.65	2.17	2.10	0.32	0.24	0.23	0.12	0.06	0.04	
Bihar	17.50	16.32	16.01	4.50	3.29	2.65	2.50	1.04	1.00	
Jharkhand	1.74	1.63	1.60	1.10	0.71	0.68	0.07	0.01	0.01	
Orissa	4.70	4.44	4.21	0.98	1.16	1.03	0.92	0.85	0.75	
West Bengal	12.00	12.28	11.94	4.10	3.99	3.54	3.58	2.78	2.51	
Assam & other N.E.	3.08	2.67	2.47	0.51	0.27	0.24	0.82	0.59	0.54	
Other Total	1.10	0.90	0.90	0.20	0.17	0.12	0.20	0.13	0.13	
All India	249.55	254.79	244.52	81.31	77.57	69.75	33.27	24.82	23.17	

Statement-II
2005-06 State-wise Requirement, Availability & Sale of Urea, DAP & MOP

State/Union Territory	Urea			DAP			MOP (LMTs)		
	Requirement	Availability	Sale	Requirement	Availability	Sale	Requirement	Availability	Sale
Andhra Pradesh	23.50	23.53	22.18	7.05	6.12	5.96	3.86	4.61	4.13
Karnataka	9.55	11.03	10.67	4.60	5.00	4.57	2.85	3.79	3.36
Kerala	1.55	1.26	1.18	0.20	0.17	0.16	1.30	1.29	1.19
Tamil Nadu	9.50	9.06	8.78	3.50	3.87	3.64	4.50	3.76	3.67
Gujarat	12.50	13.81	13.26	5.20	6.65	5.41	1.30	1.89	1.55
Madhya Pradesh	11.55	10.97	10.20	5.95	5.76	4.66	0.50	0.91	0.57
Chhattisgarh	4.70	4.67	4.45	1.16	1.38	1.27	0.49	0.79	0.49
Maharashtra	16.75	18.19	17.21	5.85	5.84	5.13	2.45	2.92	2.47
Rajasthan	12.30	12.35	11.59	4.90	5.41	4.14	0.20	0.32	0.17
Haryana	16.00	18.00	16.44	5.60	6.64	5.10	0.30	0.55	0.36
Punjab	24.70	24.55	23.72	7.65	9.54	7.32	0.65	1.25	0.85
Uttar Pradesh	52.00	50.36	45.95	15.50	15.89	12.34	2.60	3.01	1.66
Uttaranchal	1.77	2.01	1.75	0.27	0.31	0.23	0.11	0.07	0.05
Jammu and Kashmir	1.20	1.30	1.11	0.70	0.65	0.56	0.17	0.09	0.07
Bihar	14.30	14.24	7.32	3.00	2.12	1.78	1.40	1.64	1.23
Jharkhand	1.75	1.56	1.51	1.16	0.73	0.68	0.26	0.05	0.05
Orissa	4.75	4.31	1.09	0.90	0.92	0.81	1.00	1.16	0.96
West Bengal	11.90	10.97	10.41	4.10	3.53	3.43	3.90	3.06	2.52
Assam	1.95	1.95	1.76	0.43	0.27	0.20	0.75	0.75	0.53
All India	234.26	235.65	221.37	78.06	79.76	67.53	28.89	32.11	26.08

Statement-III

With regard to transportation and distribution of urea recommendations of the Alagh Committee and action taken thereon under the New Pricing Scheme Stage III for Urea are as follows:

Recommendations of the Alagh Committee	Action Taken
(i) The present system of 50% decontrol be continued for the next four years but with a more rationalized plan for reimbursement of freight on decontrolled component.	The Government will continue to retain the authority to direct movement of urea stock up to 50% of production depending upon the exigencies of the situation.
(ii) Where the fertilizer industry is prepared to set up buffers for distribution in remote and inaccessible areas, the Department of Fertilizers may recognize the effort and extend support through suitable and appropriate schemes.	The Department will operate a buffer stock through the State Institutional Agencies / Fertilizer Companies in States up to a limit of 5% of their seasonal requirement.
(iii) The existing reduction of Rs.100 PMT from the equated freight rate for deregulated quantities should be rationalized by reducing 20% from the equated freight rate subject to a maximum ceiling of Rs.100 PMT.	There will be no difference in the treatment of regulated and de-regulated urea for the purpose of payment of freight subsidy.

Water Pollution in Sea

*391. SHRIMATI P. SATHEEDEVI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of fish die every year in the sea due to water pollution and related problems;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

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

(d) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) As per the information of Ministry of Agriculture, no specific cases of mass fish mortality have been reported. However there have been some isolated instances of fish mortality observed in the sea on the south-west coast of the country. In September 2004, there were two instances of fish mortality, one at Tangesseri near Kollam and at Vizhinjam near Trivandrum in Kerala. Another instance of fish mortality was reported off Mumbai coast during October, 2005. The precise cause for these incidents have not been established.

(c) and (d) The Department of Ocean Development, Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) regularly monitors the

health of coastal water quality under a national coordinated research programme on "Coastal Ocean Monitoring and Prediction System (COMAPS)" with the active participation of reputed national research and development laboratories including coastal State Universities. Wherever necessary, investigations are also undertaken by National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI), Nagpur, Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), institutes like Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI), Kochi, Central Institute of Fisheries Education (CIFE), Mumbai and other organizations. India is a party to the marine pollution (MARPOL) international agreement, under which various actions are required to be taken by all ships.

Death of Elephants

*393. SHRI K.C. SINGH "BABA": Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of elephants killed due to mining related activities, poaching, electrocution or revenge by angry farmers, separately, during the last three years, State-wise;

(b) the steps taken/being taken by the Government to stop the killings;

(c) whether the steps to prevent the killing of elephants include issue of necessary directions in this

regard to the licence holders of mining activities and electric fencing by the farmers;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) As per the available information, the number of elephants killed due to poaching, electrocution, man-animal conflicts and mining related activity during the last three years, State-wise, is given in the enclosed statement.

(b) The important steps taken to stop such killings are as given below:

- (i) Elephants are included in Schedule-1 of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 thereby affording them highest degree of protection.
- (ii) Regular patrolling by forest staff.
- (iii) Installation of wireless system with mobile facility for better communication of protection work.
- (iv) Formation of antipoaching mobile squad.
- (v) Installation of antipoaching checkgates at strategic and sensitive points.
- (vi) Provision of secret funds for collection of intelligence of poachers and their activities.
- (vii) Trade in elephant ivory has been totally banned to discourage poaching of elephants for its tusk.

(viii) The Asian Elephant is also included in the Appendix-1 of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild fauna & flora (CITES) which prohibits international trade in Asian ivory.

(ix) Efforts have been made under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme 'Project Elephant' to protect and restore the migratory routes and corridor used by the elephants including development of scientific and planned management for conservation of elephant and its habitat.

(x) Financial assistance is provided to the elephant range states by the Central Government under the scheme 'Project Elephant'.

(xi) Promotion of measures for mitigation of man-elephant conflict in problem areas and moderating pressures of human and live stock on crucial elephant habitats is taken up.

(c) to (e) Mining activities in Protected Areas are normally not permitted and discouraged around the habitats of key species. However, in case of mining in forest areas where wildlife may be present, mining lease holders are directed to take suitable measures in consultation with the Chief Wildlife Warden so as to check the loss to wildlife. Killing of elephants by any means including electrocution is prohibited under the provisions of the Wildlife (protection) Act, 1972. However, erection of solar fences to prevent elephant attack on both humans and standing crops is a part of the mitigative measures taken up for man-animal conflict.

Statement

Sl. No.	Name of State	Poaching				Electrocution				Man-elephant conflicts				Mining Related Activity 2005-06
		2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	Total	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	Total	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	Total	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1	Assam	16	7	16	39	4	4	-	8	1	-	-	1	-
2	Arunachal Pradesh	-	-	1	1	-	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	-
3	Jharkhand	2	1	-	3	4	3	-	7	-	-	-	-	-
4	Karnataka	6	3	10	19	10	13	9	32	1	-	-	1	-
5	Kerala	6	4	1	11	7	1	-	8	1	-	-	1	-
6	Madhya Pradesh	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
7	Tamil Nadu	-	-	1	1	3	8	-	11	-	-	-	-	-

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
8	Uttaranchal	-	2	1	3	4	-	2	6	-	-	-	-	-
9	Uttar Pradesh	2	-	-	2	2	2	-	4	-	-	-	-	-
10	West Bengal	1	1	-	2	2	2	-	4	-	-	-	-	-
11	Meghalaya	7	2	1	10	6	3	-	9	-	-	-	-	-
12	Orissa	11	5	7	23	10	15	1	26	-	2	2	4	2
13	Mizoram	2	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
14	Tripura	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Total		53	25	39	117	52	54	12	118	3	2	2	7	2

[Translation]

Strategy for Kharif Production

*395. SHRI MOHAN RAWALE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a workshop of the Agriculture Secretaries of the States was held on April 3rd and 4th, 2007 for maximizing the kharif production;

(b) if so, the details of the discussions held and the decisions taken;

(c) the strategy to be adopted for maximizing the kharif production alongwith the time by which it is likely to be implemented; and

(d) the crops proposed to be covered thereunder?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) Yes, Sir. A National Conference on Agriculture for Kharif Campaign 2007, was held on 3rd and 4th April, 2007. Representatives of the Central Ministries concerned/Agriculture Secretaries of States/Union Territories and other experts participated to discuss, inter-alia, the strategy and action plan for maximizing Kharif production in the ensuing season.

(b) to (d) Detailed deliberations were held on the strategy for enhancing agricultural growth and maximizing Kharif production. It was decided that both the Central and State Governments would make joint efforts to increase production of crops such as rice, coarse cereals, pulses and oilseeds during the ensuing Kharif season adopting, inter-alia, the following strategy which is already under implementation:-

- (i) extension of area and productivity of major food crops of the States, depending upon its agro-climatic zones, including a major thrust on the pulses and oilseeds sector.
- (ii) focused attention to the development of rainfed and dry-land areas, through the introduction of better watershed management techniques coupled with appropriate farming and livelihood system approaches.
- (iii) timely availability of quality seeds in adequate quantity and undertaking a Nation-wide campaign on the development of quality seeds, particularly of pulses to improve the seed replacement rates in a determined and sustained manner.
- (iv) timely availability of other agricultural inputs such as fertilizers, micro-nutrients, pesticides etc. in adequate quantity.
- (v) immediate revamp of the extension system to improve delivery mechanism at the grassroots level.

[English]

Relief Package to Sugar Mills

*396. SHRI JASHUBHAI DHANABHAI BARAD:
SHRI A. SAI PRATHAP:

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

(a) whether the Government has recently announced Rs. 850 crore relief package for the sugar mills;

(b) if so, the details thereof indicating the manner in which the package is proposed to be utilised and the mills likely to be benefited therefrom;

(c) the extent of loss suffered by the sugar industry due to delay in announcement of the said package; and

(d) the time by which the said package is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) and (b) In order to ensure that over production of sugar does not lead to a situation of mounting cane price arrears, the Central Government on 24th March, 2007 have decided as under:-

- (i) to create a buffer stock of 20 lac tons for a period of one year (01.05.2007 to 30.04.2008) under which interest charges, insurance and storage charges for the quantity taken as buffer will be reimbursed to sugar factories. The cost of this subsidy is estimated to be Rs.378 crores for one year. Further, banks would provide additional credit of Rs.420 crores on creation of 20 lac tons of buffer. Thus, Rs.798 crores would be available with sugar factories to pay cane price to sugarcane farmers, for the sugar season 2006-07 including the cane price arrears of previous sugar seasons. The buffer subsidy and the additional credit are to be used exclusively for the payment of cane price.
- (ii) to provide export assistance to defray the internal transport and freight charges, marketing and handling charges at the flat rate of Rs 1350 per ton on export of domestically manufactured sugar from sugar factories situated in the coastal States and at the flat rate of Rs. 1450 per ton from sugar factories situated in other than coastal States. Exports made under Open General License (OGL) only (and not under 'advance license') on or after 19th April, 2007 and upto 18th April, 2008 or till further orders, whichever is earlier, would be eligible for this assistance. Further, the amount so received is also to be used for cane price payment.

(c) and (d) Although the Central Government took the above decisions on 24th March, 2007, these decisions could not be announced immediately as the process of electing the Legislative Assembly in Uttar Pradesh had begun by that time. A reference was made to the Election Commission of India on 26th March, 2007, seeking their approval to notify the decisions of the Government. On receipt of the approval of Election Commission in the Department on 15th April, 2007, appropriate steps have been taken to implement the decisions. The order for export assistance was issued on 19th April, 2007. The notification for creation and maintenance of 20 lac tons of

buffer stock from 1st May, 2007 to 30th April, 2008 was published in the Gazette of India on 20th April, 2007. Hence, there has been no delay on the part of the Central Government to announce the said decisions

Soil Testing Laboratories

*397. SHRI ANANT KUMAR HEGDE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of soil testing laboratories functioning in the country at present, State-wise;

(b) the details of the performance of such laboratories assessed in physical and financial terms during each of the last three years and thereafter, State-wise;

(c) whether the Government proposes to increase the number of soil testing laboratories;

(d) if so, the details of such laboratories proposed to be opened during the Eleventh Five Year Plan, State-wise;

(e) whether the Government proposes to provide soil test mini kits to farmers at cheaper rates; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) At present there are 609 soil testing laboratories (STLs) (487 static and 122 mobile) functioning in the country. A statement showing state-wise number of STLs working during 2005-06 is enclosed.

(b) The performance of all the STLs is being assessed and the percent capacity utilization of STLs during 2002-03, 2003-04, 2004-05 and 2005-06 are 70.5%, 73.2%, 71.53% and 74.50% respectively.

(c) and (d) To increase the number of STLs in the country, the Government is providing financial assistance for establishment of STLs through the Centrally Sponsored Scheme, Balanced & Integrated Use of Fertilizers under Macro Management of Agriculture Scheme. The State Governments are augmenting the STLs capacity under Macro Management of Agriculture Scheme in 11th Five Year Plan also.

(e) At present there is no such proposal under consideration of the Government.

(f) The Government is promoting establishment and strengthening of static STLs in the country to ensure analysis of soil samples for major, secondary and micro nutrients which the soil test mini kits are not able to analyse.

Statement

**State wise Number of Soil Testing Laboratories,
Analyzing Capacity, and Utilization During 2005-06.**

S. No.	Name of the State	No. of Soil Testing Laboratories			Annual Analyzing Capacity In '000'	Sample Analyzed In '000'	Capacity Utilization (%)
		Static	Mobile	Total			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
I. South Zone							
1.	Andhra Pradesh	81	4	85	526.0	474.2	90.2.
2	Karnataka	22	3	25	329.5	254.4	77.2
3.	Kerala	15	9	24	372.0	221.1	59.4
4.	Tamil Nadu	21	17	38	848.0	689.7	79.0
5.	Pondicherry	2	0	2	6.0	5.2	86.7
6.	Andaman and Nicobar Island	1	1	2	12.0	10.6	88.3
7.	Lakshadweep	0	0	0	-	-	-
Total		142	34	176	2093.5	1635.2	78.1
II. West Zone							
8.	Gujarat	21	3	24	254.0	309.1	121.7
9.	Madhya Pradesh	23	3	26	313.5	190.4	60.7
10.	Maharashtra	35	5	40	168.0	166.8	93.3
11.	Rajasthan	10	12	22	278.0	285.4	102.7
12.	Chhattisgarh	4	0	4	40.0	35.1	87.8
13.	Goa	1	1	2	24.0	22.5	93.8
14.	Daman and Diu	0	0	0	-	-	-
15	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	1	0	1	1.0	NII	-
Total		95	24	119	1078.5	1009.3	93.6
III. North Zone							
16.	Haryana	30	1	31	313.0	237.7	75.9
17.	Punjab	53	14	67	601.0	214.5	35.7
18.	Himachal Pradesh	11	2	13	100.0	88.3	88.3
19.	Uttar Pradesh	51	21	72	1627.0	1364.7	83.9
20.	Jammu and Kashmir	6	4	10	64.0	44.2	69.1

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
21.	Uttaranchal	13	3	16	85.0	68.8	80.9
22.	Delhi	1	0	1	5.0	0.4	7.1
23.	Chandigarh	0	0	0	-	-	-
Total		165	45	210	2795.0	2018.6	72.2

IV. East Zone

24.	Bihar	23	0	23	200.0	46.3	23.2
25.	Orissa	11	0	11	120.0	106.4	88.7
26.	West Bengal	24	7	31	147.0	51.4	35.0
27.	Jharkhand	7	3	10	67.0	18.4	27.5
Total		65	10	75	534.0	222.5	41.7

V. N.E. Zone

28.	Assam	8	4	12	106.0	59.5	56.1
29.	Tripura	2	4	6	21.0	17.7	84.3
30.	Manipur	3	0	3	20.0	7.0	35.0
31.	Nagaland	3	0	3	45.0	12.5	27.8
32.	Arunachal Pradesh	1	0	1	5.0	1.7	34.0
33.	Meghalaya	1	1	2	10.00	8.0	80.0
34.	Sikkim	1	0	1	8.0	7.9	98.8
35.	Mizoram	1	0	1	8.0	8.0	100.0
Total		20	9	29	223.0	122.3	54.8
Grand Total		487	122	609	6724.0	5007.9	74.5

Funds under National Welfare Schemes for Fishermen

*399. SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPA:

SHRI PANNIAN RAVINDRAN:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government has released its share under National Welfare Scheme for fishermen to the State Governments particularly to Kerala;

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

(c) whether any amount out of the sanctioned assistance is yet to be released by the Union Government under the scheme;

(d) if so, the details thereof during the said period, State-wise;

(e) the reasons therefor; and

(f) the time by which the said amount is likely to be released?

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

(b) to (d) The Centrally Sponsored National Scheme for Welfare of Fishermen is implemented in all the States/UTs including State of Kerala. Out of the total Central assistance of Rs. 225.00 crore released during the 9th

and 10th Plan for implementation of welfare scheme for fishermen across the country on receipt of proposals, a sum of Rs. 26.05 crore constituting 11.15% of the total allocation have been released to the State of Kerala.

The State-wise details of funds sanctioned and released during the last three year (2004-07) and the balance liability under the National Scheme for Welfare of Fishermen is given in the enclosed statement. Out of Rs. 95.57 crore sanctioned under the welfare scheme to various States/UTs during 2004-07, a sum of Rs. 78.11 crore has been released and Rs. 17.46 crore is balance committed liability.

(e) and (f) Under the Welfare Scheme, Central assistance is extended on receipt of proposals from the State Government on need basis, availability of matching share in the State budget and performance of the scheme i.e. submission of utilization certificate and physical progress report in respect earlier releases. The State Governments are eligible to get balance amount on submission of aforesaid information subject to availability of funds under the scheme.

Statement

Details of Central assistance sanctioned/released/balance liability to the States/UTs under the Welfare scheme during the last three years (2004-07)

(Rs. in lakh)

S.No.	States/UTs	2004-2007		
		Sanctioned	Released	Balance
1	2	3	4	5
1	Andhra Pradesh	284.47	284.47	0.00
2	Arunachal Pradesh	64.00	64.00	0.00
3	Assam	23.65	14.60	9.05
4	Bihar	176.51	127.48	49.03
5	Chhattisgarh	160.82	71.72	89.10
6	Himachal Pradesh	13.70	13.70	0.00
7	Goa	1.05	1.05	0.00
8	Jammu and Kashmir	100.00	100.00	0.00
9	Jharkhand	802.90	701.90	101.00
10	Karnataka	991.89	991.89	0.00

1	2	3	4	5
11	Kerala	544.24	544.24	0.00
12	Madhya Pradesh	77.97	77.97	0.00
13	Maharashtra	113.62	113.62	0.00
14	Manipur	50.77	46.52	4.25
15	Nagaland	186.80	155.55	31.25
16	Orissa	446.57	223.99	222.58
17	Rajasthan	68.56	68.56	0.00
18	Tamil Nadu	2656.86	2040.28	616.58
19	Tripura	36.45	36.45	0.00
20	Uttar Pradesh	1307.90	914.40	393.50
21	Uttaranchal	6.45	6.45	0.00
22	West Bengal	843.20	641.20	202.00
23	Andaman and Nicobar	7.31	7.31	0.00
24	Daman and Diu	30.00	30.00	0.00
25	Pondicherry	561.59	533.76	27.83
Total		9557.28	7811.11	1746.17

Growth Rate of Agriculture

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

(a) the details of the target fixed and the success achieved in agricultural growth in the country during the Tenth Five Year Plan, Year-wise and State-wise; and

(b) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to improve and achieve the desired growth rate in agricultural production during the Eleventh Plan Period, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) The all-India growth target for Agriculture Sector in terms of annual growth rate of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) during the Tenth Plan (2002-07) was fixed at 4 per cent. As per the latest data on National Accounts released by Central Statistical Organisation (CSO), the annual growth rate of agriculture sector during Tenth Plan (2002-07) at 1999-2000 prices stands at 2.3 percent.

The State-wise and year-wise achievement in terms of growth rate of agricultural GDP (at 1993-1994 prices), which are available till 2004-05 are given in the table below : —

State-wise Details of Target set for Agriculture & Allied Sector and Achievement made in the Country during the Tenth Five Year Plan.

(in percentage)

State/UT	Growth Target for 10th Five Year Plan (2002-07)	Annual Growth Rate (%)		
		2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005
1	2	3	4	5
Andhra Pradesh	3.05	-9.9	14.2	3.4
Arunachal Pradesh	4.00	4.8	1.3	-2.2
Assam	3.82	1.4	-1.6	-0.5
Bihar	3.75	22.7	-19.4	17.1
Jharkhand	3.00	5.3	2.4	5.0
Goa	-0.90	1.1	15.9	5.4
Gujarat	4.03	-13.5	56.6	-10.1
Haryana	4.07	-0.2	9.0	3.7
Himachal Pradesh	4.55	0.0	8.1	9.4
Jammu and Kashmir	4.20	3.5	5.0	4.9
Karnataka	4.99	-7.7	-14.7	14.7
Kerala	3.05	1.4	3.9	-2.8
Madhya Pradesh	4.00	-17.9	36.4	-2.4
Chhattisgarh	3.00	-26.7	46.5	-15.0
Maharashtra	3.56	-1.8	-6.6	-2.3
Manipur	3.59	-2.6	2.6	3.3
Meghalaya	4.00	3.6	2.6	3.0
Mizoram	2.00	-8.1	NA	NA
Nagaland	4.00	12.8	NA	NA
Orissa	4.07	-18.5	23.8	3.5
Punjab	4.07	-3.5	6.2	4.8
Rajasthan	4.50	-34.3	80.2	-10.9
Sikkim	5.00	16.0	6.2	2.7
Tamil Nadu	3.54	-21.9	-2.7	15.1
Tripura	3.90	-4.1	2.0	NA

1	2	3	4	5
Uttar Pradesh	4.67	1.9	2.8	1.0
Uttaranchal	3.50	2.3	4.6	2.4
West Bengal	5.09	-4.1	3.7	1.3
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	1.00	7.5	NA	NA
Chandigarh	-2.00	16.1	-11.3	-2.8
Delhi	-12.21	-1.2	-2.3	0.9
Pondicherry	1.10	-4.3	-0.9	-15.9
All-India	4.00	-7.0	9.6	1.1

NA= Not Available

Source: Central Statistical Organisation (CSO)

(b) Among the major initiatives taken by the Government to improve agricultural production include Annual Plan Outlay of Rs. 5,560 crore for 2007-08 (BE) of the Deptt. of Agriculture & Cooperation, approval of setting up National Rainfed Area Authority (NRAA) to deal with the problems faced by rainfed areas, sharper focus on Mission for Pulses, proposing a target of Rs. 225,000 crore as farm credit and an addition of 50 lakh new farmers to the banking system during 2007-08 as announced in the Budget 2007-2008, continuation of agricultural insurance scheme, extension of Agriculture Technology Management Agency (ATMA) to more districts and Horticulture development.

The major steps proposed in the Approach Paper to the Eleventh Plan to achieve the desired growth rate of 4.1 percent in agricultural production are as under:

- Doubling the rate of growth of irrigated area;
- Improvement of water management, rain water harvesting and watershed development;
- Reclamation of degraded land and focus on soil quality;
- Bridging the knowledge gap through effective extension;
- Diversification into high value outputs, fruits, vegetables, flowers, herbs and spices, medicinal plants, bamboo, bio-diesel etc. but with adequate measures to ensure food security;
- Provision of easy access to credit at affordable rates;

- Improving the incentive structure and functioning of markets;
- Refocus on land reforms issues;
- Energizing the National Agricultural Research System and improve its capacity to develop and deliver innovative and effective technologies relevant to the current contexts and needs.

Problem of Caterpillars in Karnataka

3743. SHRI G. KARUNAKARA REDDY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- whether the Karnataka has always faced the problem of caterpillars;
- if so, the steps taken by the Union Government in this regard; and
- the nature of assistance provided so far and proposed to provided by the Union Government to the State to tackle the problem?

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

(b) and (c) The Central Government advises the State Governments/Departments of Horticulture/Agriculture to monitor the pest and disease situation in various crops and provide advisories, so that the States can take appropriate control measures to avoid crop losses. Further, to assist the States, Central 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". The mandate of these Centres is pest/disease monitoring, production and release of bio-control agents/bio-pesticides, conservation of bio-control agents and Human Resource Development in Integrated Pest Management (IPM) by imparting training to Agriculture/Horticulture Extension Officers and farmers at grass root level by organizing Farmers Field Schools (FFSs). Under the scheme 544 FFSs have been organized over the years, wherein 2232 Agriculture/Horticulture Extension Officers and 16,670 farmers in different States/Union Territories have been trained on latest IPM technology in various crops. IPM package of practices for pest/disease management in 77 major crops in collaboration with State Department of Agriculture/Horticulture/Indian Council of Agricultural Research Institutions/State Agriculture Universities have been prepared and circulated to all States/Union Territories for their use.

Further, grant-in-aid of Rs.101.84 lakhs has been given for strengthening/setting up of State Bio-control Laboratory (SBCL) at Gulbarga, and State Pesticide Testing Laboratories in the State.

Import of Sugar

3744. SHRI NARHARI MAHATO: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether sugar was imported during the last three years;

(b) if so, the details and quantum thereof indicating the names of the countries from where it was imported and the Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) and Government Corporations involved in the said import;

(c) the reasons attributed to such imports;

(d) the date on which tenders were invited and contracts awarded in this regard;

(e) the estimated domestic production of sugar when the decision to import sugar was taken;

(f) the quantity and value of sugar imported by these PSUs and Government's Corporation from other countries;

(g) whether imported sugar has been found to be of poor quality;

(h) if so, the details thereof; and

(i) the estimated loss incurred/likely to be

incurred on the sale of such poor quality imported sugar at reduced rate in international market?

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 (i) The requisite information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[Translation]

Special Purpose Fund for Cash Crops

3745. SHRI DEVIDAS PINGLE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government proposes to set up a Special Purpose Fund for certain cash crops;

(b) if so, the time by which such a fund is likely to be set up;

(c) whether all the States proposed to be covered under the said fund; and

(d) if so, the details thereof alongwith 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) to (d) No, Sir. There is no proposal before the Government to set up a Special Purpose Fund for certain cash crops. However, a Special Purpose Tea Fund has already been launched by the Government for replanting and rejuvenation of Tea.

Loss in Export and Import of Foodgrains

3746. SHRI THAWAR CHAND GEHLOT: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of quantum and price of foodgrains exported by the Government between January 2004 and January, 2007 alongwith the names of countries to which it was exported;

(b) the details of quantum and rate of foodgrains imported, during the said period, alongwith the names of countries from where they were imported;

(c) the names of the foodgrains imported at rates higher than the rates at which they were exported alongwith the resultant loss incurred by the Government therein; and

(d) the reasons for the such loss making imports?

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 quantity of wheat and rice exported from the Central Pool between January 2004 and January 2007 is as follows:

(Figures in Lakh MTs)

	Wheat	Rice
Total	19.67	2.01

1.88 lakh MTs and 0.15 Lakh MTs of wheat have been lifted by the World Food Programme (WFP) as humanitarian aid to Afghanistan and Iraq respectively.

The statements-I and II showing the Wheat and Rice Prices announced by the Government from time to time as the effective export price for export purposes are enclosed.

(b) 49.10 lakh MTs of wheat has been imported by STC for Central Pool account between January 2004 and January 2007 at the weighted average price of 205.31 US dollars from Australia, Canada, France, Russia, Hungary, Czech Republic, Ukraine, Romania, Bulgaria, Argentina and Slovakia.

(c) Government does not undertake export/import of foodgrains, simultaneously. However, depending upon the situation, decision to either import or export foodgrains, is taken. Hence, no loss is incurred by the Government on this account.

(d) Does not arise.

Statement-I

Wheat Price announced by the Government from time to time for Export purposes

(Figures in Rs. per MT)

S.No.	Period	Rate
1	2	3
1.	From 01-01-2004 (Valid upto 31-03-2004) Validity Extended upto 30-6-2004	
(a)	Crop Year 1998-1999 & Earlier Years	5,485/-
(b)	Crop Year 1999-2000	5,885/-
(c)	Crop Year 2000-2001	6,085/-
(d)	Crop Year 2001-2002	6,085/-
(e)	Crop Year 2002-2003	6,225/-
(f)	Crop Year 2003-2004	6,525/-
2.	Period (01-07-2004 to 30-9-2004)- Extended upto 31-12-2004 For Govt. AID/WFP	
(a)	Crop Year 1998-1999 & Earlier Years	5,700/-
(b)	Crop Year 1999-2000	6,100/-
(c)	Crop Year 2000-2001	6,300/-
(d)	Crop Year 2001-2002	6,400/-
(e)	Crop Year 2002-2003	6,500/-
(f)	Crop Year 2003-2004	7,000/-
3.	Period (01-01-2005 to 31-03-2005)- For Govt. AID/WFP	9,350/-

1	2	3
4.	Period (01-04-2005 to 30-06-2005) - For Govt. AID/WFP	9,350/-
5.	Period (01-07-2005 to 30-9-2005)- For Govt. AID/WFP	10,223/-
6.	Period (01-10-2005 to 31-12-2005)- For Govt. AID/WFP (Inclusive of VAT & other local taxes and would be applicable for stocks of all crop years including 2005-06)	10,223/-
7.	Period (01-01-2006 to 31-03-2006) For Govt. AID/WFP (Inclusive of VAT & other local taxes and would be applicable for stocks of all crop years including 2005-06)	10,223/-
8.	Period (01-4-2006 to 30-6-2006) & 01 -7-2006 to 30-9-2006 for Govt. AID/WFP (Inclusive of VAT & other local taxes and would be applicable for stocks of all crop years including 2006-07)	11,276.30
9.	Period (01-10-2006 to 31-12-2006) For Govt. AID/WFP (Inclusive of VAT & other local taxes and would be applicable for stocks of all crop years including 2006-07)	11,973.30
10.	Period (01-01-2007 to 31-03-2007) For Govt. AID/WFP (Inclusive of VAT & other local taxes and would be applicable for stocks of all crop years including 2006-07)	11,973.30

Statement-II*Rice Price announced by the Government from time to time for Export purposes*

(Figures in Rs. per MT)

S.No.	Period	Parboiled	Raw
1	2	3	4
1.	From 01-01-2004 (Valid upto 31-03-2004) Validity Extended upto 30-6-2004		
	(a) Crop Year 1998-1999	7,550/-	7,350/-
	(b) Crop Year 1999-2000	7,600/-	7,400/-
	(c) Crop Year 2000-2001	7,650/-	7,450/-
	(d) Crop Year 2001-2002	7,725/-	7,525/-
	(e) Crop Year 2002-2003	7,800/-	7,600/-
2.	From 01-07-2004 to 30-09-2004 - Extended upto 31.12.2004 For Govt. AID/WFP		
	(a) Crop Year 1998-1999 & Earlier Years	8,600/-	8600/-
	(b) Crop Year 1999-2000	8,600/-	8,600/-
	(c) Crop Year 2000-2001	8,600/-	8,600/-
	(d) Crop Year 2001-2002	8,600/-	8,600/-
	(e) Crop Year 2002-2003	8,600/-	8,600/-
	(f) Crop Year 2003-2004	NIL	NIL

1	2	3	4
3.	From 01-01-2005 to 31-03-2005 - For Govt. AID/WFP	13,600/-	13,100/-
4.	From 01-04-2005 to 30-06-2005 - For Govt. AID/WFP	13,600/-	13,100/-
5.	From 01-07-2005 to 30-09-2005 - For Govt. AID/WFP	13,376/-	12,856/-
6.	From 01-10-2005 to 31-12-2005 - (Inclusive of VAT & other local taxes and would be applicable for stocks of all crop years including 2005-06)	13,376/-	12,856/-
7.	Period (01-01-2006 to 31-03-2006) For Govt. AID/WFP (Inclusive of VAT & other local taxes and would be applicable for stocks of all crop years including 2005-06)	13,376/-	12,856/-
8.	Period (01-04-2006 to 30-06-2006) & 01-07-2006 to 30-09-2006 For Govt. AID/WFP (Inclusive of VAT & other local taxes and would be applicable for stocks of all crop years including 2006-07)	13,950/-	
9.	Period (01-10-2006 to 31-12-2006) (Inclusive of VAT & other local taxes and would be applicable for stocks of all crop years including 2006-07)	14,327.70	
10.	Period (01-01-2007 to 31-03-2007) (Inclusive of VAT & other local taxes and would be applicable for stocks of all crop years including 2006-07)	14,327.70	

*[English]***Replacement of Existing Rules for Municipalities**

3747. SHRI MILIND DEORA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to formulate a new set of rules for the municipalities thereby replacing existing 2000 odd rules;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which these rules are likely to be framed/implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) to (c) To assist the States in providing good urban governance and better services for citizens as enshrined in the 74th Constitutional Amendment Act and to supplement the Urban Reforms Agenda, the Ministry of Urban Development, has developed the model Municipal Law to assist the urban local bodies in the area of accounting reforms, resource mobilisation and entry of private sector partnership. The model Municipal Law inter alia aims at simplification of municipal bylaws, provision of enhanced borrowing, allowing the entry of private sector and authorising concessionaires to penalise users for non payment of dues.

The Ministry of Urban Development has drafted this model municipal law under the Indo USAID FIRE Project.

This would facilitate and assist the State governments in enacting/amending their Municipal Laws.

*[Translation]***Improvement of Alkaline Soil**

3748. SHRI MAHAVIR BHAGORA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the target fixed and success achieved under Reclamation of Alkali Soil (RAS) and Watershed Development Project in Shifting Cultivation Areas (WDPSCA) schemes for improving alkaline soil during each of the last three years, State-wise;

(b) the funds allocated, released and utilized under the said schemes during each of the last three years, State-wise;

(c) whether any special provision for the tribal areas have been made under these 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 (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) to (d) Government of India is implementing a Centrally Sponsored Programme for Reclamation of Alkali Soils (RAS) through Macro Management of Agriculture (MMA) for the reclamation of the soils affected by alkalinity. The fund

allocated under this scheme is included in the overall release of funds under Macro Management of Agriculture. The State-wise target, achievement and expenditure for last three years (2004-07) are given in the enclosed statement

Government of India is also implementing a Central

Sector State Plan Scheme of Watershed Development Project in Shifting Cultivation Areas (WDPSCA) for development of the degraded shifting cultivation areas in the North Eastern States of the country which predominantly have tribal population. The State-wise target, achievement, outlay, release and expenditure for last three years (2004-07) are given in the enclosed statement.

Statement

State-wise Target, Achievement, Outlay and Expenditure of Reclamation of Alkali Soils (RAS) & Watershed Development Projects in Shifting Cultivation Areas (WDPSCA) during last three years of X Plan.

A. RAS

Phy. Area in lakh ha. & Fin. in Rs. lakh

S.No.	Name of States	2004-05			2005-06			2006-07		
		Physical		Financial	Physical		Financial	Physical		Financial
		Target	Achiev.	Exp.	Target	Achiev.	Exp.	Target	Achiev.*	Exp.
1	Andhra Pradesh	0.004	0.000	0.00	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.015	0.015	158.00
2	Bihar	0.000	0.800	0.00	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.000	0.000	0.00
3	Gujarat	0.013	0.172	253.35	0.063	0.085	447.55	0.112	0.112	708.47
4	Haryana	0.120	0.104	200.00	0.100	0.132	260.00	0.170	0.170	400.00
5	Karnataka	0.007	0.006	71.00	0.050	0.006	73.15	0.010	0.010	133.33
6	Madhya Pradesh	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.000	0.000	0.00
7	Maharashtra	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.002	0.000	0.00	0.010	0.010	100.00
8	Punjab	0.015	0.000	0.00	0.050	0.000	0.00	0.030	0.030	200.00
9	Rajasthan	0.014	0.051	50.97	0.120	0.031	86.36	0.010	0.010	293.00
10	Tamil Nadu	0.005	0.012	31.13	0.050	0.030	62.90	0.100	0.100	113.31
11	Uttar Pradesh	0.010	0.000	0.00	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.008	0.008	10.00
Total		0.188	0.345	606.450	0.435	0.284	929.96	0.465	0.465	2116.11

*Anticipated

B. WDPSCA

Phy. Area in lakh ha. & Fin. in Rs. lakh

S.No.	Name of States	2004-05				2005-06				2006-07			
		Physical		Financial		Physical		Financial		Physical		Financial	
		Target	Achiev.	Out & Rel.	Exp.	Target	Achiev.	Out & Rel.	Exp.	Target	Achiev.*	Out & Rel.	Exp.*
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1	Arunachal Pradesh	0.010	0.010	100.00	100.51	0.030	0.015	300.00	150.00	0.0350	0.0350	350.00	350.00
2	Assam	0.025	0.024	250.00	250.00	0.045	0.030	400.00	315.00	0.0550	0.0550	550.00	550.00
3	Manipur	0.020	0.026	200.00	250.00	0.040	0.035	350.00	350.00	0.0600	0.0600	600.00	600.00

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
4	Meghalaya	0.030	0.048	300.00	300.00	0.050	0.132	500.00	500.00	0.0550	0.0550	550.00	550.00
5	Mizoram	0.050	0.036	500.00	350.00	0.060	0.054	550.00	700.00	0.0550	0.0550	550.00	550.00
6	Nagaland	0.045	0.043	450.00	450.00	0.060	0.052	600.00	600.00	0.1050	0.1050	1050.00	1050.00
7	Tripura	0.020	0.023	200.00	226.74	0.030	0.030	300.00	300.61	0.0350	0.0350	350.00	350.00
Total		0.200	0.210	2000.00	1927.25	0.315	0.348	3800.00	2915.61	0.4000	0.4000	4000.00	4000.00

* Anticipated
Out- outlay
Rel- release

Use of Forest Land for other purposes

3749. SHRI RAGHUVeer SINGH KOSHAL: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether permission is granted for the use of forest land for other purposes;

(b) if so, the details of permissions granted during the last two years including the current financial year, State-wise;

(c) whether any other land has been provided in lieu of the said forest land or any amount of money has been granted for compensatory Afforestation work;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether Afforestation works has been done on the said lands; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) Under the provisions of the Forest (Conservation) Act 1980, the Central Government accords prior approval for diversion of Forest land for non-forestry purposes.

(b) So far, about 14580 proposals, involving about 1,119,017 ha. of forestland have been approved. The state wise details are given in the enclosed statement-I.

(c) and (d) While according approvals to the projects, conditions such as Afforestation on equivalent non-forestland in lieu of forestland diverted at the cost of the project is invariably stipulated.

(e) and (f) The details of Compensatory Afforestation done so far is given in the enclosed statement-II.

Statement-I

Region: Central

Category: All Categories

Case Status: Approved+
In principle

During: 25/10/1980 to
31/03/2007

As on: 31/03/2007

State/UT	Number of Cases Approved	Total Land Diverted (Ha.)
1	2	3
Andaman and Nicobar Island	73	2,725.65
Andhra Pradesh	440	36,655.72
Arunachal Pradesh	120	44,048.33
Assam	202	7,003.88
Bihar	40	1,985.29
Chandigarh	20	43,307
Chhattisgarh	356	86,915.04
Dadar and Nagar Haveli	169	274.842
Daman and Diu	0	0
Delhi	3	3.965
Goa	86	1,574.34
Gujarat	1063	65,674.14
Haryana	863	8,371.20
Himachal Pradesh	1037	14,215.57
Jammu and Kashmir	8	1,500.09
Jharkhand	202	14,218.55

1	2	3	1	2	3
Karnataka	618	42,158.06	Pondicherry	1	0.96
Kerala	208	40,889.80	Punjab	2145	76,590.37
Lakshadweep	0	0	Rajasthan	492	19,339.80
Madhya Pradesh	822	388,854.98	Sikkim	223	1,865.34
Maharashtra	1396	85,699.37	Tamil Nadu	383	4,847.28
Manipur	20	1,051.07	Tripura	197	7,922.45
Meghalaya	81	396.034	Uttar Pradesh	303	40,635.42
Mizoram	24	25,214.81	Uttaranchal	2493	51,930.46
Nagaland	0	0	West Bengal	78	3,988.84
Orissa	408	42,442.29	Total	14580	1,119,017.25

Statement-II

As on 31.03.2007

S.No.	State/UT	No. of Cases Approved	Area Diverted (HA)	Compensatory Afforestation (HA)							Total (%) of CA Achieved
				Forest Land	Non Forest Land	Penal CA on Forest Land	Total	Forest Land	Non Forest Land	Total	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	73	2725.65	617.90	1,979.14	1.00	2,598.03	189.70	1,715.73	1,905.43	73.34
2	Andhra Pradesh	442	36,663.12	5,351.90	23,628.72	2,948.81	31,929.43	4,587.77	15,805.96	20,393.73	63.87
3	Arunachal Pradesh	120	44,048.33	9,711.40	4,544.20	6,163.00	20,418.60	5,388.21	86.00	5,474.21	26.81
4	Assam	202	7,003.88	6,924.73	1,524.23	328.95	8,777.91	1,163.06	536.96	1,700.03	19.37
5	Bihar	46	1,965.29	1,254.62	556.68	69.20	1,880.50	846.56	0.00	846.56	45.02
6	Chandigarh	20	43,3072	6.48	18.26	0.00	24.74	0.00	0.12	0.12	0.47
7	Chhattisgarh	354	86,891.62	33,158.88	58,539.67	16,238.11	107,936.66	27,284.00	3,317.00	30,601.00	28.35
8	Haveli	169	274,8423	356.15	273.35	0.00	629.51	269.15	210.15	479.30	76.14
9	Delhi	3	3,965	0.00	5.46	0.00	5.46	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
10	Goa	86	1,574.34	852.94	456.12	266.77	1,577.82	1,131.44	18.00	1,149.44	72.85
11	Gujarat	1062	65,673.96	6,403.67	51,249.53	23,765.80	81,419.00	17,233.29	27,054.23	44,287.52	54.39
12	Haryana	864	8,371.21	2,586.51	1,536.75	21.41	4,144.67	2,251.63	1,091.69	3,343.51	80.67
13	Himachal Pradesh	1032	14,203.29	16,147.33	523.34	3,971.23	20,641.90	5,739.98	137.00	5,876.98	28.47
14	Jammu and Kashmir	8	1,500.09	1,124.94	0.00	0.00	1,124.94	288.00	0.00	288.00	25.60

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
15	Jharkhand	203	14,395.16	11,476.94	4,729.53	4,176.89	20,383.36	36.00	0.00	36.00	0.18
16	Karnataka	618	42,158.06	6,476.97	30,001.50	5,575.22	42,053.69	9,210.92	27,150.99	36,361.91	86.47
17	Kerala	208	40,889.80	42,961.42	15,220.64	29.96	58,212.02	49,448.53	762.28	50,210.81	86.26
18	Madhya Pradesh	815	388,805.62	119,804.95	213,502.73	89,982.89	423,290.57	129,559.84	38,134.11	167,693.95	39.62
19	Maharashtra	1397	85,700.87	28,909.09	34,401.89	19,120.70	82,431.88	43,919.36	27,653.00	71,572.36	86.83
20	Manipur	20	1,051.07	247.77	741.27	0.00	989.03	181.16	0.00	181.16	18.32
21	Meghalaya	81	396.034	112.03	344.90	0.00	456.93	258.45	4.80	263.25	57.61
22	Mizoram	24	25,214.81	19,263.17	10,439.25	227.57	29,930.00	38.15	5,520.65	5,558.81	18.57
23	Orissa	407	42,430.72	8,993.60	38,148.13	8,934.19	56,075.91	9,777.94	20,649.33	30,427.26	54.26
24	Pondicherry	1	0.96	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
25	Punjab	2141	76,570.53	7,166.93	1,797.66	28,315.94	37,280.52	3,478.51	929.23	4,407.74	11.82
26	Rajasthan	492	19,339.80	2,584.15	14,433.59	10,323.39	27,341.13	3,066.01	7,252.77	10,318.78	37.74
27	Sikkim	220	1,844.24	2,267.22	150.67	95.91	2,513.80	2,012.97	17.78	2,030.75	80.78
28	Tamil Nadu	383	4,847.28	595.59	1,851.53	1,069.95	3,317.07	1,210.03	717.90	1,927.93	58.12
29	Tripura	197	7,922.45	3,611.99	734.42	2,049.39	6,395.79	2,591.54	58.21	2,649.75	41.43
30	Uttar Pradesh	303	40,635.42	54,060.54	6,405.94	2,067.42	62,533.90	2,457.57	4,687.50	7,145.07	11.43
31	Uttaranchal	2493	51,930.46	52,338.07	13,331.84	1,390.71	67,060.61	8,333.53	6,558.00	14,891.53	22.21
32	West Bengal	78	3,988.84	1,848.90	3,854.89	4.66	5,708.45	1,237.35	2,628.27	3,865.62	67.72
Total		14562	1,119,065.03	447,216.77	534,727.81	227,139.07	1,209,083.65			525,888.52	43.49

Allocation for Welfare Institutions Under PDS

(e) the action taken by the Government thereon?

3750. SHRIMATI RUPATAI D. PATIL:

SHRI CHANDRA MANI TRIPATHI:

SHRIMATI KARUNA SHUKLA:

DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY:

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

(a) whether welfare institutions in the States are being allocated foodgrains under the public distribution system;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether some States have requested the Union Government to increase the quantum of foodgrains allocated for welfare institutions;

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

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 Welfare Institutions in the States/Union Territories are being allocated foodgrains in addition to allocation made under Targetted Public Distribution System. A statement showing the allocation/offtake of foodgrains under this scheme for 2006-07 is enclosed.

(c) to (e) State Governments of Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Madhya Pradesh, Manipur, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tripura and Union Territory Dadar & Nagar Haveli have requested to increase the quantum of foodgrains allocated to them for their welfare institutions. Since the offtake of the those States & Union Territories is less than the allocated foodgrains under the scheme in the preceding years, their requests for increase in the quantum of foodgrains have not been agreed to.

Statement

Allocation and Offtake for the Year 2006-07 made under Welfare Institutions and Hostels Scheme

(fig. in 000' tonnes)

S.No.	State/UT	Allocation			Offtake		
		Rice	Wheat	Total	Rice	Wheat	Total
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	Andhra Pradesh	202.93	0.00	202.93	201.75	0.56	202.31
2	Arunachal Pradesh	0.24	0.08	0.32	0.00	0.00	0.00
3	Assam	0.06	0.02	0.08	0.01	0.00	0.01
4	Bihar	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
5	Chhattisgarh	1.44	0.60	2.04	0.09	0.00	0.00
6	Delhi	0.20	0.32	0.52	0.01	0.03	0.04
7	Goa	0.36	0.12	0.48	0.00	0.00	0.0
8	Gujarat	3.36	7.80	11.16	0.02	6.07	6.09
9	Haryana	0.07	0.13	0.20	0.00	0.02	0.02
10	Himachal Pradesh	0.60	0.59	1.19	0.43	0.07	0.50
11	Jammu and Kashmir	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
12	Jharkhand	0.10	0.04	0.14	0.26	0.03	0.29
13	Karnataka	44.17	21.01	65.18	13.27	4.37	17.64
14	Kerala	1.80	0.73	2.53	0.54	0.19	0.73
15	Madhya Pradesh	2.28	5.28	7.56	0.78	2.64	3.42
16	Maharashtra	7.56	17.64	25.20	5.71	9.68	15.39
17	Manipur	0.36	0.12	0.48	0.31	0.10	0.41
18	Meghalaya	1.44	0.00	1.44	1.34	0.00	1.34
19	Mizoram	0.96	0.00	0.96	0.61	0.00	0.61
20	Nagaland	1.20	0.49	1.69	1.40	0.64	2.04
21	Orissa	13.44	0.00	13.44	10.52	0.03	10.55
22	Punjab	0.01	0.02	0.03	0.00	0.00	0.00
23	Rajasthan	0.12	0.36	0.48	0.04	0.25	0.29
24	Sikkim	0.12	0.00	0.12	0.00	0.00	0.00
25	Tamil Nadu	38.64	0.00	38.64	37.55	0.47	38.02

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
26	Tripura	0.68	0.00	0.68	0.41	0.00	0.41
27	Uttar Pradesh	0.48	0.18	0.66	0.03	0.09	0.12
28	Uttarakhand	0.02	0.08	0.10	0.00	0.00	0.00
29	West Bengal	2.28	0.96	3.24	0.09	0.00	0.09
30	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	0.05	0.02	0.07	0.01	0.00	0.01
31	Chandigarh	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
32	Dadar and Nagar Haveli	0.06	0.01	0.07	0.00	0.00	0.00
33	Daman and Diu	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
34	Lakshadweep	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
35	Pondicherry	0.24	0.12	0.36	0.08	0.00	0.08
Total		326.27	56.72	382.99	276.26	25.24	301.50

[English]

Monitoring of Antyodaya Anna Yojana

3751. SHRI NAVEEN JINDAL: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has evolved a new procedure to monitor Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY);

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether National Monitors have been deputed to monitor the implementation of this Yojana in various States;

(d) if so, whether they have reported diversion of foodgrains from the said scheme; and

(e) if so, the action taken by the Government on the basis of these Reports?

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) There are no National Monitors who have been deputed especially to Monitor the implementation of AAY.

(d) and (e) However, in order to strengthen Public Distribution System (PDS) in the country after evaluation studies by Programme Evaluation Organisation of Planning Commission (PEO) and ORG-MARG (which covered AAY Yojana also as part of TPDS), five regional conferences of State Food Secretaries were held. They were followed by a national conference of State Food Ministers and Secretaries held on 29.3.2006. Based on feed back of these conferences, a nine point action plan given below was prepared for implementation by all State/UT Governments:

1. States should undertake a campaign for Review of BPL/AAY lists, to eliminate ghost ration cards within 3 months.
2. Strict action should be taken against the guilty to ensure leakage free distribution of foodgrains. In this respect information asked for under clause 9 of PDS Control Order, may also be sent.
3. For sake of transparency involvement of elected PRI members in distribution of foodgrains, licences be given to SHGs, gram panchayats, cooperatives, etc.
4. BPL/AAY lists should be displayed on all FPSs.
5. District-wise and FPS-wise allocation of foodgrains should be put up on websites and other prominent places, for public scrutiny.
6. Wherever possible, door step delivery of foodgrains should be ensured by States, instead of letting private transporters/wholesalers to transport goods.

7. Timely availability of foodgrains at FPS level and fixed dates of distribution to ration card holders should be ensured.
8. Training of members of FPS level Vigilance Committees should be ensured.
9. Computerisation of TPDS operations be undertaken.

The action taken by the State/UT Governments on this issue is reviewed by the Department of Food and Public Distribution during meetings of State Food Secretaries from time to time.

Kalasa and Bandurinalla Schemes of Karnataka

3752. SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the project proposals, Kalasa and Bandurinalla Schemes submitted by the Karnataka Government have been pending with the Union Government for a long time;

(b) if so, the reasons for delay in clearing these projects; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) to (c) The Government of Karnataka in April, 2002 requested for clearance of proposal from Inter-State angle for diversion of 7.56 TMC of water from Mahadayi/ Madei basin to Malaprabha basin through implementation of Kalsa and Bandurinalla schemes to meet the drinking water needs of Hubli/Dharwad cities. The Ministry of Water Resources gave an in principle clearance to the proposal to meet the drinking water needs of Hubli/Dharwad from water availability angle on 30th April, 2002. The Government of Goa in July, 2002 took strong exception to the grant of this clearance by the Ministry and requested for setting up of an Inter-State Water Disputes Tribunal under the Inter-State Water Disputes Act, 1956 for resolution of the dispute. In view of this, the 'in-principle' clearance granted by the Ministry was kept 'in abeyance' in September, 2002 with a view to resolve the matter by an agreement between the two states, failing which by an award of the Tribunal. The Ministry of Water Resources has come to a conclusion that this dispute cannot be settled by negotiation.

[Translation]

Proposals of Dairy Development

3753. DR. DHIRENDRA AGARWAL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of proposals received from the State Governments particularly Jharkhand for Dairy Development during the last two years; and

(b) the action taken by the Government on these proposals and the number of proposals rejected 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) During the last two years, one proposal under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme "Intensive Dairy Development Programme" was received from the State Government of Jharkhand for the districts of Ranchi, East Singhbhum & Saraikela-Kharsawan. However, considering the viability of the project, the proposal for the district of Ranchi was approved with the total outlay of Rs.294.29 lakhs and an amount of Rs.166.89 lakh has been released till 31.03.2007 for implementation of the project.

Assistance to Women Under Rural Backyard Poultry Development Scheme

3754. SHRI KULDEEP BISHNOI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has provided assistance to the women of poor rural families for their income generation under the Rural Backyard Poultry Development Scheme; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the number of the women benefited therefrom during the last three years, 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) and (b) No Rural Backyard Poultry Development Scheme is in operation.

[English]

Super Speciality Hospitals

3755. SHRI G.M. SIDDESWARA: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of super speciality hospitals administered/directly run by Employees State Insurance Corporation (ESIC), State-wise;

(b) whether the Government proposes to open such more super speciality hospitals;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) the number of State Governments run hospitals of ESIC, State-wise;

(e) whether the services by ESIC are not being provided properly due to dual control of both the State and Union Governments; and

(f) if so, the details thereof and the remedial steps proposed to be taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES):
(a) Nil.

(b) and (c) ESI Corporation in its 133rd meeting decided to set up four super speciality hospitals in four zones. Accordingly, Hospital Services Consultancy Corporation (HSCC), Government of India was assigned to prepare the detailed project report on setting up of super speciality hospital at Hyderabad (South Zone). The Report of the HSCC was considered by the ESI Corporation in its meeting held on 23.12.2006 and as recommended in the report it was decided to have a fresh look on the setting up of super speciality hospitals specially with reference to its feasibility and financial viability.

(d) The number of State Government run hospitals of ESI Corporation is furnished in the statement enclosed.

(e) and (f) 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 on the provision of Medical Care provided through the State Governments is to 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 Govt. and the payment is made directly by State Medical Commissioner and Regional Director Office in respect of super speciality treatment, drugs and dressings.

Statement

List of State-run ESI Hospitals

Sl.No.	State	Hospital
		2005-06
1	2	3
1.	Andhra Pradesh	10
2.	Assam	--
3.	Bihar	2
4.	Chandigarh Admn.	--
5.	Chhattisgarh	--
6.	Delhi	--
7.	Goa	1
8.	Gujarat	11
9.	Haryana	05
10.	Himachal Pradesh	01
11.	Karnataka	08
12.	Kerala	12
13.	Madhya Pradesh	06
14.	Maharashtra	13
15.	Meghalaya	--
16.	Orissa	05
17.	Pondicherry	01
18.	Punjab	06

1	2	3
19.	Rajasthan	04
20.	Tamil Nadu	08
21.	Uttar Pradesh	15
22.	Uttaranchal	--
23.	West Bengal	13
24.	Jammu and Kashmir	--
25.	Jharkhand	02
Total		123

Dhansri and Champamati Multi-Purpose Project

3756. SHRI M.K.SUBBA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the status of Dhansri and Champamati Irrigation multi-purpose project of Assam as on date;

(b) the date on which the project was taken up for construction alongwith the original estimated cost escalation incurred thereon so far;

(c) the time by which it is likely to be completed; and

(d) the funds provided by the Union Government therefor so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) As informed by the State Government, the overall physical progress of Dhansri Irrigation Project is 76% and that of Champamati Irrigation Project is 60%.

(b) The details are given below:

(Rs. in crore)

Sl.No.	Name of the project	Year of start	Original approved cost / (Year of approval) by Planning Commission	Latest Estimated Cost (at 2004 price level)
1.	Dhansri	1975-76	15.83 (1975)	401.24
2.	Champamati	1980	15.32 (1980)	147.24

(c) As informed by the State Government, Dhansri Irrigation Project in the first phase and Champamati Irrigation Project are scheduled to be completed by 2009.

(d) The Union Government has released an amount of Rs.31.69 crore for Dhansri Irrigation Project and Rs.13.73 crore for Champamati Irrigation Project as Central Loan Assistance (CLA) under Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme (AIBP) upto March, 2007.

Command Area Development and Water Management Programme

3757. SHRI RANEN BARMAN: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the restructured Command Area Development (CAD) and Water Management programmes have not achieved the desired results;

(b) if so, the factors attributed thereto;

(c) the states where the work has been completed so far under the said programmes; and

(d) the steps taken by the Union Government to

help in achieving the targets fixed under the said programmes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) No, Sir. The progress under restructured Command Area Development and Water Management Programme has been satisfactory except for the new components of correction of system deficiencies up to distributaries of 150 cusec capacity and the renovation of minor irrigation tanks.

(b) For implementation of new components of correction of system deficiencies up to distributaries of 150 cusec capacity and the renovation of minor irrigation tanks, formation of legalized Water Users' Associations is a pre-requisite, which is taking time as several States have not yet enacted a new Participatory Irrigation Management Act or make amendments in the existing Irrigation Act to facilitate formation of Water Users' Associations.

(c) Projects under the restructured Command Area Development & Water Management Programme are continuing in all the states except in Goa where all CAD

projects were completed prior to restructuring of the programme.

(d) The Programme implementation is being monitored and reviewed periodically to ensure achievement of the targets.

[Translation]

Soil Erosion In Ravines

3758. SHRI ASHOK ARGAL: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government has received any suggestions to check the soil erosion in ravines;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the estimated area of agricultural land converted into ravines due to soil erosion by rivers every year;

(d) whether the villages situated on the banks of the Chambal river are also coming under the grip of soil erosion; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and the steps being taken to remedy the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) As estimated by the National Remote Sensing Agency (NRSA) in 2003, about 16,469 ha of more land is engulfed by existing ravines every year.

(d) and (e) The villages situated within about 2 km range of Chambal river or its tributaries are under the grip of gully erosion. The Research Centre of Central Soil and Water Conservation Research and Training Institute (CSWCR&TI) located at Kota (Rajasthan), has developed technology packages for reclamation of Chambal ravines. With the application of this technology, about 3 lakh ha of Chambal ravine in M.P. and about 1.4 lakh ha in Rajasthan have been restored under various watershed/wastelands development programmes.

[English]

Prices of Medicines

3759. SHRI SUBRATA BOSE: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) the increase in percentage recorded in the prices of medicines during the last three years;

(b) whether permission has been sought from the Union Government for increasing the price of any of the medicines;

(c) if so, the names of such medicines alongwith the details of the permission granted for the price rise; and

(d) the details of medicines whose prices have either come down or have been reduced during the said period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) to (d) The 74 bulk drugs specified in the First Schedule of the Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 1995 (DPCO, 95) and the formulations based thereon are under price control and their prices are fixed/ revised by the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) in accordance with the provisions of the DPCO, 95. These drugs have been kept under price control on the basis of criteria mentioned in 'Modifications in Drug Policy, 1986', announced in September, 1994. The price fixation/revision of the Scheduled Drugs and formulations is a continuous process under DPCO, 95.

Prices of non-Scheduled formulations are fixed by the manufacturers themselves keeping in view the various factors like cost of production, marketing/selling expenses, R&D expenses, trade commission, market competition, product innovation, product quality etc. The Government takes corrective measures where the public interest is found to be adversely affected.

Prices of medicines in India have increased at a lesser rate than prices of general commodities as would be clear from the above table.

% Change in WPI Over preceding year
(Source: Ministry of Commerce & Industry)

Year	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Drugs & Medicines	5.85	3.48	0.71	2.55	2.37	4.10*
All Commodities	7.16	3.60	3.41	5.46	6.48	4.41*

*Provisional

Note - WPI for the year 2006-07 has not yet been finalized.

As part of its price monitoring activity, NPPA regularly examines the movement in prices of non-scheduled formulations on the basis of internal guidelines formulated for this purpose. These guidelines are reviewed by the NPPA from time to time based on experience. These

guidelines are uniformly followed for the whole Pharma Industry.

The year wise details as well as increase in prices of scheduled medicines since 2004-05 are as under:

	2004-05		2005-06		2006-07	
	Nos	%age	Nos	%age	Nos	%age
Price Increased	42	12.65	99	9.72	131	12.84
Price Decreased	133	40.06	398	39.10	340	33.33
Price fixed for the first time	144	43.37	480	47.15	522	51.18
No change in prices	13	3.92	41	4.03	27	2.65
Total	332	100	1018	100	1020	100

Medical Scheme for Beedi Workers

3760. SHRI A.V. BELLARMIN: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is contemplating to introduce a comprehensive Medical Scheme for the Beedi Workers; and

(b) If so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES):

(a) and (b) The Government has already formulated a comprehensive medical scheme for beedi workers and their dependents, to provide health care through hospitals and dispensaries run by the Labour Welfare Organization all over the country. There is also provision of reimbursement in case of major ailments like heart disease, Kidney transplant, surgery, cancer, etc. as under:

- (i) Reimbursement unto Rs. 1.30 lakh for heart disease.
- (ii) Rs. 2 lakh for kidney transplant.
- (iii) Rs. 30,000/- for minor surgeries.
- (iv) Full reimbursement in case of cancer treatment.

Pen Ganga Project

3761. SHRI HARIBHAU RATHOD: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has given permission to the Penganga Project in Yavatmal District, Maharashtra;

(b) if so, whether necessary clearance has been

obtained from the Ministry of Environment and Forests and other concerned departments;

(c) If so, the details thereof; and

(d) If so, the reasons therefor and the time by which the said clearance is likely to be obtained?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) The preliminary project report of Lower Penganga project for according in principle clearance of Central Water Commission (CWC) was submitted by the Government of Maharashtra to CWC on 14.11.2006. The State Government is yet to comply with the observations of the CWC. After obtaining in principle clearance from CWC, the Government of Maharashtra is required to submit detailed project report for appraisal.

(b) and (c) The project requires environmental and forest clearance from Union Ministry of Environment & Forest and clearance from the Ministry of Tribal Affairs for Resettlement & Rehabilitation Plan which are to be obtained by the State Government.

(d) The time taken for the clearance from Central Appraising Agencies depends on the promptness with which State Government complies to the observations of the central appraising agencies.

Shortage of Funds for Agricultural Research

3762. SHRI TUKARAM GANGADHAR GADAKH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether various agricultural research projects are suffering due to shortage of funds;

(b) If so, the details thereof, project-wise; and

(c) the steps being taken by the Government to overcome the problem?

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 fund allocations to DARE/ICAR for agricultural research are being increased progressively every year.

Year	BE (Rs. in crore)
2005-06	1150.00
2006-07	1350.00
2007-08	1620.00

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

Closure of Super Bazar

3763. SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN:

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA:

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

(a) the number of persons displaced due to closure of Super Bazar;

(b) the stage at which the proposal of its revival stands as on date;

(c) the time likely to be taken in its implementation alongwith the modalities finalized therefor; and

(d) the manner in which the claims of displaced employees have been/proposed to be settled?

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 Liquidator, Super Bazar, Delhi has informed that after the order for winding up of Super Bazar was issued by the Central Registrar of Cooperative Societies (CRCS), 897 employees opted for Voluntary Separation Scheme and 12 employees were dismissed.

(b) and (c) During the hearing held on 04.04.2007, the Supreme Court approved the proposal submitted by Additional Solicitor General and Senior Counsel for Indian Potash Limited (IPL) and Indian Labour Cooperative Society (ILCS) for revival of Super Bazar and permitted them to give effect to the proposal in accordance with law. The

Department of Agriculture and Cooperation has sent a letter dated 24.04.2007 to Managing Director, Indian Potash Limited and Chairman, Indian Labour Cooperative Society to send a copy of the modalities duly signed by them for submission to the Supreme Court and a copy of the scheme/proposal indicating, inter-alia, investment to be infused as per Orders of the Supreme Court for revival of Super Bazar to enable CRCS to take further action as per provisions of the Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act, 2002 and orders of the Supreme Court. The next date of hearing fixed by the Supreme Court is 10.05.2007.

(d) The Liquidator, Super Bazar has informed that the terminal benefits of all the employees who opted for Voluntary Separation Scheme have been paid. There is no provision in the Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act, 2002 to rehabilitate such employees.

Setting up of Special Horticulture Zones

3764. SHRI K.C. PALLANI SHAMY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government has any proposal to set up special horticulture zone in various parts of the country;

(b) if so, the locations identified for the same and features thereof, State-wise; and

(c) the time by which the said zones 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) The Union Government does not have any proposal to set up special horticulture zone in the country.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Does not arise.

Setting up of Cold Storages

3765. SHRI M. SHIVANNA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the assistance provided for setting up of cold storages during the last three years, State-wise;

(b) whether the Government of Karnataka has sought assistance from the Union Government to set up cold storages to reduce wastage of agricultural produce;

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

(d) the assistance provided to each State for the purpose during 2007-08?

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 assistance provided for setting up of cold storages during the last three years through National Horticulture Board is given in the enclosed statement.

(b) and (c) Government of Karnataka has not sought any assistance from the Union Government to set up cold storages to reduce wastage of agricultural produce. However, a sum of Rs.363.89 lakh have been provided to entrepreneurs in the State of Karnataka for construction of 9 cold storages with a capacity of 54,696 metric tonnes during the year 2006-07.

(d) As the financial year 2007-08 has just begun, assistance is yet to be provided to the States.

Statement

Details of Assistance provided for setting up of Cold Storages during last three years - State wise

From 2004-2005 to 2006-07				
S.No.	Name of the State	No. of Project	Capacity (MT)	Assistance (Rs. in lakh)
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Andhra Pradesh	42	247311	1443.85
2.	Assam	10	46400	513.30
3.	Arunachal Pradesh	0	0	0.00
4.	Bihar	48	181942	1310.24
5.	Chhattisgarh	9	40313	335.22
6.	Delhi	1	1000	5.00
7.	Goa	0	0	0.00
8.	Gujarat	20	77636	569.99
9.	Haryana	8	16479	112.69
10.	Himachal Pradesh	0	0	0.00
11.	Jharkhand	9	38664	258.38
12.	Jammu and Kashmir	1	114	1.14
13.	Karnataka	27	141571	1158.22

1	2	3	4	5
14	Kerala	3	9850	98.50
15.	Madhya Pradesh	18	60849	446.86
16.	Maharashtra	93	86709	637.38
17.	Nagaland	0	0	0.00
18	Orissa	4	21500	193.53
19.	Punjab	43	121141	1019.57
20.	Rajasthan	15	43226	324.99
21.	Tamil Nadu	22	59343	776.58
22.	Tripura	0	0	0.00
23.	Uttar Pradesh	305	1541445	9878.59
24.	Uttaranchal	0	0	0.00
25.	West Bengal	24	103074	781.35
Total		702	2838567	19865.38

Indo-US Co-operation in Environment Sector

3766. SHRI PARSURAM MAJHI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has a proposal to establish cooperation with the USA in the environment sector; and

(b) if so, the areas in the environment sector identified therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) Government of India has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the United States Environment Protection Agency in the year 2002 under which bilateral cooperation is going on in various environmental sectors such as Air and Water Quality Management, Management of Toxic Chemicals and Hazardous Wastes, Pollution Prevention and Control, Environmental Governance, Environmental Monitoring and Assessment etc. Recently, on 2nd April, 2007 the Memorandum of Understanding has been extended further by Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India and the USEPA by mutual consent for a further period of five years.

Handing Over of Quarters to HFCL Employees

3767. SHRI SUNIL KHAN: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the quarters of Hindustan Fertilizer Corporation of India Limited (HFCL), Durgapur unit were not handed over to the employees;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the corrective steps being taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Keeping in view the possibility of revival of Durgapur unit, the quarters have not been handed over to the employees.

(c) The regular employees have been allotted quarters as per the policy of Hindustan Fertilizer Corporation Ltd. 230 ex-employees of the Company have also been allotted residential quarters at Durgapur under the Leasing Scheme. In view of the decision not to hand over the quarters to employees on outright sale basis through the Asansol Durgapur Development Authority, the question of taking corrective steps does not arise.

[Translation]

Central Integrated Forest Scheme

3768. SHRI KRISHNA MURARI MOGHE: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal under the Central Integrated Forest Scheme (CIFS) for the year 2006-07 is pending with the Union Government;

(b) if so, the action taken in this regard so far; and

(c) the time by which the said proposal is likely to be approved?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) to (c) There is no Scheme with the name Central Integrated Forest Scheme (CIFS). However, under Integrated Forest Protection Scheme, thirty Annual Work Programme proposals were received from States/Union Territories during 2006-07. These Annual Work Programmes were examined. Out of these, two proposals did not conform to the guidelines and cost norms of the Scheme and the concerned States/Union Territories were informed. Annual Work Programmes for eighteen States were sanctioned and first installments were released. In the remaining ten cases, Annual Work Programme proposals were examined. However, due to non-submission of Utilisation Certificates and Progress Reports in respect of funds released in previous year/s, fresh funds could not be released to ten States.

Import of Milk and Dairy Products

3769. SHRI TUFANI SAROJ: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether import of milk and dairy products have increased unprecedentedly due to decrease in milk production in the country; and

(b) if so, the percentage of increase recorded during the period from April 1, 2006 to December 2006?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Import of milk and milk products gradually decreased during 2003-04 to 2005-06 whereas milk production during the period from 2003-2004 to 2006-2007 increased from 88.1 million tonnes to 100 million tonnes in 2006-07 (provisional). However import of milk products have increased during the period from April 2006 to November 2006 as compared to corresponding period in year 2005 as shown below:

Commodity	Year	Quantity (In 000' Kg)	%age growth
Milk & other dairy products under ITC (HS code 0401, 0402, 0403, 0404, 0405, 0406)	2005- 06 (April -November)	3232.83	-
	2006-07 (April to November, 06)	9929.99	207.16

[English]

Production of Nutmeg

3770. SHRI P.C. THOMAS: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Nutmeg is being produced in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the production recorded during the last three years, State-wise;

(c) whether the farmers are in difficulty due to low price of Nutmeg; and

(d) if so, the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) As per data available from Spices Board, Cochin, the State-wise production of nutmeg in the country during the last three years are as follows:

(Production in MT)			
State	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06 (P)
Kerala	2427	2700	2748
Karnataka	120	151	151
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	3	5	5
Total	2550	2856	290

(P) = Provisional

(c) In Cochin market in Kerala, the average price of nutmeg with shell in the last three years has shown a declining trend though the prices of nutmeg without shell has increased in 2006-07.

Basic data in this regard is shown in the Table below:

(Prices in Rs/Kg)		
Year	Average price	
	Nutmeg with shell	Nutmeg without shell
2004-05	106.62	187.79
2005-06	102.34	179.55
2006-07	96.26	188.89

(d) To protect the growers of perishable agricultural and horticultural commodities including nutmeg from un-remunerative prices, there is a scheme called Market Intervention Scheme (MIS) which is implemented on the request of the State Government. No proposal has been received from any State Government in this regard.

Spices Board has been implementing a number of export promotion programmes to increase the export of spices including nutmeg.

Storage Facilities for Non-Horticultural Produce

3771. SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the figures with respect to storage capacity required for proper storage of non-horticultural produce in various States, State-wise;

(b) the current storage capacity for non-horticultural produce in various States, State-wise;

(c) the additional capacity proposed to be created during the current year; and

(d) the funds allocated 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) The details of State-wise requirement of storage capacity, for storage of foodgrains by FCI for Public Distribution System are given in the enclosed statement-I.

(b) The details of State-wise current storage capacity available with FCI as on 28.2.2007 are given in the enclosed statement-II.

(c) During 2007-08, an additional storage capacity of 25,000 MTs is proposed to be created.

(d) For the year 2007-08, a budget provision of Rs.18.40 crore has been made for the Plan Scheme of construction of godowns by FCI.

Statement-I

Name of the State/ Union Territory	Storage Capacity required for Public Distribution System (Figures in Lakh MTs)
1	2
Bihar	2.10
Jharkhand	1.42
Orissa	2.60
West Bengal	4.48
Sikkim	0.02
Assam	2.94
Arunachal Pradesh	0.20

1	2
Meghalaya	0.24
Mizoram	0.16
Tripura	0.42
Manipur	0.16
Nagaland	0.28
Delhi	0.96
Haryana	0.62
Himachal Pradesh	0.64
Jammu and Kashmir	1.20
Punjab	0.40
Chandigarh	0.00
Rajasthan	2.40
Uttar Pradesh	7.72
Uttaranchal	0.54

1	2
Andhra Pradesh	12.36
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	0.04
Kerala	1.74
Karnataka	4.34
Tamil Nadu	6.32
Pondicherry	0.02
Gujarat	1.68
Maharashtra	4.86
Goa	0.06
Madhya Pradesh	3.80
Chhattisgarh	1.46
Daman and Diu	0.00
Dadra and Nagar Haveli	0.00
Total	131.02

Statement-II

The storage capacity (owned & hired)/covered & CAP, stocks held with FCI as on 28.02.2007

(fig. in lakh tonnes)

Sl.No.	Name of the State/ Union Territory	Covered Stg. Capacity			CAP (Open) Stg. Capacity			Total Covered & CAP	Total Stocks	%age utilization
		Owned	Hired	Total	Owned	Hired	Total			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1	Bihar	3.66	1.55	5.21	0.00	0.00	0.00	5.21	2.15	41
2	Jharkhand	0.66	0.52	1.18	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.18	0.99	84
3	Orissa	2.93	3.43	6.36	0.00	0.00	0.00	6.36	4.15	65
4	West Bengal/Sikkim	8.74	1.35	10.09	0.00	0.00	0.00	10.09	3.48	34
	Total of East Zone	15.99	6.85	22.84	0.00	0.00	0.00	22.84	10.77	47
5	Assam/Arunachal Pradesh	2.17	0.56	2.73	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.73	0.95	35
6	Meghalaya	0.14	0.15	0.29	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.29	0.19	66
7	Mizoram	0.17	0.01	0.18	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.18	0.04	22
8	Tripura	0.22	0.13	0.35	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.35	0.23	66

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
9	Dimapur	0.40	0.12	0.52	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.52	0.17	33
	Total of N.E. Zone	3.10	0.97	4.07	0.00	0.00	0.00	4.07	1.58	39
10	Delhi	3.36	0.00	3.36	0.34	0.00	0.34	3.70	1.14	31
11	Haryana	7.70	10.65	18.35	3.17	0.00	3.17	21.52	7.50	35
12	Himachal Pradesh	0.14	0.13	0.27	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.27	0.18	67
13	Jammu and Kashmir	0.96	0.16	1.12	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.12	0.85	76
14	Punjab/Chandigarh	22.24	36.85	59.09	6.41	0.09	6.50	65.59	39.35	60
15	Rajasthan	7.06	0.29	7.35	1.58	0.10	1.68	9.03	3.59	40
16	Uttar Pradesh	14.96	6.12	21.08	4.19	0.00	4.19	25.27	5.53	22
17	Uttaranchal	0.66	0.69	1.35	0.09	0.02	0.11	1.46	0.90	62
	Total of North Zone	57.08	54.89	111.97	15.78	0.21	15.99	127.96	59.04	46
18	Andhra Pradesh	12.73	20.06	32.79	1.97	0.00	1.97	34.76	17.87	51
19	Kerala	5.12	0.00	5.12	0.21	0.00	0.21	5.33	2.16	41
20	Karnataka	3.73	0.81	4.54	1.37	0.00	1.37	5.91	2.92	49
21	Tamil Nadu/ Pondicheny	6.25	1.10	7.35	0.68	0.00	0.68	8.03	4.81	60
	Total of South Zone	27.83	21.97	49.80	4.23	0.00	4.23	54.03	27.76	51
22	Gujarat	5.00	0.56	5.56	0.81	0.00	0.81	6.37	3.97	62
23	Maharashtra/Goa	11.92	2.69	14.61	1.42	0.00	1.42	16.03	7.20	45
24	Madhya Pradesh	3.37	1.70	5.07	0.35	0.00	0.35	5.42	4.91	91
25	Chhattisgarh	5.12	1.47	6.59	0.76	8.18	8.94	15.53	13.30	86
	Total of West Zone	25.41	6.42	31.83	3.34	8.18	11.52	43.35	29.38	68
	Grand Total (All India)	129.41	91.10	220.51	23.35	8.39	31.74	252.25	128.53	51

Misuse of Fund

3772. SHRI M. APPADURAI: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the amount allotted by the Government to Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) for abolition of child labour in the country during the last three years, State-wise;

(b) whether the Government has received any complaints against the NGOs for misuse of the funds;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) Government is implementing the Scheme of Grants-in-aid to Voluntary Organisations in the districts which are not covered by National Child Labour Project Scheme and INDUS projects. Under the scheme, financial assistance is being provided to the NGOs for running special schools for the welfare of children withdrawn from work. State-wise details of amount allotted to the NGOs during the last three years is given in the enclosed statement.

(b) and (c) No specific complaint has been received with regard to misuse of funds.

(d) Does not arise.

Statement

Sl. No.	Name of the State	Amount released		
		2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
1.	Assam	3,85,906	4,57,650	4,57,650
2.	Bihar	2,46,285	Nil	Nil
3.	Chhattisgarh	4,57,588	1,14,412	Nil
4.	Haryana	1,70,100	Nil	Nil
5.	Jharkhand	4,57,650	Nil	Nil
6.	Jammu and Kashmir	11,44,267	Nil	3,43,238
7.	Madhya Pradesh	13,17,491	2,16,112	2,28,825
8.	Maharashtra	16,67,377	22,80,342	9,10,766
9.	Manipur	5,59,350	23,71,658	18,68,737
10.	Nagaland	Nil	2,91,669	6,86,475
11.	New Delhi	1,01,742	17,74,050	6,04,710
12.	Orissa	26,18,650	33,00,986	20,54,928
13.	Rajasthan	32,52,446	9,68,284	17,25,265
14.	Tripura	68,456	Nil	2,28,825
15.	Tamil Nadu	1,16,841	Nil	Nil
16.	Uttar Pradesh	38,40,640	29,50,538	19,01,257
17.	West Bengal	18,03,889	6,54,477	8,19,037

Nagarjuna Sagar Project

3773. SHRI SARVEY SATYANARAYANA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Andhra Pradesh had requested the Union Government to provide water to the people of Guntur district through Nagarjuna Sagar Dam; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Revival of FCI and HFCL

3774. SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATEL:

SHRI JUAL ORAM:

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) the plants under Fertilizer Corporation of India (FCI) and Hindustan Fertilizer Corporation Limited (HFCL) which were closed down alongwith the reasons therefor;

(b) whether the Board of Reconstruction of Public Sector Enterprises (BRPSE) has recommended to review the earlier decision of winding up of FCI and HFCL;

(c) If so, the reasons advanced therefor and the action taken thereon; and

(d) the time by which the production in these plants are likely to be resumed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) The name of the plants and the dates on which the plants under Fertilizer Corporation of India Ltd. (FCIL) and Hindustan Fertilizer Corporation Ltd. (HFCL) were closed down are indicated below:

FCIL	
Name of the Plant/Unit	Government decision to close
Sindri (Jharkhand)	05.09.2002
Gorakhpur (U.P.)	18.07.2002
Ramagundam (A. P.)	18.07.2002
Talcher (Orissa)	18.07.2002
Korba (Chhattisgarh)	30.07.2002

The reasons for closure of these units, inter-alia, include technological obsolescence, mismatch of capacities, feedstock related issues, high energy consumption.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d) The BRPSE has found merit in the rationale for exploring the options for revival of the closed units of FCIL and HFCL having regard to the demand-supply gap of urea, availability of natural gas, utilization of the existing infrastructure and availability of gas as feedstock. Based on the recommendations of BRPSE, the Government has decided 'in-principle' to examine the feasibility of reviving FCIL and HFCL subject to the confirmed availability of gas. No definite time-frame could be fixed for production of fertilizer by these plants at this stage.

[Translation]

Loss of Crops due to Rains and Hailstorms

3775. SHRI MOHD.TAHIR:
SHRIMATI JHANSI LAKSHMI BOTCHA:
SHRIMATI NIVEDITA MANE:
SHRI EKNATH MAHADEO GAIKWAD:
SHRI HEMMAL MURMU:
SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH:
SHRI HANSRAJ G. AHIR:
SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY:
SHRI ABU AYES MONDAL:
SHRI DEVIDAS PINGLE:
SHRI KAILASH NATH SINGH YADAV:
SHRI RAGHURAJ SINGH SHAKYA:
SHRI DUSHYANT SINGH:
SHRI M.APPADURAI:
SHRI K.C. PALLANI SHAMY:
SHRI SHISHUPAL N. PATLE:
SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

HFCL	
Name of the Plant/Unit	Government decision to close
Durgapur (W.B.)	05.09.2002
Barauni (Bihar)	05.09.2002
Haldia (W.B.) (Not commissioned)	18.07.2002

(a) whether due to the unexpected rains, hailstorms and strong winds in the months of February and March, 2007, crops like wheat, pulses and cereals have been badly affected in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the estimated loss reported by each State as a result thereof; and

(c) the assistance being provided by the Union Government to the affected farmers, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) The Governments of Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh reported damage to crops, of varying magnitude, due to rains and hailstorms during February and March, 2007. State-wise details of crop area affected, as reported by the States/as per available information, is indicated below:

State	Crop area affected
Haryana	5.78 lakh acres
Madhya Pradesh	1.74 lakh hectares
Punjab	2.15 lakh acres
Rajasthan	2.85 lakh hectares
Uttarakhand	1.54 lakh hectares
Uttar Pradesh	4.12 lakh hectare

(c) It is primarily the responsibility of the State Governments concerned to take necessary measures in the wake of natural calamities including hailstorm. There is ready availability of funds with the States under Calamity Relief Fund (CRF) to take necessary measures. Additional assistance, over and above CRF, is considered from the National Calamity Contingency Fund (NCCF), if necessary, for natural calamities of severe nature, in accordance with an established procedure, on submission of a Memorandum.

dum for assistance from the NCCF by the State Government. The Government of Haryana had submitted a Memorandum seeking assistance from the NCCF, in the wake of hailstorm. However, it was assessed that the requirements, as per existing norms, could be met from the funds available in the CRF and the State Government have been advised accordingly. No other State Government mentioned above have so far submitted any Memorandum for assistance from the NCCF in the wake of recent hailstorms.

[English]

**Project Proposal for Development of
Forest/Environment**

3776. SHRI ANWAR HUSSAIN:

SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE:

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

(a) whether the Government has received any proposal from the Government of Assam for the development of forests and environment;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken/proposed to be taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA):

(a) Yes Sir.

(b) and (c) The details of proposals received from the Government of Assam for the Development of forests and environment and action taken/proposed to be taken, is given in the enclosed statement.

Statement

Sl.No.	Project Proposal	Action Taken/ Proposal to be taken
1	2	3
1.	Deepar Beel Wetland Conservation	Identified Wetlands in 1994, since than financial assistance has been provided for management action plan for Deepar Beel. So far an amount of Rs. 311.66 lakh has been released to Government of Assam for conservation and management of Deepar Beel.
2.	Urpada Beel	Identified Wetlands for conservation and management. This wetland has been included subject to site visit the wetland and the management action plan for conservation of this wetland is still awaited for the State Government hence no funds grant has been given for Urpada Beel in Assam.
3.	29 Forest Development Agency (FDA) Projects Proposals	These FDA proposals have been received and sanctioned at a total cost of Rs. 43.14 crore for treating an area of 26,955 ha during 10th Plan. An amount of Rs. 32.67 crore has been released till 31st March, 2007 under these projects.
4.	Annual Plan Proposal for Manas Tiger Reserve	Proposal for Rs. 272.41 lakhs Sanctioned for Rs. 125.31 lakh Installment released during 2006-2007 Rs.30.00 lakh
5.	Annual Plan Proposal for Nameri Tiger Reserve	Proposal for Rs. 126.216 lakh Sanctioned for 61. 86 lakh Installment Released during 2006-2007 Rs. 57.431 lakh
6.	Integrated Forest Protection Scheme	Proposal for Rs. 600.00 lakh (Rs. 540/- Central Share Rs. 40/- lakhs State Share) Rs. 190.26 lakh release during 2006-2007

1	2	3
7.	Assistance for Botanical Garden at Singrihills, Assam Submitted by PCCF, Assam	The proposal has been Examined and comments sent to PCCF, Assam for Improvement of the proposal
8.	Implementation of Management Action Plan of Dibru Saikova Biosphere Reserve in Assam-2006-2007	An amount of Rs. 78.60 lakhs has been sanctioned and Rs. 13.796 lakhs released during 2006-2007
9.	Implementation of Management Action Plan of Manas Biosphere Reserve in Assam - 2006-2007	The proposal could not be sanctioned because Utilization Certificate was not in order and the proposal did not have approval of State Level Committee.

[Translation]

Yamuna Action Plan-III

3777. SHRI CHANDRA MANI TRIPATHI:
DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY:
SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE:

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

- (a) whether the Government has received draft of the Yamuna Action Plan (YAP)-III for approval;
- (b) if so, the details of the plan;
- (c) the time by which it is likely to be implemented/ completed; and
- (d) the amount of funds spent during the first two phases of the action plan and the results achieved therefrom?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) At this stage, it is not possible to indicate the time frame.

(d) The total amount of funds spent by the Government under the completed Yamuna Action Plan, Phase-I (YAP-I) and the ongoing works under Yamuna Action Plan-II (YAP-II) is Rs.686.39 crores as on 31st December 2006.

With the completion of works under YAP-I, a sewage treatment capacity of 753.25 million litres per day (mld) has been created and 269 schemes of pollution abatement completed in the three States of Delhi, Uttar Pradesh and Haryana under the Plan. Under YAP-II, an amount of Rs.29.40 crores, Rs.15.50 crores & Rs.10.05 crores has been released to Delhi, U.P. & Haryana against the allocation of Rs.387.17 crores, Rs.124.13 crores and

Rs.62.50 crores respectively for works which comprise laying of Sewer lines, Rehabilitation of Trunk Sewers, setting up of Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs) & improving efficiencies of existing STPs etc.

[English]

Sale of Dry Sugarcane

3778. SHRIMATI JHANSI LAKSHMI BOTCHA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the farmers in coastal region of Andhra Pradesh produced dry sugarcane due to depletion of ground water during the year 2006-07;
- (b) if so, whether they are now facing problems in selling their produce, leading to heavy losses to them;
- (c) if so, whether the Government proposes to direct the sugar factories for procurement of the said sugarcane;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the time by which such procurement is likely to start; and
- (e) the other steps taken by the Government to compensate these farmers?

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) As per the information received from the Commissioner of Sugar & Cane Commissioner, Andhra Pradesh, no such complaints were received from Coastal Andhra Pradesh. All the sugar factories in coastal Andhra Pradesh are accepting the cane irrespective of its category.

(b) to (e) Do not arise.

Closure of FCI Depot

3779. SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons attributed to the closure of the Food Corporation of India (FCI) Depot in Angadippuram, Kerala;

(b) whether the Government has since decided to revive the said depot;

(c) if so, the time by which the said depot is likely to resume functioning;

(d) whether the Ministry has received any proposal from the Ministry of Railways for the placement of full rakes at Angadippuram Godown of FCI; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) The Food Corporation of India (FCI) was forced to close its operations at Angadippuram Depot (Kerala) due to closure of goods-shed by the Railway authorities.

(b) and (c) The FCI can resume its operations at Angadippuram, Depot in Kerala on placement of part/full rake by the Railways.

(d) Yes, Sir. The Railway Board has suggested that full rake movement can be undertaken by them provided the FCI develops a full rake handling siding in its own land adjoining to the Railway Station.

(e) Under the Plan Scheme for construction of storage godowns, presently the construction of storage godowns is undertaken only in the North East Region States including Sikkim and State of Jammu & Kashmir. The scope of scheme is proposed to be widened in 11th Plan to include newly emerging procurement States like West Bengal, Bihar, Jharkhand, Orissa, Chhattisgarh etc. The proposal of other States will be taken up in the perspective of revised Plan Scheme.

Introduction of Village as Unit Under NAIS

3780. DR. M. JAGANNATH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has recently decided to introduce village as unit in 100 districts of the country

under National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (NAIS); 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) National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (NAIS) is implemented on the basis of 'homogeneous area' approach. The implementing States/UTs are free to notify any unit area of insurance viz. Tehsil, Taluka, block, mandal, firka, gram panchayat/village keeping in view the capacity of the State to undertake requisite number of Crop Cutting Experiments (CCEs) and availability of adequate past yield data.

However, a proposal to modify the existing NAIS based on the recommendations of the Joint Group constituted by the Government to study the improvements required in the existing NAIS which interalia includes the reduction in unit area of insurance to Gram Panchayat/village for major crops, is under consideration of the Government.

[Translation]

Research to Curb Fruits Disease

3781. SHRI MANSUKHBHAI D. VASAVA:
SHRI V.K. THUMMAR:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether fruits get destroyed because of their infliction with diseases;

(b) if so, whether the Government has conducted any research to curb these diseases;

(c) if so, the details and outcome thereof and the action taken thereon; 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) Yes, Sir. Fruits get destroyed because of their infliction with diseases if care is not taken.

(b) Yes, Sir. Research has been conducted to curb diseases by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research through ICAR Institutes/National Research

Centres, All India Coordinated Research Projects on different fruit crops and Network programmes.

(c) and (d) Outcome of the research has been that fungal, bacterial, microbial and mould associated with diseases causing damages to different fruits have been identified. Details of pre-disposing factors including pre-harvest conditions, which are aggravating the diseases have also been worked out. Diseases causing damage to fruits are anthracnose, black rot, cigar-end rot in banana, Diplodia stem-end rot, Aspergillus black rot, blue mould, bacterial rots, Rhizopus rot/black mould. Phytophthora rot, etc. Common factors which are pre-disposing for the diseases are infection in orchard, poor handling at the time of harvest and transport, storage in inappropriate conditions and weather conditions. To reduce the damage due to diseases in fruits, Guidelines, based on the research, have been prepared. The recommendations include pre-harvest treatment, proper handling, pre-cooling, grading, pre-treatment of fruits with non-toxic chemicals, sulphuring in case of litchi, grading, appropriate packaging and maintenance of cool chain temperature appropriate to fruits i.e. tropical fruit not less than 12°C and temperate fruit 0-6°C.

[English]

Norms for Environmental Clearance to Mining Lease

3782. SHRI JUAL ORAM: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to refer to the reply given to Starred Question No. 171 on 4th December, 2006 and state:

(a) the norms prescribed for giving clearance to mining lease;

(b) the number of clearances given in Orissa, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand within these norms during the last three years;

(c) the details of the companies/ individuals given such mining lease during the said period, year-wise;

(d) whether the same norms are being applied for the pending projects; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) Mining of minerals with lease area of 5 ha and above requires prior environmental clearance under the provisions of the EIA Notification, 2006. However, all

projects relating to mining of asbestos require environmental clearance, irrespective of the mining lease area. Prior to the new EIA Notification, 2006 coming into force on 14th September, 2006, the projects relating to mining of major minerals only with lease area of more than 5 ha were required to obtain prior environmental clearance under the EIA Notification, 1994.

(b) and (c) Ministry of Environment & Forests has granted environmental clearance to 93 mining projects from the States of Orissa, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand during the last three years. These include projects from Central and State Public Sector Undertakings, Private Companies and Individuals. The year-wise break-up of these projects is as under:-

Details of Companies/ Individuals	Year			Total
	2004	2005	2006	
Public Sector	05	10	28	43
Undertakings				
Private Companies/ Individuals	09	25	16	50
Total	14	35	44	93

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) Does not arise in view of the reply to part (d) above.

[Translation]

Committee to Simplify Approval Procedure

3783. SHRI RAKESH SINGH: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has received any proposal from the Director General, Forests for setting up of a Committee to simplify the procedure for approval of the management schemes of more than 10 hectares forest areas under the Public Forestry Programme;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Union Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Question does not arise.

[English]

**Amendment of Wildlife Protection
Act, 1972**

3784. SHRIMATI NIVEDITA MANE:

SHRI EKNATH MAHADEO GAIKWAD:

SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH:

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

(a) whether the Government proposes to bring out an amendment to Wildlife Protection Act, 1972;

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

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government for strengthening the protection of wild animals?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) The proposed amendments in the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 are to meet certain exigencies and include mainly introduction of a new chapter on the implementation of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild fauna & flora (CITES) and sale of domesticated live elephants.

(c) The steps taken by Government for strengthening the protection of wild animals include:

- (i) The Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 has been amended from time to time and made more stringent. The punishments in cases of offences have been enhanced.
- (ii) Legal protection has been provided to wild animals against hunting and commercial exploitation under the provisions of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.
- (iii) Habitats of important & endangered species have been designated as Protected Areas.
- (iv) The National Tiger Conservation Authority has been established for better protection and management of the tiger and its habitat.
- (v) Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has been empowered under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 to apprehend and prosecute wildlife offenders.
- (vi) Government of India has set up Regional and Sub-Regional Offices for wildlife preservation in major export and trade centers of the country to prevent smuggling of wild animals and their products.

(vii) Financial assistance is provided to the State Governments under the Centrally Sponsored Schemes of 'Development of National Parks and Sanctuaries', 'Project Tiger' and 'Project Elephant' for infrastructure development, setting up of anti-poaching camps, purchase of wireless sets, vehicles, fire arms etc.

(viii) India has bilateral agreements with Nepal and China for controlling trans-boundary illegal trade in wildlife.

[Translation]

Strikes and Lockouts

3785. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE:

SHRI ABU AYES MONDAL:

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

(a) the number of incidents of strikes and lockouts occurred in public sector and private sector during each of the last three years especially in tribal areas, state-wise;

(b) the number of mandays wasted on account of this in the country including Gujarat, State-wise and year-wise;

(c) the number of workers/employees rendered jobless on account of these incidents in various States, State-wise and year-wise; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government to improve industrial relations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) A statement-I showing the number of strikes and lockouts in the public sector and the private sector, State-wise, during 2004, 2005 and 2006 is enclosed. However, information is not maintained separately for tribal areas.

(b) and (c) The information on number of workers rendered jobless on account of incidents of strikes and lockouts is not centrally maintained. The details on number of mandays lost and workers affected due to strikes & lockouts in the country, including Gujarat during 2004, 2005 and 2006 is given in the enclosed statement-II.

(d) The Industrial Disputes Act, 1947, provides a framework for maintaining harmonious industrial relations. The Act facilitates intervention, mediation and conciliation by the Industrial Relations Machinery of the appropriate Government for resolution of industrial disputes.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Uttaranchal	1	3	4	0	3	0	0	1	1
Uttar Pradesh	9	14	23	2	7	9	5	3	8
West Bengal	2	203	205	3	205	208	14	195	209
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Chandigarh	2	3	5	2	1	3	3	0	3
Dadar and Nagar Haveli	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Delhi	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	0	7
Daman and Diu	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lakshadweep	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pondicherry	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
All India	49	428	477	57	399	456	111	329	440

Source: Labour Bureau, Shimla S: Strikes L: Lockouts P: Provisional

Statement-II*No. of workers affected and mandays lost due to incident of strikes and lockouts*

State/U.T.	2004		2005		2006 (P)	
	Mandays Lost (in thousand)	Workers Affected	Mandays Lost (in thousand)	Workers Affected	Mandays Lost (in thousand)	Workers Affected
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Andhra Pradesh	957	100394	1012	198010	2358	68132
Arunachal Pradesh	0	0	0	0	0	0
Assam	68	38476	112	19484	0	0
Bihar	146	72227	23	23163	118	40793
Chhattisgarh	29	18196	10	7700	23	3405
Goa	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gujarat	163	27428	187	79469	168	49537
Haryana	158	3415	494	21403	408	7944
Himachal Pradesh	25	4247	23	6394	@	48
Jammu and Kashmir	0	0	@	145	N.A	N.A
Jharkhand	0	0	0	N.A	32	13404
Karnataka	217	180142	458	148295	239	84432
Kerala	469	103339	3619	563324	227	107753
Madhya Pradesh	55	41358	85	84773	70	13263

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Maharashtra	1346	854002	1433	931291	435	49091
Manipur	52	1077	19	600	0	0
Meghalaya	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mizoram	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nagaland	0	0	0	0	0	0
Orissa	72	4714	122	24639	135	48568
Punjab	310	7200	33	8544	36	2561
Rajasthan	1332	37367	1927	59298	1150	39068
Sikkim	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tamil Nadu	538	25189	661	33195	510	94072
Tripura	0	0	0	0	0	0
Uttaranchal	33	13830	39	4824	@	213
Uttar Pradesh	185	53596	133	46951	456	20561
West Bengal	17565	461531	19216	599482	15649	298498
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	0	0	0	0	0	0
Chandigarh	12	12034	47	44204	102	22680
Dadar and Nagar Haveli	0	0	0	0	0	0
Delhi	32	32459	10	10413	111	78059
Daman and Diu	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lakshadweep	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pondicherry	0	0	0	0	0	0
All India	23865	2072221	29665	2913601	22230	1042062

Source: Labour Bureau, Shimla

P: Provisional

@ less than 500

N.A: Not Available

Environmental clearance to irrigation project

3786. SHRI SUBHASH SURESHCHANDRA
DESHMUKH:

SHRI HANSRAJ G. AHIR:

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

(a) whether certain proposals pertaining to
irrigation projects of Maharashtra are under consideration
of the Union Government for clearance;

(b) if so, the dates since when these proposals
are pending with the Government;

(c) the reasons for delay in according clearance
to these proposals; and

(d) the time by which the Government proposes
to clear these proposals?

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

(b) to (d) Lower Penganga and Jigaon major
irrigation projects were received on 10.1.2007 and
09.3.2007 respectively. These two projects have been
processed under the EIA Notification of 1994 as permitted
under the EIA Notification 2006. The proposals were
considered and recommended for approval by the
concerned Expert Appraisal Committee on 22nd March
2007 subject to submission of certain clarifications, which
were received only during the middle of April 2007. As per
EIA Notification 1994, assessment is to be completed
within a period of ninety days from receipt of the requisite
documents and decision conveyed within thirty days
thereafter. The decision regarding these proposals are
expected to be taken accordingly.

[English]

**Promotion of Horticulture
and Floriculture**

3787. SHRI SHRINIWAS DADASAHEB PATIL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a shift from traditional crops to horticulture and floriculture is reported in the Agriculture Sector;

(b) if so, the increase recorded in cultivation in hectares of horticulture and floriculture crops during the last three years, State-wise;

(c) the steps taken by the Government to further promote horticulture and floriculture in the country;

(d) whether the Government proposes to open Mandi's equipped with cold storage facilities to store the horticultural and floricultural produce throughout the country; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) Yes, Sir. There is an increase both in the area and production of horticulture crops which indicates a shift from traditional crops to horticulture including floriculture.

(b) The state wise details of area and production of horticultural crops including floriculture during 2003-04, 2004-05 & 2005-06 is given in the enclosed statement.

(c) National Horticulture Mission has been launched in the country during 10th plan with effect from 2005-06 for holistic development of horticulture sector duly ensuring horizontal and vertical linkages with the active participation of all the stake-holders. All the States and Union Territories of India are covered under the Mission except the eight North Eastern States including Sikkim and the States of Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir and Uttaranchal which have been covered under the Technology Mission for integrated development of horticulture in the North Eastern States (TMNE). Under the Scheme, assistance is provided to the farmers for taking up various activities related to Horticulture and Floriculture such as area coverage, rejuvenation of senile orchards, protected cultivation, organic farming, promotion of

Integrated Nutrient Management/ Integrated Pest Management and bee-keeping including setting up of Markets, Rural Mandis and Cold Storages.

In addition to the above, Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) has taken following steps to promote horticulture and floriculture exports:-

- (i) Introduced the concept of AEZ for promotion of export of Horticulture produces.
- (ii) Agri Export Zones in 20 states in the country has been approved.
- (iii) APEDA promotes export of horticulture and floriculture products through following financial assistance schemes:-
 - Scheme for Infrastructure development.
 - Scheme for market development.
 - testing of Pesticide Residue.
 - Scheme for Research & development.
 - Scheme for transport assistance.

(d) and (e) A Central Sector Scheme for "Development/Strengthening of Agricultural Marketing Infrastructure, Grading and Standardization" is being implemented in the country to encourage rapid development of marketing infrastructure in agriculture and allied sectors to cater to the post harvest requirements of handling, value addition and marketing of surplus of various farm products including the horticultural produce. Under National Horticulture Mission, a component for setting up of modern terminal markets is covered. The terminal markets would be linked to a number of collection centres, conveniently located to allow easy access to farmers for the marketing of their produce. The commodities to be covered by the markets include fruits, vegetables, flowers, aromatics, herbs, meat and poultry. The public-partnership model envisaged for the terminal market projects where the private enterprise brings the capital and management, the State Government provides the regulatory clearance and the Central Government, part of equity capital in the project. In addition to terminal markets, 3855 cold storages and 848 markets has been approved under National Horticulture Mission during Xth Plan (2005-06 and 2006-07).

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Karnataka	242.5	3633.4	363.3	4176.9	18.2	143.3	5591.0			242.5	217.8	624.9	1778.5	1491.4	10147.9	
Kerala	170.5	1002.2	99.2	2802.9						292.2	158.3	1119.0	5689.7	1690.9	9453.1	
Lakshadweep	0.3	1.1	6.2	0.2								2.7	53.0	3.2	54.3	
Madhya Pradesh	47.2	910.2	184.7	2377.0						502.7	366.2			714.6	3653.4	
Maharashtra	1265.0	9769.7	379.0	4132.1	8.4	48.5	2.9	6.0	112.5	108	168.0	398.4		1928.8	14460.7	
Manipur	51.2	320.9	13.4	86.6	0.5	0.7			14	9.4				79.1	417.0	
Meghalaya	23.8	199.6	32.7	270.5					17.5	71.5	11.2	14.2		85.2	555.8	
Mizoram	21.2	42.5	5.7	24.0	0.1	6.0	0.6		8.8	35.3	2.0	5.3		35.8	107.1	
Nagaland	13.3	48.9	11.9	88.1					3.5	24.2	1.1	2.5		29.8	163.7	
Odisha	227.2	1353.4	655.3	8030.9	0.3	0.1	11.0		235.8	216.5	179.4	314.4		1298.6	9915.3	
Pondicherry	1.0	21.2	4.4	71.9							20.4	48.8		25.8	139.9	
Punjab	43.6	628.2	183.0	2589.1	0.6	3.0			11	30.2				206.2	3249.5	
Rajasthan	23.4	221.0	116.5	527.6	1.9	2.2			2447.9	2127.8				2589.7	2878.6	
Sikkim	10.0	8.1	16.1	75.0	0.0		9.0		32.1	29.6				58.2	112.7	
Tamil Nadu	221.0	3609.4	187.1	4672.7	20.3	161.7			144.6	191.8	453.3	2616.8		1026.3	11252.2	
Tripura	30.8	487.4	32.6	352.2					4.5	17.6	6.7	13.9		74.0	871.1	
Uttar Pradesh	289.4	2320.4	819.5	14862.6	6.3	9.8	2650.0		49.3	133.1				1144.5	17325.3	
Uttarakhand	79.0	844.6	41.6	447.3	0.1	0.6		4.9	4.1	5.9	33.4			130.9	1130.6	
West Bengal	-172.9	2111.6	1165.9	18510.6	17.3	43.6	8766.6		86.1	104.4	42.6	345.0		1484.8	21115.2	
Total	4675.4	45844.6	6308.9	93185.0	101.1	579.7	17925.8	105.9	121.4	5155.3	5113.3	3102.4	3160.9	50.0	19449.0	157834.9

PC(Inf)- Production in (lakh Nos)
 Figure of Production under Grand total does not include Production of Cut-Flowers.
 Previous year data repeated wherever current data not available.

*State-wise Area and Production of various Horticultural
Crops during the year 2004-05*

State/UTs	Fruits		Veg.		Flowers		Almond/Walnut		Spices		Plantation Crops		Aromatic &		Mushroom		Total	
	Area		Prod.		Area		Area		Area		Area		Area		Area		Area	
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
1	Loose Cut																	
Andaman and Nicobar	4.1	23.4	7.1	30.8					1.4	1.9	29.8	101.9					42.4	158.1
Andhra Pradesh	652.0	7735.4	258.5	3861.9	15.7	57.9	83.6		350.5	960.8	298.4	220.2	6.5	6.5			1575.2	12842.7
Arunachal Pradesh	50.7	103.2	20.4	78.8				3.1	0.1	6.6	36.7						80.8	218.8
Assam	93.3	1151.0	194.5	2020.4					27.0	18.1	85.3	223.3					410.1	3412.8
Bihar	276.1	2769.3	8912.1	13285.2	0.1	1.8	11		99.8	88.7	0.4	3.6					1188.5	16126.8
Chandigarh	0.1	1.1	0.1	1.7													0.2	2.8
Chhattisgarh	48.7	343.2	125.1	1266.3	1.5	2.8			56.9	23.9							232.2	1636.2
Dadra and Nagar Haveli	0.7	7.1	1.5	13.5													2.2	20.6
Daman and Diu	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0											0.1	0.2
Delhi	0.1	1.0	43.7	626.8	4.5	25.0											48.3	652.8
Goa	10.3	81.6	7.8	74.7							81.7	150.9					99.8	307.2
Gujarat	251.9	4014.4	331.5	4867.9	7.0	41.8	1969		416.9	396.8	18.0	111.7					1023.3	9402.6
Haryana	24.1	232.2	207.8	2960.4	4.8	55.6	50.8										236.6	3268.2
Himachal Pradesh	207.3	720.8	59.1	1013.5	0.4	2.2	181.7	10.4	3.4								277.3	1739.7
Jammu and Kashmir	167.5	1217.6	52.1	943.0	0.2	0.9	110	94.6	107.8	4.3	1.4						308.8	2170.7

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Jharkhand	33.2	403.4	223.6	3394.9													256.8	3798.3
Karnataka	255.3	4078.7	371.0	4513.1	20.4	142.6	12655			251.5	596.1	730.8	495.7				1629.0	9826.2
Kerala	314.3	1518.7	55.5	2490.1						322.4	167.8	1097.7	4244.8				1789.6	8421.4
Lakshadweep	0.3	0.8	0.2	0.2								2.7	53.0				3.2	54.0
Madhya Pradesh	47.9	1033.0	185.0	2621.0	1.7	1.0				265.6	315.0			15.6	93.0		516.0	4063.0
Maharashtra	1346.5	10586.3	372.2	4044.4	8.7	51.7		2.9	6.0	112.5	106.0	180.0	452.4				2022.8	15246.8
Manipur	51.2	320.9	13.4	86.0	0.5	0.7				14.0	9.4						79.1	417.0
Meghalaya	23.8	199.6	32.7	270.5		0.0				17.5	71.5	11.2	14.2				85.2	555.8
Mizoram	21.2	42.5	5.7	24.0	0.1	0.0	0.6			6.8	35.3	2.0	5.3				35.8	107.1
Nagaland	13.3	48.9	11.9	88.1		0.0				3.5	24.2	1.1	2.5				29.8	163.7
Orissa	233.4	1404.0	655.9	8045.6	0.3	17.3	12.05			235.8	216.5	181.4	317.4				1306.9	10000.7
Pondicherry	1.0	21.1	4.5	74.7		0.0						20.4	44.8				25.9	140.6
Punjab	47.1	679.5	158.6	2677.4	0.6	3.1				11.0	30.2						217.3	3390.2
Rajasthan	23.8	257.0	122.9	623.2	3.3	2.6				417.1	424.3			104.9	52.3		567.2	1359.3
Sikkim	8.2	12.2	17.0	76.5	0.1	0.0	27.7			32.1	29.6						57.4	118.3
Tamil Nadu	224.6	4467.6	215.3	6218.3	23.2	187.3				144.6	191.8	463.7	2618.6				1071.5	13683.8
Tripura	32.4	503.4	32.7	373.4						4.5	17.6	6.7	13.9				76.2	908.3
Uttar Pradesh	274.9	2912.8	840.9	15792.8	8.0	11.9	3527			49.3	133.1						1173.1	19850.6
Uttaranchal	201.3	788.7	72.8	951.8	0.5	0.6		4.9	4.1	5.9	33.4						285.5	1778.5
West Bengal	166.3	2128.3	1189.0	18103.2	17.9	44.7	8963			86.1	104.4	42.6	344.0				1501.9	20724.6
Total	5107.1	49808.7	6701.9	101434.3	119.6	651.5	28046.7	105.9	121.4	5155.3	3984.5	3261.9	9418.2	127.0	151.8	50.0	20451.6	165620.3

State-wise Area and Production of various Horticultural
Crops during the year 2005-06

State/UTs	Fruits		Veg.		Flowers		Aromatic		Almond/Walnut		Spices		Plantation Crops		Mushroom and Honey		Area in 000' hec.	
	Area		Prod.		Area		Prod.		Area		Prod.		Area		Prod.		Area	
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
	Loose Cut																	
Andaman and Nicobar	2.8	20.2	1.3	8.8								1.4	1.9	29.8	101.9		35.4	132.9
Andhra Pradesh	652.0	7735.4	258.4	3881.9	32.0	80.0	86.5	7.6	16.0			333.4	722.8	248.3	1290.8		1532.0	13706.9
Assam	51.8	105.2	20.4	78.8						3.7	0.1	14.0	38.1				89.8	222.2
Bihar	93.3	1151.0	194.5	2020.4								27.0	18.1	95.3	223.3		410.1	3412.9
Chandigarh	276.4	3068.4	780.6	12932.4	0.1	1.8	11					99.8	68.7				1157.0	16071.3
Chhattisgarh	0.1	1.1	0.1	1.7													0.2	2.8
Dadra and Nagar Haveli	75.8	646.8	195.6	2432.3	1.6	3.3		1.586	7.093			29.1	168.3				303.6	3257.7
Daman and Diu	0.7	7.1	1.5	13.5													2.2	20.6
Delhi	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0											0.1	0.2
Goa	0.0	0.0	39.1	420.0	4.5	25.0											43.6	445.3
Gujarat	10.5	91.9	8.1	82.6								0.7	0.1	80.3	86.2		99.7	260.9
Haryana	269.8	4577.6	380.2	6308.3	7.1	42.2						426.1	505.7	20.5	140.0		1103.7	11673.8
Himachal Pradesh	24.1	232.2	207.8	2980.4	4.8	55.6	508										236.6	3268.2
Jammu and Kashmir	180.1	695.4	64.9	1090.0	0.4	2.2	181.7			10.4	3.4						255.8	1791.1
	167.5	1217.6	52.1	843.0	0.2	0.9	110			84.6	107.8	4.3	1.4				308.8	2170.7

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Jharkhand	33.3	388.6	224.1	3401.3													257.5	3789.9
Karnataka	263.0	4241.8	382.2	4697.4	21.1	148.3	131.6	1901	6.877			259.1	618.9	752.7	515.6		1679.9	10229.9
Kerala	218.2	1308.8	96.0	2597.1								268.1	124.5	1082.0	4066.5		1684.2	8097.9
Lakshadweep	0.3	0.7	0.2	0.3										2.7	53.0		3.2	54.1
Madhya Pradesh	45.9	1043.5	210.5	2986.1	1.8	1.1		17.14	102.841			292.4	346.7				567.8	4480.3
Maharashtra	1618.6	11721.3	398.5	4739.7	9.3	58.1				2.9	6.0	112.5	106.0	180.0	452.4		2321.8	17081.5
Manipur	53.1	353.3	11.1	73.7	0.5	0.7						14.0	9.4				78.7	437.1
Meghalaya	28.2	231.6	41.7	340.3		0.0						18.6	73.6	18.9	22.7		107.3	668.2
Mizoram	21.2	42.4	5.7	24.1	0.1	0.0	0.6					6.8	35.3	2.0	5.3		35.8	107.1
Nagaland	13.3	48.8	10.7	83.6		0.0						3.5	24.2	1.1	2.5		28.6	159.1
Orissa	237.5	1403.4	656.7	8051.7	0.6	19.3	129.64					145.0	195.5	50.8	189.2		1090.7	9859.0
Pondicherry	1.0	21.1	4.5	74.7		0.0								20.4	46.8		25.9	142.6
Punjab	51.6	746.3	152.1	2434.9	0.8	4.1		2.3	1.09			11.0	30.2				217.8	3216.5
Rajasthan	24.8	248.7	122.91	755.1	3.0	2.3		107.1	36.5			347.5	297.2				605.2	1339.7
Sikkim	8.9	13.1	17.5	79.1	0.1	0.0	33.086					27.2	40.7				53.7	132.9
Tamil Nadu	255.0	4856.0	232.0	6800.0	25.0	202.0		6.0	11.0			154.0	868.0	467.2	2868.9		1139.2	15605.9
Tripura	33.2	525.1	31.5	365.0								4.6	9.6	6.7	13.9		76.0	913.7
Uttar Pradesh	279.3	3009.2	895.5	17337.3	8.3	12.2	3668	77.7	7.77			91.1	283.9				1351.8	20650.4
Uttaranchal	181.7	692.5	72.9	911.7	0.6	0.6				4.9	4.1	6.6	49.9				266.7	1658.8
West Bengal	172.7	2301.7	1276.2	18382.3	17.9	42.3	9347.9					108.2	226.8	53.5	314.4		1628.4	22267.4
Total	5345.9	52849.2	7047.4	108210.0	139.6	699.9	27239.4	221.5	189.2	106.5	121.4	2805.8	4866.5	3112.2	10393.4	50.0	18779.0	177379.5

Amendment in Forward Contract Bill, 2006

3788. SHRI K.S. RAO: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the main recommendations of the Standing Committee regarding amendments to the Forward Contract Bill, 2006, alongwith the present status thereof;

(b) the steps taken to regulate farm product prices to safeguard the interests of the farmers and consumers;

(c) the current status of the proposal to provide single regulatory framework for the spot and commodity market, appoint eminent persons from marketing and farming on regulatory authority and to have an Act to regulate and stabilize prices of agricultural commodities, check speculation in agricultural commodities to protect the interests of farmers; and

(d) the time by which it is likely to be finalised?

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 Standing Committee on Food, Consumer Affairs and Public Distribution has, inter alia, recommended changes in the provisions of the Forward Contracts (Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2006 relating to composition of the Forward Markets Commission (FMC), qualification and selection of the Members of FMC, constitution of the selection committee to recommend Chairman and Members of FMC, constitution of a separate Appellate Tribunal, quantum of fine, grant of exemption from Wealth Tax and Income Tax to FMC etc. The recommendations of the Standing committee are under consideration of the Government.

(b) The Government's price policy for agricultural commodities, inter-alia, seeks to ensure stabilization of prices. In this regard, the Government announces Minimum Support Prices (MSPs) for major crops. MSPs enable the farmers to sell their produce at remunerative prices whenever the market prices tend to fall below the MSP. The Government also implements the Market Intervention Scheme (MIS) in respect of the agricultural commodities which are not covered under the MSP scheme. Under MIS, procurement operations are permitted to be carried out by the National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd. (NAFED) or State designated agencies on the request of the State Governments to prevent distress sale by farmers of their produce in the event of glut, provided the concerned State Governments undertake to share the losses in such operations. As a

part of the process of reforms in agricultural marketing in order to make it more vibrant and competitive, the Central Government had drafted a Model Act on Agricultural Marketing which, inter alia, provided for the establishment of direct purchase centres and farmers' markets for direct sale to consumers. Besides, such a marketing system would ensure complete transparency in the pricing system. While some of the State Governments have amended the Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee Act, some other States have initiated action for making amendments to the Act.

(c) and (d) The Standing Committee on Food, Consumer Affairs and Public Distribution have recommended that the spot market and futures market need to be placed under the same regulatory framework. The Committee has further recommended that in order to bring in better coordination and synergy between spot trading and futures market, this subject needs to be placed under the Union or Concurrent List by amending the Constitution of India suitably. These recommendations are under consideration of the Government.

More Items Under PDS

3789. SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has initiated a move for sale of other items like cooking gas, postal stamps etc. through Fair Price Shops;

(b) if so, the details thereof indicating the items likely to be sold therein;

(c) whether the Government has issued any guidelines to the States in this regard; 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) to (d) There have been complaints from FPS owners about lower margin on PDS items. One of the findings of the Evaluation studies done on PDS was also that only with the margins allowed on PDS items, the Fair Price Shops could not be made financially viable. Therefore, the State Governments/UTs Administrations have been advised to allow FPSs owners to enlarge the basket of commodities by adding additional non-PDS items of daily use as per local requirement for sale. Some States also distribute additional items of mass consumption such as exercise books, pulses, iodised salt, tea etc. through the FPSs to make them financially more viable. For sale of other items

like cooking gas, through FPS, the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas has not agreed with the proposal as it is not a practical proposition to put domestic cooking gas (LPG) in FPS as cooking gas (LPG) is a purely commercial good marketed by Government Oil Companies through their distributors appointed as per their commercial considerations. The issue of including the sale of Postal items through FPS has been taken up with Department of Posts recently to make the FPS economically more viable.

[Translation]

Interest Payment on Sugarcane Dues

3790. SHRI HARIKEWAL PRASAD:

SHRI GIRIDHARI YADAV:

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

(a) whether there is a provision for payment of 15 per cent interest on sugarcane dues if the same is not paid within the stipulated period of fourteen days;

(b) if so, the details of the cases reported during the last three years wherein payment was not made within the stipulated period;

(c) the number out of these where the requisite interest was not paid despite the delay in payment of sugarcane dues beyond the stipulated period; and

(d) the provisions made for action to be taken against the defaulters for non-payment of the interest?

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) and (c) The responsibility for ensuring timely payment of cane price to sugarcane farmers lies with the State Governments, as such, the delay in payment of cane price, if any is reported to the concerned State Governments. The Central Government does not maintain data on payment of interest on delayed payments of cane price.

(d) In November, 2000, the Sugarcane (Control) Order, 1966 was amended providing that where any producer of sugar or his agent defaults in paying the whole or any part of the price of sugarcane to a farmer of sugarcane or a growers' cooperative society within 14 days from the delivery of sugarcane or where there is an agreement in writing between the parties for payment of price within a specified time and any producer or his agent defaults in making payment within the agreed time specified therein, the amount of price of sugarcane and interest due thereon is recoverable from the producer of sugar or his agent as arrears of land revenue.

Shortage of Wheat

3791. SHRI HEMMAL MURMU:

SHRI RAGHURAJ SINGH SHAKYA:

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

(a) whether the Government has decided to use hedging at the global level to meet the shortage of wheat in the country;

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

(c) whether a high level empowered Committee has been constituted/proposed to be constituted for the purpose;

(d) if so, the details thereof indicating the terms of reference of the Committee; and

(e) the time by which the process 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) to (e) No, Sir. There is no shortage of wheat in the country due to production of 73.75 million tonnes of wheat in the Rabi crop to be marketed in Rabi Marketing Season 2007-08. However, it has been decided by the Government to constitute an Empowered Committee (EC) of experts to advise the FCI for using overseas wheat derivatives market. The composition of EC is as under:

1. Shri U.K. Sinha, - Chairman
CMD UTIAMC, Mumbai
2. Dr. Susan Thomas, - Member
Indira Gandhi Institute of
Development Research
Mumbai
3. Shri Bharat Ramaswami, - Member
Indian Statistical Institute,
Delhi

2. The Terms of Reference of the EC are as under:

- (i) to interact with a set of potential OTC vendors in designing a legal contract that would be finally signed between the designated entity of the Government of India and the successful vendors;
- (ii) to arrive at the transaction sizes, based on empirical evidence and interaction with global industry, which could be contracted without

undue impact on the market. EC would recruit international or domestic consultant on commercial terms to assist them in this work, if deemed appropriate.

- (iii) it would be fully empowered to proceed on a transparent procurement process for choosing one or more OTC vendors for buying options.
- (iv) to establish minimum technical criteria., viz minimum size and track record for the prospective writer of option contracts that can quote price of options in the auction.
- (v) based on their judgment, if EC comes to conclusion that exclusive reliance on options is not feasible at an acceptable price, it could buy futures contracts and based on the market conditions dynamically decide whether to exercise it or to roll it over.

3. The term of the EC would be up to September 2007 or until further orders, whichever is earlier.

[English]

Drugs under Price Control Scheme

3792. SHRI UDAY SINGH: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government proposes to bring more essential drugs under the price control regime; and
- (b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) and (b) Keeping in view the directions of the Supreme Court in SLP No. 3668/2003

and in line with the declared objective of the Government in the National Common Minimum Programme to make available life saving and essential drugs at reasonable prices to the poor, the draft National Pharmaceuticals Policy-2006 proposes, inter alia, that the basket for price control would be the essential medicines as contained in the National List of Essential Medicines, 2003 in addition to 74 drugs which are at present under price control under the Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 1995.

Expenditure on Procurement

3793. SHRI ANIL BASU: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) the details regarding the total quantum of foodgrains including Rice, Paddy, Wheat procured by Food Corporation of India and the State Governments separately during the last three years, State-wise and year-wise; and
- (b) the comparative figures of the expenditure incurred by F.C.I. vis-a-vis the State Governments per Metric Tonne for the above said procurement?

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 procurement of rice, paddy and wheat by FCI and State Governments separately during Kharif Marketing Season 2003-04 to 2006-07 and Rabi Marketing Season 2004-05 to 2006-07 State-wise and year-wise is enclosed.

(b) Statement-II giving the comparative figures of economic cost of wheat and rice in FCI and States undertaking the Decentralised Scheme for last three marketing Seasons is enclosed.

Statement-I

FCI and Agency wise Rice and Paddy for KMS 2003-04 to 2005-06

(figures in 000 tonnes)

States/Year	FCI			State Agency			Total (in terms of rice)		
	Levy Rice	Paddy	Total	Levy Rice	Paddy	Total	Levy Rice	Paddy	Total
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
2003-04									
Andaman and Nicobar Islands				0		192	Neg.		Neg.
Andhra Pradesh	3972	99	4038		286	0	3972	385	4230

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Arunachal Pradesh			0			0			0
Assam	17		17			253	17		17
Bihar		164	110		378	0		542	363
Chandigarh			0			1819			0
Chhattisgarh	555		555		2715	0	555	2715	2374
Delhi			0			0			0
Gujarat			0			657			0
Haryana	650	41	677		980	0	650	1021	1334
Himachal Pradesh	3		3			0	3		3
Jammu and Kashmir			0			0			0
Jharkhand		3	2			0		3	2
Karnataka			0			0			0
Kerala			0			43			0
Madhya Pradesh	12	84	68		64	125	12	148	111
Maharashtra	183		183		186	0	183	186	308
Nagaland			0			70			0
Orissa	1273	45	1303		104	0	1273	149	1373
Pondicherry			0			5514			0
Punjab	2057	1629	3148		8230	0	2057	9859	8663
Rajasthan	28	20	41			207	28	20	41
Tamil Nadu			0		309	700		310	208
Uttar Pradesh			0	1853	1045	1858	1853	1045	2553
Uttaranchal	197		197	121	7	299	318	7	323
West Bengal	630		630	118	265	296	748	265	926
Total	9577	2085	10974	2092	14569	11853	11669	16855	22828

(figures in 000 tonnes)

States/Year	FCI			State Agency			Total (in terms of rice)		
	Levy Rice	Paddy	Total	Levy Rice	Paddy	Total	Levy Rice	Paddy	Total
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
2004-05									
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	-	-	-	1	-	1	1	-	1
Andhra Pradesh	3891	10	3898	0	12	8	3891	22	3906

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Arunachal Pradesh	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Assam	-	Neg.	Neg.	-	-	-	-	Neg.	Neg.
Bihar	-	72	48	295	-	295	295	72	343
Chandigarh	19	-	19	-	-	-	19	-	19
Chhattisgarh	890	-	890	-	2906	1947	890	2906	2837
Delhi	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Gujarat	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Haryana	646	100	713	-	1417	949	646	1517	1662
Himachal Pradesh	2	-	2	-	-	-	2	-	2
Jammu and Kashmir	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	1
Jharkhand	-	2	1	-	-	-	-	2	1
Karnataka	-	-	-	-	31	21	-	31	21
Kerala	-	-	-	-	49	33	-	49	33
Madhya Pradesh	7	20	20	-	33	22	7	53	42
Maharashtra	157	-	157	-	72	48	157	72	205
Nagaland	1	-	1	-	16	11	1	16	11
Orissa	1314	84	1370	-	327	220	1314	411	1590
Pondicherry	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Punjab	2368	1149	3138	-	8908	5968	2368	10057	9106
Rajasthan	17	7	22	-	-	-	17	7	22
Tamil Nadu	-	-	-	-	973	652	-	973	652
Uttar Pradesh	849	-	849	1602	776	2121	2451	776	2971
Uttaranchal	186	-	186	122	11	130	308	11	316
West Bengal	318	-	318	148	714	626	466	714	944
Total	10666	1444	11633	2168	16245	13052	12834	17689	24885

(figures in 000 tonnes)

States/Year	FCI			State Agency			Total (in terms of rice)		
	Levy Rice	Paddy	Total	Levy Rice	Paddy	Total	Levy Rice	Paddy	Total
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

2005-06

Andaman and Nicobar Islands

Andhra Pradesh	4653	192	4782		284	190	4653	476	4972
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1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Arunachal Pradesh									
Assam	1		1				1		1
Bihar	73	85	131		587	394	73	673	524
Chandigarh	2	16	13				2	16	13
Chhattisgarh	860		860		3589	2404	860	3589	3265
Delhi									
Gujarat									
Haryana	475	95	538		2262	1515	475	2356	2053
Himachal Pradesh									
Jammu and Kashmir	3		3				3		3
Jharkhand	1	1	2				1	1	2
Karnataka	47		47		2	1	47	2	48
Kerala					140	94	-	140	94
Madhya Pradesh	24	93	86		75	50	24	168	136
Maharashtra	92		92		151	101	92	151	193
Nagaland									
Orissa	966	384	1223		839	562	966	1223	1785
Pondicherry									
Punjab	1074	1042	1772		10571	7083	1074	11613	8855
Rajasthan	23	Neg.	23				23	Neg.	23
Tamil Nadu					1382	926		1382	926
Uttar Pradesh	526		526	1924	1047	2625	2450	1047	3151
Uttaranchal	198		198	126	18	138	324	18	336
West Bengal	264	813	809	97	552	467	361	1365	1276
Total	9282	2721	11106	2147	21499	16550	11429	24220	27658

State-wise and Marketing Season-wise Procurement of Wheat by FCI & State Agencies

(in '000 MT)

[illegible]

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Assam	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bihar	Neg.	14	14	Neg.	1	1	-	-	-
Chandigarh	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Chhattisgarh	-	Neg.	Neg.	-	-	-	-	-	-
Delhi	2	-	2	2	-	2	-	-	-
Gujarat	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Haryana	880	4235	5115	617	3912	4529	269	1960	2229
Himachal Pradesh	Neg.	-	Neg.	Neg.	-	Neg.	-	-	-
Jammu and Kashmir	Neg.	-	Neg.	Neg.	-	Neg.	-	-	-
Karnataka	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Madhya Pradesh	35	315	350	15	469	484	Neg.	Neg.	Neg.
Maharashtra	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Orissa	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pondicherry	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Punjab	2147	7093	9240	1428	7582	9010	1063	5883	6946
Rajasthan	178	101	279	119	40	159	2	Neg.	2
Tamil Nadu	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Uttar Pradesh	15	1725	1740	41	519	560	5	44	49
Uttaranchal	9	46	55	6	34	40	Neg.	Neg.	Neg.
West Bengal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	3266	13529	16795	2228	12557	14785	1339	7887	9226

Neg.: Below 500 tonnes.

Statement-II

Comparison of Economic Cost of Wheat and Rice of Food Corporation of India (FCI) and States Undertaking Decentralised Procurement (DCP)

FCI's economic cost is fixed on All India basis and many of the expenditure items of the FCI like transportation cost, labour charges, administrative overheads etc. are apportioned on All India basis. Therefore, if DCP States economic cost are compared to FCI's economic cost the state wise various components of economic cost may not compare. However, Statement showing FCI's economic cost for 2004-05 to 2006-07 and DCP States' economic cost (provisional) from 2004-05 to 2006-07 of both rice and wheat are as under.

(I)	2004-05	(Rs. per tonne)	
State/Corporation	Raw Rice		Wheat
	Common	Grade-A	
1	2	3	4
FCI (2004-05 Prov.)	13295.90		10495.90
Chhattisgarh	11231.60	11744.30	-
Karnataka	10813.90	11311.70	-
Kerala*	-	-	-
Madhya Pradesh	-	-	8033.80
Orissa	11282.00	11796.80	-

1	2	3	4
Tamil Nadu	10577.90	11064.00	-
Uttar Pradesh	11646.10	12167.40	8718.20
Uttarakhand	11306.10	11827.40	8411.50
West Bengal	10526.80	11013.00	-

* DCP scheme started in Kerala from 2005-06

(II) 2005-06

State/Corporation	Raw Rice		Wheat
	Common	Grade-A	
FCI (2005-06 Prov.)	13372.90		10444.20
Chhattisgarh	11746.50	12266.80	-
Karnataka	10962.80	11460.70	+
Kerala	11771.40 (Par-boiled)	-	-
Madhya Pradesh	-	-	8538.70
Orissa	11514.50	12029.20	-
Tamil Nadu	10421.50	10907.80	-
Uttar Pradesh	11922.30	12443.70	8672.90
Uttarakhand	11571.50	12092.80	8411.50
West Bengal	10712.60	11201.20	

(III) 2006-07

State/Corporation	Raw Rice		Wheat
	Common	Grade-A	
FCI (2006-07 RE)	13859.20		12325.80
Chhattisgarh	12672.00	13198.20	-
Karnataka	11800.20	12299.40	-
Kerala	12706.70 (Par-boiled)	-	-
Madhya Pradesh	-	-	9111.00
Orissa	12483.50	13003.80	-
Tamil Nadu	11544.50	12036.80	-
Uttar Pradesh	12753.50	113276.30	9353.80
Uttarakhand	12450.70	12975.60	9018.20
West Bengal	11790.40	12282.70	-

Land Use Survey

3794. PROF. CHANDER KUMAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to conduct the land use survey keeping in view the diversification in the agriculture sector;

(b) whether the Government has prepared any action plan for conducting the said land use survey; and

(c) if so, the details thereof including the amount proposed to be allotted therefor, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) All India Soil & Land Use Survey (AIS&LUS) and National Bureau of Soil Survey & Land Use Planning (NBSS&LUP) are the two Government organizations involved in Soil and Land Use Survey. AIS&LUS conducts soil and land use survey with a view to generate and provide detailed scientific data base on soil and land characteristics to various State user departments for planning and implementation of various Natural Resources Management programmes. The NBSS&LUP conducts soil surveys in different parts of the country with particular reference to soils under agricultural areas to determine its land quality and studies the properties with respect to morphology, physical and chemical characteristics and use the data for land use planning.

Based on these land use and soil surveys, State Governments have been encouraged to take up the diversification of agriculture in their States.

(b) and (c) In the action plan for the year 2007-08, it is proposed to do rapid reconnaissance survey in 208 lakh ha. detailed soil survey in 2 lakh ha. land degradation mapping in 156 lakh ha. and soil resource mapping in 220 lakh ha. against budget outlay of Rs. 10.75 cr.

Exposure to Steel Industry

3795. SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO:
SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL:

Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the CII has sought increased banking exposure and infrastructure status for the steel industry along with fiscal sops at par with those extended to SEZs;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Union Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (DR. AKHILESH DAS): (a) to (c) Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) have stated that they have not made any earlier representation regarding increased banking exposure and infrastructure status for the steel industry alongwith fiscal sops at par with those extended to SEZs. However, they have sent a representation on 26.04.2007 to Ministry of Steel, which is now being examined.

Procurement of Rice

3796. SHRI B. MAHTAB: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the total quantity of rice procured by the Food Corporation of India (FCI) in Orissa and other rice producing States during the last six months, State-wise;

(b) the quantity likely to be procured from the said States by FCI till commencement of next Kharif season, State-wise;

(c) the districts where the rice is being stored by the FCI, indicating the quantum thereof;

(d) the storage charges paid by FCI during the last three years for the rice stored in private godowns in the States; and

(e) the steps proposed to be taken to reduce the expenses on storage of such rice?

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) As per information furnished by FCI the total quantity of rice procured for the Central Pool by the FCI and State agencies during Kharif Marketing Season 2006-07 (from October, 2006 to March 2007) and the further quantity of rice likely to be procured till commencement of next Kharif season, State-wise is given in the enclosed statement-I.

(c) District-wise stocks of FCI are not maintained by this Department. As per information received from FCI, a statement-II indicating state-wise stock position of foodgrains available with FCI and State agencies as on 31.3.2007 is enclosed.

(d) The commodity-wise storage charges paid to Private parties are not maintained in the books of accounts. The storage charges paid by FCI during the last three years for the rice stored in private godowns State-wise is given in the enclosed statement-III.

(e) For reducing the storage expenses, instructions already exist among the field offices i.e. to (i) review the storage need at regular intervals to dehire the capacity found surplus, (ii) to hire out the FCI owned surplus godowns capacity to other users (iii) to use/finalize HTC at most competitive rates, so as to reduce the storage/handling cost of foodgrains.

Statement-I

Rice Procured by FCI during KMS 2006-07 (From October, 2006 to March, 2007) and the quantity of rice likely to be procured by FCI till commencement of next kharif season

(in lakh tonnes)

State/U.T.	By FCI	By State Agency	Total	Further likely qty. of rice during KMS 2006-07
Andhra Pradesh	26.05	0.70	26.75	22.50
Bihar	1.02	3.23	4.25	0.50
Chandigarh	0.10	-	0.10	-
Chhattisgarh	9.74	15.39	25.13	4.00
Haryana	4.08	13.63	17.71	0.10
Jharkhand	0.05	-	0.05	-
Karnataka	0.20	0.01	0.21	-
Madhya Pradesh	0.49	0.24	0.73	-
Maharashtra	0.11	0.85	0.96	0.70
Orissa	6.74	6.85	13.59	8.70
Punjab	8.77	69.25	78.02	2.00
Pondicherry	0.03	-	0.03	-
Rajasthan	0.10	-	0.10	-
Tamil Nadu	-	9.95	9.95	3.00
Uttar Pradesh	2.07	18.94	21.01	5.00
Uttarakhand	0.64	1.08	1.72	0.10
West Bengal	1.63	3.26	4.89	3.00
All India	61.82	144.19	206.01	49.60

Statement-II*Total Stocks of Rice in Central Pool as on 31.3.2007*

(in Lakh tonnes)

S.No.	State	With FCI	With State Agencies	Total Rice in Central Pool
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Bihar	2.20	0.47	2.67
2.	Jharkhand	0.37	-	0.37
3.	Orissa	4.99	0.31	5.30
4.	West Bengal	2.20	-	2.20
5.	Assam	0.39	-	0.39
6.	Arunachal Pradesh	0.01	-	0.01
7.	Tripura	0.20	-	0.20
8.	Mizoram	0.04	-	0.04
9.	Meghalaya	0.13	-	0.13
10.	Manipur	0.05	-	0.05
11.	Nagaland	0.12	-	0.12
12.	Delhi	0.34	-	0.34
13.	Haryana	3.76	0.23	3.99
14.	Himachal Pradesh	0.13	-	0.13
15.	Jammu and Kashmir	0.45	-	0.45
16.	Punjab	37.99	11.06	40.05
17.	Rajasthan	0.26	-	0.26
18.	Uttar Pradesh	2.87	11.06	13.95
19.	Uttarakhand	0.76	0.49	1.25
20.	Andhra Pradesh	16.88	-	16.88
21.	Kerala	1.71	0.39	2.10
22.	Karnataka	3.16	-	3.16
23.	Tamil Nadu	4.52	4.16	8.68
24.	Gujarat	0.46	-	0.46

1	2	3	4	5
25.	Maharashtra	1.97	0.37	2.34
26.	Madhya Pradesh	0.76	-	0.76
27.	Chhattisgarh	8.40	4.79	13.19
	Total	95.11	33.47	128.58
	Stocks in Transit	3.13	-	3.13
	Total All India	98.24	33.47	131.71

Statement-III

The commodity-wise storage charges paid to Private parties are not maintained in the books of accounts. The total storage charges paid by FCI during the last 3 years for private godowns State-wise are as under:-

(Rupees in Lakhs)

S. No.	Name of Region	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Bihar	47.26	60.90	57.21
2.	Jharkhand	44.28	29.15	23.66
3.	Orissa	20.97	19.73	22.91
4.	West Bengal	121.42	134.24	63.90
5.	Assam	53.37	42.71	48.70
6.	NEF	1.11	0.88	25.05
7.	N&M	-	0.89	-
8.	Haryana	155.79	113.59	105.29
9.	Himachal Pradesh	1.10	0.15	0.11
10.	Jammu and Kashmir	-	1.50	0.83
11.	Punjab	1029.88	566.02	339.35
12.	Rajasthan	18.11	12.32	23.11
13.	Uttar Pradesh	26.80	15.07	18.67
14.	Uttaranchal	3.95	3.95	31.59
15.	Andhra Pradesh	38.81	20.78	-
16.	Kerala	0.98	-	-

1	2	3	4	5
17.	Tamil Nadu	-	0.56	-
18.	Gujarat	85.11	-	-
19.	Maharashtra	33.56	72.72	83.15
20.	Madhya Pradesh	70.90	93.89	73.32
21.	Chhattisgarh	17.04	15.91	31.58
Total		1764.44	1204.96	948.73

Development of Ichamati River

3797. SHRI AJOY CHAKRABORTY: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is considering to implement a programme to develop the river Ichamati in West Bengal including increasing its depth and water carrying capacity;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Union Government is aware that large number of people got affected every year due to recurrent floods in this river; and

(d) if so, the details of the steps taken by the Government to remedy the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) and (b) The Government of West Bengal prepared a scheme in September, 2005 amounting to Rs.23.59 crore for desilting/dredging of river Ichhamati along the common border between India and Bangladesh for better drainage and flood management for an approximate length of 20 km. from Angrail BSF Bridge to Kalanchi BSF Bridge.

(c) Yes Sir.

(d) As the river Ichhamati form the international border between India and Bangladesh, the matter has already been taken up by Government of India with Bangladesh during 36th meeting of Indo-Bangladesh Joint Rivers Commission (JRC) held at Dhaka in September, 2005 to work out the modalities for undertaking desilting/dredging work. A joint field visit by Ministers of water Resources of both the countries (India and Bangladesh) was also undertaken in September, 2006 to assess situation on the ground.

Misutilisation of Funds under GAP

3798. SHRI ABU AYES MONDAL:

SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL:

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

(a) whether the Government has received complaints against misutilisation of funds for Ganga Action Plan (GAP);

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) to (c) As per the information received from the State Government of Uttar Pradesh, the Hon'ble High Court of Allahabad appointed an audit team under a Public Interest Litigation vide its order dated 5.5.1998. The audit report submitted on 10.9.1999 is still sub-judice. On another complaint received on 28.2.2003 action has been taken against the persons concerned on the basis of detailed enquiry conducted by the Chief Engineer, UP Jal Nigam. The process of enquiry into yet another complaint concerning award of tender for construction of a 29 mld. (million litres per day) Sewage Treatment Plant at Allahabad is on.

Notification regarding Environment Tribunal

3799. SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL:

SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO:

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

(a) whether the Government is yet to notify the tribunal without which the National Environment Tribunal Act, 1955 remains non-functional;

(b) if so, the reasons for not notifying the said Tribunal so far; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to notify the Tribunal set up under the National Environment Tribunal Act, 1955?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) to (c) The Law Commission of India in its 186th Report has inter-alia recommended setting up of separate Environmental Courts in each State (or for group of States). The Commission has also recommended repeal of the National Environment Tribunal (NET) Act, 1995 and the National Environment Appellate Authority (NEAA) Act, 1997, and transfer of provisions regarding functions and powers of the Tribunal and Appellate Authority contained in those Acts in the proposed enactment for establishment of the Environment Courts.

In view of the said Report, the Ministry of Environment & Forests has, in principle, decided to propose enactment

of legislation for setting up a National Environment Tribunal and Regional Environment Tribunals. The mandate of the Tribunals under the proposed legislation will not be limited to the provisions of NET Act, 1995 to provide for strict liability for damages arising out of any accident while handling any hazardous substance but will provide for adjudication in all civil cases where a substantial question of environment protection including enforcement of any legal rights relating to environment is involved.

[Translation]

Review of River Water Conservation Project

3800. SHRI SHISHUPAL N. PATLE:

SHRI DEVIDAS PINGLE:

SHRI KAILASH NATH SINGH YADAV:

SHRI MOHD. TAHIR:

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

(a) whether the Union Government has assessed the shortcomings during the review of the working of the National River Water Conservation Project in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether a report on the health of children getting affected due to polluted water of the rivers in the country has been received;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the Union Government has formulated/is formulating any scheme to strengthen the existing conservation projects; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) The Government has identified certain systemic issues affecting implementation of pollution abatement works for rivers under the National River Conservation Plan (NRCP). The major issues identified among others are inadequate funds for Operation & Maintenance (O&M) of assets created under the Plan by the State Governments, insufficient budgetary allocation for States' share, delay in the implementation of the projects due to land acquisition problem, among others.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. Does not arise.

(e) and (f) The Central Government undertakes regular review meetings and field visits to enhance the effectiveness of project implementation. It has also requested State Governments to have regular monthly

meetings under the Chairmanship of Chief Secretaries for a time-bound resolution of inter-sectoral problems.

[English]

Establishment of National Fund for Strategic Agricultural Research

3801. SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Dr. M.S. Swaminathan Commission has recommended for establishing National Fund for Strategic Agricultural Research with corpus of Rs.50 crores;

(b) if so, whether the said recommendation has been accepted by the Government;

(c) if so, the steps taken for its speedy implementation;

(d) whether efforts have been made to tie-up with multilateral agencies like World Bank and Asian Development Bank etc. in this regard in view of insufficient provisions of the funds for the same;

(e) if so, the details thereof and the current status of the proposal; and

(f) the present position of the fund and the steps taken to grant sufficient funds thereunder for encouraging agricultural research?

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) Yes, Sir.

(c) The Finance Minister announced in his budget speech for the year 2006-07 an initial provision of Rs. 50 crore for operationalizing the National Fund. There after an Empowered Committee with very eminent Chairman and Members was constituted by the Hon'ble Minister of Agriculture in 2006-07 for the Fund functioning. The DARE/ICAR is operating the Fund.

(d) and (e) No, Sir. However, the ICAR is now operating a World Bank funded National Agricultural Innovation Project with one of the Components entitled, "Basic and Strategic Research in Frontier Areas of Agricultural Sciences" with a budget of US\$ 56 million (approx. Rs. 250 crore) for six years to support large projects.

(f) So far 14 innovative high quality projects have been sanctioned under the Fund with a total budget of Rs. 24.76 crore. Some projects are in the process of selection and sanction.

Performance of Central Cattle Breeding Farms

3802. SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATEL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has constituted Farm Technical Advisory Committees to examine the deteriorated performance of various Central Cattle Breeding Farms (CCBFs) in the country particularly at Suratgarh (Rajasthan), Almadhi (Tamil Nadu) and Chilplima (Orissa);

(b) whether the said Committees have submitted its report;

(c) if so, the details of the recommendations made by the Committees;

(d) the action taken by the Government on such recommendations; and

(e) the extent to which the performance of each of the said farms have been improved so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d) The recommendations and the action taken on them are given in the enclosed statement-I.

(e) The performance of the farms is given in the enclosed statement-II.

Statement-I

Action Taken Report on the Approved Recommendations of the Farm Technical Advisory Committees

Recommendations	Action Taken
1. High pedigree Tharparkar breeding bulls should be procured through Central Herd Registration Scheme (CHRS) and stationed at Central Frozen Semen Production and Training Institute (CFSP&TI) for frozen semen production and its use in Tharparkar bull mother of Central Cattle Breeding Farm (CCBF), Suratgarh.	Five high pedigree bulls have been procured from the breeding tract of Tharparkar through CHRS and stationed at Central Cattle Breeding Farm (CCBF), Suratgarh. After attaining the breedable age they will be transferred to CFSP&TI for production of frozen semen.
2. Twenty five Tharparkar cows should be transferred from CCBF Suratgarh to CCBF Almadhi for production of bulls. Twenty five Sahiwal cows should also be procured and stationed at CCBF Almadhi.	The recommendation was reviewed by the Department since the breeding policy of southern states does not envisage use of Tharparkar and Sahiwal for upgrading the local cows. The recommendations will be reconsidered after revision of the breeding policy by the concerned states.
3. Frozen semen of high pedigree Red Sindhi bulls may be imported from Pakistan for breeding the Red Sindhi bull mothers of CCBF, Chilplima. Frozen semen of high pedigree Sahiwal, Tharparkar and Niliravi bulls may also be imported for use in the concerned herds.	The proposal for procurement of frozen semen has been taken up through different forums for International Cooperation with Pakistan.
4. Grazing of animals within the farm premises allowed earlier should be stopped in the farms maintaining exotic and crossbred cows.	The grazing of animals has been stopped in all the Central Cattle Breeding Farms to avoid transmission of infection from outside animals.
5. Disease testing for the specified sexually transmissible diseases should be done on rotational basis by different agencies. Testing of the animals for Tuberculosis and Johne's disease should be done by the farm by ELISA test.	Farms are regularly carrying out the tests for screening the animals for the diseases
6. Regular soil testing should be done to find out the deficiency of the specific nutrients and use the chemical fertilizer accordingly to compensate the deficiency.	All the CCBFs have carried out the soil testing and are accordingly using fertilizers to make up the deficiency besides using farmyard manure

Statement-II**Performance of Central Cattle Breeding Farms (2006-07)**

S.No.	Parameter	Alamadhi	Andeshnagar	Chiplima	Dhamrod	Hesserghatta	Sunabeda	Suratgarh	Total
1	Bull calf production	33	50	43	23	31*	85*	61*	326*
2	Bull calves sold	13*	70*	33	14	26*	64*	15	235
3	Mortality	4.07	3.60*	3.44	4.80*	5.22*	5.94	4.37*	4.42*
4.	No. of persons trained	372*	356*	567*	243	549*	781*	281*	3149*
5.	Milk production (Lakh Kg.)	1.19*	5.28*	1.83	0.74	2.96*	3.88*	2.01*	17.89*
6.	Revenue (Rs. in lakhs)	19.24*	66.51	23.23	22.15*	35.39*	54.45	45.01*	265.98*

* Indicates improvement in performance

[Translation]**Smuggling of Animals****3803. SHRI HARISINH CHAVDA:****DR. DHIRENDRA AGARWAL:**

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

(a) whether the Animal Welfare Board has drawn the attention of the Government towards the smuggling of animals;

(b) if so, the action taken by the Government in this regard so far; and

(c) the number of persons against whom action has been taken during the last two years, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) The Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI) is a statutory body created under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1960, which is presently functioning under the aegis of the Ministry of Environment and Forests. Its mandate is to deal with various matters connected with animal welfare and the prevention of infliction of unnecessary pain and suffering on animals, including domesticated animals and animals in captivity. AWBI has not made any reference to this Ministry regarding the subject of smuggling of animals.

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

[English]**Integrated Project for Coastal Conservation/Management****3804. DR. VALLABHBHAI KATHIRIA:****SHRIMATI JAYABEN B. THAKKAR:****SHRI MAHESH KANODIA:**

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

(a) whether the Government of Gujarat has submitted any Integrated Project for Coastal Conservation/Management;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the project has been taken up for external assistance; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) The Central Government has initiated an Integrated Coastal Zone Management project based on the approach suggested by Prof. M.S. Swaminathan Committee, that had reviewed the Coastal Regulation Zone Notification, 1991. One of the States identified for the project is Gujarat. The Government of Gujarat has also communicated acceptance for implementing the project in Gujarat.

(c) and (d) For implementing the above project, the Central Government has sought technical and financial assistance from multilateral donor agencies, including the World Bank. The project includes demarcation of vulnerability line, mapping of ecologically sensitive areas, institutional development and capacity building, control of pollution from land based activities and preparation of Integrated Coastal Zone Management for the coastal stretches of the identified States, including the State of Gujarat.

Production of Fodder

3805. SHRI DUSHYANT SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No.53 dated February 26, 2007 regarding shortage of fodder and state:

(a) the quantum of fodder produced in each

Central Fodder Seed Production Farm during the last three years;

(b) whether the Government proposes to set up additional farms and take steps to increase the production of fodder during the Eleventh Five Year Plan; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the additional production of fodder expected during the said plan period?

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 quantum of fodder produced in each Regional Station for Forage Production & Demonstration and in the Central Fodder Seed Production Farm in last three years is enclosed as statement.

(b) and (c) Question does not arise.

Statement

Fodder Production at Regional Station for Forage Production & Demonstration & Central Fodder Seed Production Farm for the last three years

(In qtls)

Farm	Type of fodder	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Regional Station for Forage Production & Demonstration, Gandhinagar, Gujarat	Green	1211	831	814
	Dry	284	973	750
Regional Station for Forage Production & Demonstration, Gandhinagar, Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir	Green	35	-	-
	Dry	75	64	70
Regional Station for Forage Production & Demonstration, Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh	Green	300	75	225
	Dry	100	50	50
Regional Station for Forage Production & Demonstration, Suratgarh, Rajasthan	Green	1157	1600	3810
	Dry	2793	2800	2280
Regional Station for Forage Production & Demonstration, Hisar, Haryana	Green	908	696	192
	Dry	603	-	313
Regional Station for Forage Production & Demonstration, Chennai, Tamil Nadu	Green	2310	2340	6910
	Dry	855	660	2485
Regional Station for Forage Production & Demonstration, Kalyani, West Bengal	Green			
	Dry		208	247
Central Fodder Seed Production Farm, Hessarghatta, Bangalore, Karnataka	Green	70	60	130
	Dry	180	150	170

[Translation]

VRS to Labourers

3806. SHRI RASHEED MASOOD: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of Labourers working under different departments of Steel Ministry/PSU were offered VRS in 1998-99;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether certain outstanding amount in respect of some labourers offered VRS in 1998-99 has not been paid so far; and

(d) if so, the time by which the said outstanding dues are likely to be paid?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (DR. AKHILESH DAS): (a) and (b) There are no departments under the Ministry of Steel. However, the details in respect of Public Sector Undertaking under the administrative control of the Ministry of Steel are as follows:

Steel Authority of India, Ltd. (SAIL)

In VRS-1998, introduced in SAIL w.e.f 1.3.1998 till 31.8.1998, a total number of 5975 employees were offered/ took voluntary retirement (658 Executives and 5317 Non-Executives) and in VRS-1999, introduced w.e.f. 1.6.99 till 31.10.1999, a total number of 13617 employees were separated (2011 Executives and 11606 Non-Executives).

In case of IISCO which was a subsidiary of Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) in 1998 and 1999, 260 number of Non-Executive employees have taken voluntary retirement (VR) during the period.

Bharat Refractories Limited (BRL)

VRS scheme was in operation in BRL and 7 employees opted for voluntary retirement in the year 1998-99.

Spong Iron India Limited (SIIL)

A total number of 27 workers including 9 Executives and 18 Non-Executives opted for voluntary retirement in the year 1998-99.

Hindustan Steel Works Construction Limited (HSCL)

A total number of 407 employees including 70 Executives, 43 Non-Executives and 294 workers of HSCL opted voluntary retirement in 1998-99.

(c) and (d) During the year 1998/1999, SAIL was operating Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS) on deferred payment basis where VR compensation amount was paid on monthly/quarterly basis. Only in Durgapur Steel Plant (DSP), there are a few cases where after the death of the employee, nominees could not file the claims after obtaining succession certificate, therefore claims could not be settled. In DSP there are some other cases also where payments have not been released as ex-employees have not vacated Company's accommodation or the injunction from the Court has been obtained by a party in dispute for the claim. In Ispat Limestone Quarry, Satna only in a few cases dues on account of gratuity and leave encashment of the employees arising out of 1997 wage/salary revision, which was made effective in July, 2004 could not be released due to non-submission of claims by the employees. However, the payments are released as soon as, the stipulated requirements are fulfilled by the employee concerned. In all other cases, payment has already been made.

As regards the other PSUs viz., BRL, SIIL and HSCL no outstanding claim is pending with the companies in respect of the employees who had opted for voluntary retirement in 1998-99.

[English]

Depleting Water Level of Yamuna River

3807. SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the water level of Yamuna River in Delhi is depleting day-by-day causing shortage of drinking water in Delhi;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the measures taken to maintain water level of Yamuna River to check shortage of drinking water; and

(d) the details of the policy formulated to meet potable water demand of Master Plan, 2021?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) to (c) CWC is maintaining a Gauge & Discharge observation site on river Yamuna at Old Delhi Railway Bridge downstream of Wazirabad barrage since 1963. A study of observed data at the site does not suggest that there is any trend showing that water levels in river Yamuna are falling over the years during the corresponding periods of the year.

River Yamuna is one of the main sources of water supply to Delhi. The water from River Yamuna is supplied to Delhi at Wazirabad barrage also. The full pond level at Wazirabad barrage is to be maintained as per the orders of Hon'ble Supreme Court dated 29.02.1996. The release of water in river Yamuna and canal network is regulated through Hathnikund Barrage (nearly 240 kms. From Delhi) and a regulator at Munak, both under the control of Haryana Irrigation Department. The water travels a long distance before reaching Delhi. Therefore there is a possibility of fluctuation of water level at Wazirabad barrage. As and when a fall in water level is reported by Delhi Jal Board, the Haryana Irrigation Department is requested to release more water for maintaining the pond level, so that the water supply to Delhi from river Yamuna is ensured.

(d) Delhi Jal Board (DJB) has informed that the present population of Delhi is 165 lakhs (approx.) and DJB is supplying 720 MGD of water. As per the past trend the population is estimated to be around 230 lakhs by 2021. As such the potable water demand is expected to be 1380 MGD by 2021. Present installed capacity of water treatment plants (WTP) are:

WTP	Capacity
Chandrawal	90 MGD
Wazirabad	120 MGD
Haiderpur	200 MGD
Nangloi	40 MGD
Bawana	20 MGD
Bhagirathi	100 MGD
Sonia Vihar	140 MGD
Ranney wells/tubewells	100 MGD
Total	810 MGD

Out of the above Sonia Vihar & Nangloi Water Treatment Plants are running under capacity due to less supply of raw water and Bawana WTP which is ready but not running due to non-availability of raw water. To bridge the gap between supply and demand, following steps are being undertaken:

1. Efforts are being made to increase raw water supply of Sonia Vihar WTP.
2. Strengthening of water carrier canals to increase raw water supply to Nangloi WTP.

3. A scheme for construction of parallel line channel from Munak to Haiderpur WTP is being executed by Haryana against deposit of Rs. 315 crore from Delhi Government. This will make available additional water due to savings in seepage water losses in the existing canal.
4. Four re-cycling back wash/waste water treatment plants are also under construction and will produce 45 MGD of additional water.
5. Water harvesting schemes to recharge the depleting ground water table in Delhi are being promoted.
6. Three storage dams in Yamuna basin to provide raw water to Delhi are proposed to be constructed at Renuka, Kishau and Lakhwar Vyasi. As per MoU of May, 1994 among Upper Yamuna Basin States (Delhi, Rajasthan, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand & Himachal Pradesh) Delhi is to get 0.724 BCM of water out of the 11.983 BCM of annual utilizable flow of Yamuna upto Okhla. In accordance with MoU of May 1994 separate agreement will be executed in respect of each identified storage project. Ministry of Water Resources in association with Central Water Commission is facilitating to work out the Resolution on each of the storage projects in respect of sharing of benefits and cost. Out of these three dams Detailed Project Report of Renuka dam in Himachal Pradesh is in advanced stage of appraisal by Central Water Commission.

With these measures, by 2021, it is expected that the supply of raw water to Delhi will cross 1380 MGD against the demand of 1380 MGD

Decline in Sowing Area of Oilseed

3808. SHRI EKNATH MAHADEO GAIKWAD:
SHRIMATI NIVEDITA MANE:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether edible oil crop acreage has shrunk considerably as reported in the Business Standard dated April 9, 2007;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) and (b)

The Business Standard dated 9th April 2007 reported that, among other things, oilseeds acreage declined by 5.47 percent. As per the 3rd advance estimates for 2006-07, acreage under kharif and rabi oilseeds stands at 25.99 million hectares compared to 27.86 million hectares during 2005-06, showing a decrease of 1.87 million hectares. The kharif acreage declined from 17.37 million hectares in 2005-06 to 16.55 million tonnes and the rabi acreage declined from 10.49 million hectares to 9.44 million hectares in 2006-07. The area shrinkage under oilseeds has been mainly due to that in Groundnut in kharif season and Rapeseed & Mustard in rabi season. Groundnut area declined in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka due to drought like situation at the time of sowing, and in Gujarat due to diversion of groundnut area to Cotton. The area under Rapeseed & Mustard has been diverted to Wheat crop specially in Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Haryana and to Gram in Madhya Pradesh.

(c) A Centrally Sponsored Integrated Scheme on Oilseeds, Pulses, Oilpalm and Maize (ISOPOM) is in place from 01.04.2004 for increasing production and productivity of oilseeds in the country. Under the scheme financial assistance is provided for purchase of breeder seeds, production of foundation seeds, distribution of seed minikits, infrastructure development, block demonstrations on improved technology, integrated pest management, weedicides, distribution of sprinkler sets and farmers training. The Budget 2007-08 announced proposals to expand the ISOPOM.

[Translation]

Norms for Allotment of Levy Sugar

3809. SHRIMATI RUPATAI D. PATIL:

SHRI CHANDRA MANI TRIPATHI:

SHRIMATI KARUNA SHUKLA:

DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY:

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

(a) whether the Government has laid down certain norms for the allotment of levy sugar to various States under the Public Distribution System (PDS);

(b) If so, the details thereof;

(c) whether a discriminatory policy is being followed in the allotment of levy sugar to some States including Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Maharashtra;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor;

(e) whether the effected States have taken up the

issue with Union Government to ensure regular allocation; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) and (b) With effect from 01.02.2001, the allotment of levy sugar is made on the basis of fixed norms of ensuring minimum 500 grams per capita availability for the projected population as on 1.3.2000.

(c) and (d) Since the levy percentage has been reduced to 10% of the domestic production, w.e.f. 1.2.2001, the availability of sugar for levy allocation varies depending upon the levels of domestic production, as such, it has not been possible to supply levy sugar as per the fixed levy quota to each State/UT. Accordingly, due to fall in sugar production in 2003-04 and 2004-05 sugar seasons, the levy quota of many States including the States of Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Maharashtra was reduced in August, 2005.

(e) and (f) The State Governments of Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Maharashtra requested for restoration of levy quota and their full State quotas has since been restored.

[English]

Water Withdrawals from Ganga

3810. SHRI NAVEEN JINDAL: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ganga is facing a serious threat owing to increased water withdrawals as reported in the Hindu dated March 21, 2007;

(b) if so, the extent of water extracted from Ganga every year for irrigation and other purposes; and

(c) the steps being taken to remedy the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) to (c) Central Water Commission has a network of hydrological observation sites in Ganga basin. A study of flow data at five important stations viz. Rishikesh, Kanpur, Allahabad, Varanasi and Patna, in river Ganga for the period 1983-84 to 2002-03 showing five yearly average is given below:

(Unit: Cumecs)

Period	Rishikesh	Kanpur	Allahabad	Varanasi	Patna
Average Annual flow for 1983-84 to 1987-88.	689.176	846.234	3071.465	3253.642	6843.685
Average Annual flow for 1988-89 to 1992-93.	729.388	727.431	2609.051	2509.868	6964.158
Average Annual flow for 1993-94 to 1997-98.	783.132	720.003	2987.875	3079.797	8715.034
Average Annual flow for 1998-99 to 2002-03.	751.563	998.990	2851.711	2860.950	8511.401

From the above data, no discernible trend in decrease in water flow in Ganga is observed.

Relocation of Tiger Reserves

3811. SHRI G. KARUNAKARA REDDY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to relocate some tiger reserves;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether some States have asked for a special financial package to meet the immediate needs of national parks and reserves as regard protection of tigers; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Question does not arise.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. The State Government of Rajasthan has submitted proposal for special financial package for Sariska Tiger Reserve and Ranthambhore National Park & adjoining areas for Rs.4264.50 lakhs and Rs.6248.75 lakhs respectively.

Beedi Workers under Provident Fund Scheme

3812. SHRI NARHARI MAHATO: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of beedi workers in the country getting the benefit of provident fund scheme, State-wise;

(b) the details of the Government mechanism for

ensuring full benefits under the labour laws to all the workers;

(c) whether the Government is aware of the activities of certain unscrupulous elements in the office of provident fund who are allegedly exploiting the workers; and

(d) if so, the steps taken or proposed to be taken by the Government to check such activities to prevent exploitation of the workers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) As on 31.03.2006, the number of beedi workers getting benefits under the Employees' Provident Fund Scheme, 1952 was 19,88,257 as per details given in the enclosed statement.

(b) The Employees' Provident Funds & Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952 applies with its own force and the establishments fulfilling the condition of the applicability are required to comply with the provisions of the Act. Special drives are launched from time-to-time for coverage of coverable establishments avoiding compliance. Further compliance of the covered establishments is monitored regularly to ensure that the benefits under the Act and Schemes framed thereunder are extended to, all eligible employees.

(c) and (d) With a view to restrict the activities of unscrupulous elements, strict vigil is kept on the functioning of all offices of Employees' Provident Fund Organisation. A full-fledged grievance redressal machinery already exists in the Organisation to redress grievances of the aggrieved member/employer. Whenever activities of unscrupulous elements are detected, appropriate action e.g. lodging complaints, disciplinary action etc. is taken against the persons concerned.

Statement**State-wise Membership in respect of Beedi Establishments**

(As on 31.03.2006)

Sl. No.	Region	Establishments	Members
1	Delhi	0	0
2	Haryana	0	0
3	Himachal Pradesh	0	0
4	Punjab	0	0
5	Uttaranchal	0	0
6	Uttar Pradesh	169	9954
7	Andhra Pradesh	571	452802
8	Karnataka	299	238832
9	Kerala	127	69985
10	Tamil Nadu	2097	580868
11	Bihar	37	30102
12	Jharkhand	51	33348
13	N.E Region	23	1340
14	Orissa	254	88596
15	West Bengal	1303	207399
16	Chhattisgarh	48	10820
17	Goa	0	0
18	Gujarat	60	1102
19	Madhya Pradesh	281	146512
20	Maharashtra	192	102443
21	Rajasthan	150	14154
Total		5662	1988257

[Translation]

Technology Mission on Cotton

3813. SHRI MAHAVIR BHAGORA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the targets fixed and success achieved under the Technology Mission of Cotton (TMC-MM-II) during each of the last three years;

(b) the funds allocated, released and utilized under the said mission, State-wise;

(c) the basis for the allocation of the funds therein;

(d) whether there is any provision for additional funds if the expenditure under the said mission exceeds the allocated/released funds; and

(e) if so, the details thereof indicating the quantum of additional funds proposed to be released alongwith the time by which the said funds are likely to be released?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) The target and achievement for cotton production during last three years are as under:

(Production lakh bales of 170 kg each)

Year	Target	Achievement
2004-05	150	164
2005-06	165	185
2006-07	185	210(P)

P (Provisional)

(b) State-wise allocation, release and utilization of fund is enclosed at Statement.

(c) The funds are allocated to the States on the basis of area, production, demand from the state, performance of the scheme in past years and potential to increase production.

(d) and (e) Additional funds are given to the scheme implementing states based on the achievements of physical targets and utilization of funds available. At present, there is no proposal for release of additional funds under the scheme.

Statement**Allocation, Release and Utilised Under Mini Scheme-II of Technology Mission on Cotton from 2004-05 to 2006-07**

(Rs in Lakh)

Sl.No.	State	2004-05			2005-06			2006-07		
		Allocation	Release	Utilisation	Allocation	Release	Utilisation	Allocation	Release	Utilisation (P)
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1.	Andhra Pradesh	623.62	571.16	554.14	440.00	570.52	547.99	1320.00	1227.91	994.23
2	Gujarat	750.00	773.04	800.18	750.00	812.42	658.11	1200.00	1095.11	1095.47
3	Haryana	225.00	112.50	186.96	280.00	270.43	203.72	300.00	223.17	207.7
4	Karnataka	486.03	478.58	420.79	500.00	500.00	416.21	560.00	438.62	448

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
5	Madhya Pradesh	807.59	483.28	406.42	400.00	302.35	427.70	450.00	377.30	228.05
6	Maharashtra	784.79	771.44	775.81	788.00	763.00	765.62	1000.00	989.93	625.62
7	Orissa	80.00	40.00	100.94	78.00	78.95	75.16	125.00	120.41	80.35
8	Punjab	1.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00	284.00	10.00	0.00	0
9	Rajasthan	719.21	231.25	189.55	500.00	392.87	457.98	580.00	548.11	242
10	Tamil Nadu	339.41	342.94	234.08	350.00	338.45	400.28	245.00	291.54	237.6
11	Tripura	25.00	22.00	15.07	50.00	15.00	20.00	200.00	32.00	7.5
12	Uttar Pradesh	80.00	40.00	58.15	65.00	35.00	39.38	80.00	40.00	38.85
13	West Bengal	50.00	38.59	49.60	75.00	92.77	66.00	80.00	40.00	17.16
Total		4771.650	3904.780	3791.690	4275.000	4171.760	4342.13	6150.00	5424.10	4220.53

P - Provisional

*[English]***Agro Climatic Zones**

3814. SHRI G.M. SIDDESWARA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of agro-climatic zones exist at present in the country, State-wise;

(b) whether the seed, fertilizer and agricultural processes/techniques used in one zone cannot be used in another zone;

(c) if so, whether there is any plan to open an agricultural research institute in the country;

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

(e) 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) There are

15 agro-climatic zones as per the Planning Commission in the country. The state-wise distribution of different zones is given in the enclosed statement.

(b) Each zone has specific characteristics with respect to climate, soil and growing period in one zone. Hence, the input requirement like seed, fertilizers vary from zone to zone. However, some crop species/varieties may be common to similar adjoining agro climatic zones. The agricultural processes/techniques depends on the particular commodity.

(c) and (d) Oversight Committee headed by Shri M. Veerappa Moily recommended establishment of three Agricultural Research Institutes:-

- (i) National Institute for Biotic Stress Management,
- (ii) National Institute for Abiotic Stress Management,
- (iii) National Institute for Agricultural Biotechnology.

The Department has included the proposal in its XI Plan submitted to the Planning Commission.

(e) Does not arise.

Statement**Agro Climatic zones as per the Planning Commission**

S.No.	Agro-Climatic Zones	States covered	
1	2	3	
1.	Western Himalayan Region	Zone 1	Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttaranchal
2.	Eastern Himalayan Region	Zone 2	Sikkim, West Bengal, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, Tripura, Mizoram

1	2	3
3.	Lower Gangetic Plains Region	Zone 3 West Bengal
4.	Middle Gangetic Plains Region	Zone 4 Eastern Uttar Pradesh, Bihar
5.	Upper Gangetic Plains Region	Zone 5 Uttar Pradesh
6.	Trans-Gangetic Plains Region	Zone 6 Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, Union Territories of Delhi and Chandigarh
7.	Eastern Plateau and Hills Region	Zone 7 Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Orissa & West Bengal
8.	Central Plateau and Hills Region	Zone 8 Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh
9.	Western Plateau and Hills Region	Zone 9 Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan
10.	Southern Plateau and Hills Region	Zone 10 Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu
11.	East Coast Plains and Hills Region	Zone 11 Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry
12.	West Coast Plains and Ghat Region	Zone 12 Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Goa
13.	Gujarat Plains and Hills Region	Zone 13 Gujarat
14.	Western Dry Region	Zone 14 Rajasthan
15.	The Islands Region	Zone 15 Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep

[Translation]

**Expenditure Incurred on
Kunopalpur Sanctuary**

3815. SHRI ASHOK ARGAL: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the amount spent by the Union Government on the Kunopalpur Sanctuary located in Madhya Pradesh in the current year;

(b) the number of villages vacated for the Kuno Sanctuary;

(c) whether the displaced villagers have been rehabilitated; and

(d) if so, the time by which the Gir lions are likely to be brought into the above Sanctuary?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) During the current financial year i.e. 2007-08, no funds have been released to Kuno-Palpur Sanctuary. However, during the last financial year i.e. 2006-07, Rs. 249.84 lakhs were released to Kuno-Palpur Sanctuary.

(b) and (c) As per the information available, 1545

families of 24 villages have been rehabilitated outside the sanctuary.

(d) No time frame has been fixed for the translocation of lions in Kuno-Palpur Sanctuary.

Inter-Linking of National Parks

3816. SHRI GANESH SINGH: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government proposes to strengthen road links to inter-link national parks;

(b) if so, whether any proposal to link Madhavgarh National Park and Sanjay Gandhi National Park at Siddhi with Road links has been sent by State Government of Madhya Pradesh;

(c) if not, whether the Union Government proposes to include these two national parks keeping in view the national importance of these two parks;

(d) if so, whether the Government proposes to issue directives to the State Government to send such a proposal; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF

ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) No, Sir. There is no proposal to strengthen road links to interlink national parks.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

[English]

Assistance for Strengthening of Data Base and Information Networking

3817. SHRI SUGRIB SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has provided Central assistance for strengthening of data base and information net working for fisheries sector; and

(b) If so, the assistance provided during 2006-07 and proposed to be provided during 2007-08, 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) Yes Sir.

(b) An amount of Rs.363.21 lakh has been released to various States, UTs and other implementing agencies during 2006-07 under the Central Sector Scheme on Strengthening of Database and Information Technology for Fisheries Sector. The statement indicating the release made to various implementing agencies during 2006-07 is enclosed. An amount of Rs.280.00 lakh has been allocated under the scheme for 2007-08. The funds are released to various implementing agencies on receipt of viable proposals from them.

Statement

Financial Assistance for Strengthening of Database and Information Networking for the Fisheries Sector during 2006-07 (State-wise)

Amount in Rs. lakh		
S.No.	States/UTs/other implementing agencies	2006-07
1	2	3
1	Andhra Pradesh	9.55
2	Arunachal Pradesh	7.45

1	2	3
3	Goa	4.00
4	Haryana	10.50
5	Himachal Pradesh	6.15
6	Karnataka	19.93
7	Maharashtra	49.37
8	Mizoram	3.89
9	Rajasthan	9.07
10	Tripura	4.87
11	Uttar Pradesh	31.20
12	West Bengal	6.00
13	Pondicherry	4.50
14	Chhattisgarh	0.23
15	Uttaranchal	14.00
16	Central Inland Fisheries Research Institute (CIFRI)	151.42
17	Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI)	10.37
18	Fishery Survey of India (FSI)	15.53
19	Department of Animal Husbandry Dairying & Fisheries HQ, Govt. of India	5.18
Total		363.21

Setting up of Sub-Regional P.F. Commissioners Office

3818. SHRI A.V. BELLARMIN: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the status of the proposal to set up a Sub-Regional Provident Fund Commissioner's Office in Kanyakumari District as on date; and

(b) the steps initiated in that direction so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) and (b) The proposal to set up a Sub-Regional Office at Nagercoil covering District of Kanyakumari & Nagercoil was placed before the Executive Committee,

Central Board of Trustees, Employees' Provident Fund in its meeting held on 24.07.2006. The matter was deferred and the same is yet to be considered by the Committee.

Rate of Interest on EPF

3819. SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the rate of interest paid on Employees Provident Fund (EPF) during each of the last three years and the rate fixed for the year 2006-07 and 2007-08;

(b) whether there is shortfall in the payment of interest on EPF;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps taken to earn more revenue on the EPF funds?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) The rate of interest on EPF deposits for the years 2003-04 and 2004-2005 was 9.5% whereas for the year 2005-06 it was 8.5%. However, the rate of interest for the years 2006-07 and 2007-08 has not yet been recommended by the Central Board of Trustees, Employees' Provident Fund.

(b) and (c) No, Sir. The rate of interest to be credited on EPF accounts in any particular year is determined in such a manner that there should be no overdrawal on the Interest Suspense Account as a result of debit thereto of the interest credited to members' accounts.

(d) The investments made are monitored by the Central Board and suitable recommendations are made from time-to-time for better return, safety and liquidity.

Special Quota of Fertilizers for Yavatmal

3820. SHRI HARIBHAU RATHOD: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has received any representation for sanctioning of special quota of fertilizers for the farmers of Yavatmal district, Maharashtra to save the rabi crop; and

(b) if so, the action taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Movement and distribution of only 50% of the indigenous production of Urea is under the control of the Government. All other fertilizers viz., DAP and MOP etc. are decontrolled fertilizers and the availability of these fertilizers depends upon the market forces of demand and supply. During Rabi, the availability of urea in Maharashtra was more than the assessed demand. Distribution and movement of fertilizers within the state is the responsibility of the State Government.

Setting up of Warehouses

3821. SHRI M. SHIVANNA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Karnataka has sought any financial assistance from the Union Government to set up warehouses in order to reduce wastage of agriculture produce and ensure remunerative prices to the farmers;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Union 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) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Poaching of Lions in Sariska

3822. SHRI JASHUBHAI DHANABHAI BARAD: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of lions in Sariska reserve as on date;

(b) whether in the month of March, 2007, six lions were killed in Sariska in two poaching incidents;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether any inquiry has been conducted in this regard;

(e) if so, the outcome thereof; and

(f) the steps taken by the Government to arrest the poachers and to ensure safety of lions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF

ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) There is no report of presence of lions in Sariska Reserve as on date.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) to (f) Questions do not arise.

[Translation]

Water Projects in Jharkhand

3823. SHRIMATI SANGEETA KUMARI SINGH DEO: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the names of irrigation schemes and potable water schemes received and approved for Jharkhand, separately during the last three years and thereafter;

(b) the amount allocated scheme-wise indicating the amount of share by the Union Government and State Government during the said period;

(c) the number of projects completed in the stipulated time;

(d) the number of ongoing projects out of them still under implementation; and

(e) the time likely to be taken for their completion?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) One irrigation scheme namely Burahi Reservoir project of Jharkhand State has been received in Central Water Commission for Techno economic appraisal during the last three years. Comments/observations on

the same have been sent to the State Government for compliance.

(b) The Central Government launched Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme (AIBP) to provide financial assistance to the States for early completion of the irrigation projects. Under this scheme Central Loan Assistance (CLA)/Grant was provided to six projects of the State of Jharkhand during the last 3 years. Scheme-wise details of CLA/Grant released for these projects and total expenditure incurred by the State on them during this period are given in the enclosed Statement-I.

In order to supplement the efforts of the State Governments and the urban Local Bodies in water supply, sewerage and sanitation sector, Accelerated Urban Water Supply Programme (AUWSP) was initiated by the Central Government under which Central Assistance is being extended to augment water supply in towns having a population of less than 20,000 as per 1991/2001 Census. The Central and State Governments fund the AUWSP schemes on 50:50 basis. Under this scheme Central Assistance was provided to seven projects of the State of Jharkhand. Scheme-wise details of Central Assistance released for these projects and total expenditure incurred by the State on them are given in the enclosed Statement-II.

(c) to (e) Year of inclusion of these schemes under AIBP, their scheduled year of completion and revised year of completion is given in the enclosed Statement-I.

The AUWSP projects normally have a time frame 2-3 years for completion. The schemes mentioned in Statement-II were sanctioned from January to March, 2005. Their scheduled completion date is 31-3-2008.

Statement-I

Central Loan Assistance (CLA)/grant released under AIBP to Govt of Jharkhand during 2004-05 to 2006-07

							(Rs. in crore)		
Sl. No.	Name of project	CLA/Grant					Year of inclusion under AIBP	Scheduled year of completion	Revised year of completion
		2004-05			2005-06	2006-07			
		Loan	Grant	Total	Grant	Grant			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	Gumani				1.3620	0.3900	1997-98	2001-02	2008-09
2	Kansjore				0.4800		1997-98	2001-02	2007-08

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
3	Sonua	4.1965	1.7985	5.9950	0.7080		1997-98	2001-02	2008-09
4	Surangi	1.7675	0.7575	2.5250			1997-98	2001-02	2008-09
5	Upper Sankh	5.7890	2.4810	8.2700	1.4400	0.9000	2004-05	2008-09	2008-09
6	Panchkhero	3.1465	1.3485	4.4950	1.0470		2004-05	2008-09	2008-09
Total		14.8995	6.3855	21.2850	5.0370	1.2900			

Statement-II**Schemes funded under AUWSP**

(Rs. in lakh)

Sl. No.	Name of Town	District	Project Cost	Central share	Funds released by Government of India	Expenditure upto March, 2006
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	Dugdha	Bokaro	215.63	107.82	80.85	48.36
2	Hussainabad	Daltonganj	277.45	138.73	136.73	23.14
3	Manoharpur	Paschim Singhbhum	152.00	76.00	76.00	2.48
4	Basukinath	Dhumka	553.77	276.89	207.66	0.00
5	Meru	Hazaribagh	72.85	36.43	38.43	15.34
6	Panchet	Dhanbad	279.63	139.81	139.81	169.69
7	Ballarpur	Dhanbad	192.82	96.41	96.41	134.97
Total			1744.15	872.09	775.89	394.18

Note: Rs. 606.72 lakh were released to the undivided State of Bihar upto March, 2001. The respective share of Bihar & Jharkhand works out to Rs.307.37 lakh and Rs.299.35 lakh respectively.

*[English]***Decline in Production of Seafood**

3824. SHRI PARSURAM MAJHI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been sharp decline in seafood production in the West coast this year;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the shortfall in percentage recorded as compared to the last year;

(c) the reasons therefor; and

(d) the action taken/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 TASLIMUDDIN): (a) to (d) The seafood production figures for this year 2006-07 has not been compiled by the Coastal States/UTs. The marine fish

production for the last three years is given in the enclosed statement. It is seen that there was no sharp decline in seafood production in the West coast.

Statement**Trend of Marine Fish Production along the west coast**

(In '000 tonnes)

S. No.	Name of State/UT	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
1	Gujarat	609.14	584.78	663.88
2	Maharashtra	420.01	417.77	445.34
3	Goa	83.76	94.81	100.91
4	Daman and Diu	13.77	12.51	17.72
5	Karnataka	187.00	171.23	176.97
6	Kerala	608.52	601.66	556.91
7	Lakshadweep	10.03	11.96	11.96
Total		1932.23	1894.92	1975.69

Cold Storage

3825. SHRI MILIND DEORA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government has decided to set up a Task Force to come out with a set of guidelines for large scale augmentation of the cold storage infrastructure for agriculture produce in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of constitution and terms of the Task Force; and

(d) the time by which the Task Force is likely to be submitted its report?

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, Sir. However, the Cold Chain Summit, 2007 held on 20-21st March, 2007 at New Delhi, organized by Confederation of India Industry (CII) in association with Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Food Processing Industries has recommended to constitute a Task Force involving the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Food Processing Industries, National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) etc. for large scale augmentation of Cold Chain Infrastructure in the country with the following mandate:

- i) To develop the terms of reference for the Central and State nodal agencies to be constituted for policy execution and to ensure participation of crucial stake holders in developing cold chain in the country.
- ii) To develop a road map with milestones.
- iii) To detail investment dimensions and execution time frame.
- iv) To continuously pursue the execution model.

The Task Force is expected to complete its work within a period of three months of its constitution.

[Translation]

Shelter Homes for Child Labour

3826. SHRI DEVIDAS PINGLE:

SHRI MOHD. TAHIR:

SHRI BRAJESH PATHAK:

SHRI KAILASH NATH SINGH YADAV:

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

(a) whether the Union Government has accorded sanction for construction of shelter homes for the children freed from child labour;

(b) if so, whether arrangements is being made to provide food, education and vocational training to such children in shelter homes;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the number of such shelter homes existing in the country at present, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) to (c) Government is implementing the National Child Labour Project (NCLP) Scheme for the rehabilitation of Child Labour. Under the Scheme, children withdrawn from work are put in the special schools, where these children are provided with education, vocational training, nutrition, stipend and health care facilities etc. These schools do not have residential facility. However, recently the shelter homes for children available under the Juvenile Justice Act of Ministry of Women and Child Development have been made available for the child labour also.

(d) State-wise details of number of shelter homes existing in the country at present is given in the enclosed statement.

Statement**State-wise details of Shelter Homes existing in the country**

S.No.	States/UTs	No. of homes assisted
1	2	3
1.	Andaman and Nicobar	-
2.	Andhra Pradesh	28
3.	Arunachal Pradesh	-
4.	Assam	7
5.	Bihar	13
6.	Chandigarh	-
7.	Chhattisgarh	7
8.	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	-
9.	Daman and Diu	-
10.	Delhi	19

1	2	3
11.	Goa	3
12.	Gujarat	55
13.	Haryana	7
14.	Himachal Pradesh	-
15.	Jammu and Kashmir	-
16.	Jharkhand	-
17.	Karnataka	62
18.	Kerala	23
19.	Lakshadweep	-
20.	Madhya Pradesh	26
21.	Maharashtra	273
22.	Manipur	-
23.	Meghalaya	3
24.	Mizoram	4
25.	Nagaland	2
26.	Orissa	5
27.	Pondicherry	15
28.	Punjab	15
29.	Rajasthan	9
30.	Sikkim	1
31.	Tamil Nadu	19
32.	Tripura	7
33.	Uttar Pradesh	47
34.	Uttaranchal	28
35.	West Bengal	33
Total		711

[English]

Increase in Iron-ore Production

3827. SHRI ANANTA NAYAK: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Mineral Development Corporation (NMDC) has any proposal for expansion and increase of iron-ore production;

(b) if so, the details in this regard;

(c) the details of targets fixed and achievements made during each of the last three years; and

(d) the details of the new mines proposed to be acquired by the NMDC in various States during the year 2006-07 and 2007-08?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (DR. AKHILESH DAS): (a) and (b) Yes Sir, National Mineral Development Corporation Limited (NMDC) has planned to increase the production of iron ore from the level of 27 million tonnes achieved in 2006-07 to 50 million tonnes per annum by 2014-15.

(c) Details of targets for production of iron ore and achievements by NMDC during the last three years are given below.

Year	(Qty. in million tonnes)	
	Production	
	Target	Achievement
2004-05	19.69	20.74
2005-06	2100	22.92
2006-07	23.10	27.07

(d) NMDC applies to various State Governments for grant of mining leases from time to time. However it can not be forecasted as to when (during which year) the concerned State Governments will take a decision on mining lease applications made by NMDC.

Removal of Brand Names of Drugs

3828. SHRI HITEN BARMAN: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is considering any proposal to remove the brand names of the drugs and marketing the drugs by their generic names so that the high prevailing prices of the drugs can be brought down;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the maximum percentage difference in the prices of drugs being sold at brand name and in generic form; and

(d) the details of control mechanism of permitting the maximum difference in the cost price and selling price of the drugs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) and (b) In the draft National Pharmaceutical Policy, 2006 it has been proposed, inter alia, that one of the ways to make available cheaper drugs to people at large and to public health system could be to promote the production and marketing of generic drugs in the country. This may be achieved through preference of generic drugs for public procurement and distribution and free of cost quality certification for generic drugs.

This Policy was submitted before the Cabinet for its approval. The Cabinet considered the proposal in its meeting held on 11-1-2007 and has referred the matter to a Group of Ministers (GOM). A GOM has since been constituted. The first meeting of the GOM was held on 10-4-2007. No time frame can be given for finalization of the pharma policy.

(c) and (d) The 74 bulk drugs specified in the First Schedule of the Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 1995 (DPCO, 95) and the formulations based thereon are under price control and their prices are fixed/revised by the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) in accordance with formula given in Para 7 of the DPCO, 95.

Under Para 8 of the DPCO 1995, Government/NPPA is empowered to fix from time to time, retail prices of Scheduled formulations in respect of individual manufacturers. Under Para 9 of DPCO 1995, the Government is empowered to fix from time to time ceiling prices of Scheduled formulations and such ceiling prices will be applicable to all such packs including those sold under generic name and for every manufacturer of such formulations.

At present Maximum Allowable Post Manufacturing Expenses (MAPE) is allowed @ of 100% on ex-factory price in respect of indigenously manufactured Scheduled formulations and not exceeding 50% of the landed cost for imported Scheduled formulations.

Prices of non-Scheduled formulations are fixed by the manufacturers themselves keeping in view the various factors like cost of production, marketing/selling expenses, R&D expenses, trade commission, market competition, product innovation, product quality etc. The Government takes corrective measures where the public interest is found to be adversely affected.

[*translation*]

Proposals under Janbhagidari Yojana

3829. SHRI VIJAY KUMAR KHANDELWAL: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government has received a proposal from the Government of Madhya Pradesh amounting to Rs.103.73 lakh each for Indore, Bhopal, Vidisha, Mandidweep, Jabalpur, Ujjain, Nagda, Burhanpur, Seoni, Chhapara and Kewlari respectively from 1999 to 2002 under the Janbhagidari Yojna;

(b) if so, the current status of these proposals;

(c) the reasons for not approving them so far;

(d) the action being taken by the Government in this regard; and

(e) the time by which they are likely to be cleared?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) The Ministry of Environment and Forests did not implement any scheme called "Janbhagidari Yojana" during the period from 1999 to 2002.

(b) to (e) Does not arise.

[*English*]

Distribution of Steel made Bullock Carts

3830. SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA:
SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO:
SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL:
SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL:

Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to distribute bullock carts made of steel among villagers, particularly to the weaker sections;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the criteria to be followed for distribution of bullock carts among villagers;

(d) whether the Union Government has also launched several schemes through Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) and Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited (RINL) to promote consumption of steel, and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (DR. AKHILESH DAS): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir Institute of Steel Development and Growth (INSDAG), an institute engaged in promotion of steel use, has made the design and got fabricated nearly 600 steel bullock carts for distributions through the sponsoring steel companies.

(c) The criterion for the distribution of bullock carts is decided by the sponsoring companies themselves. However, weaker sections of the society are given priority in the distribution.

(d) and (e) To further promote awareness regarding use of steel, particularly in the rural sector and to boost steel demand in the country, a National Steel Campaign has been launched on 20th March, 2007 with participation of major steel producers such as Steel Authority of India Ltd. (SAIL), Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Ltd (RINL), JSW Ltd, Jindal Steel & Power Ltd. (JSPL), Essar Ltd., Ispat Ltd. and Ministry of Steel.

Connectivity between Tiger Reserves

3831. SHRI K.C. SINGH "BABA": Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the tiger reserves in the country having connectivity between them and also those having no connectivity between them;

(b) whether tiger reserves having no connectivity between them are causing genetic problems in breeding amongst tigers thereby restricting the increase in the population of tigers; and

(c) If so, the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) The list of all Tiger reserves in the country are given in the enclosed statement. Tiger reserves in the country are not connected by natural forest corridors with each other except Pench Tiger Reserve in Madhya Pradesh with Pench Tiger Reserve in Maharashtra and Buxa Tiger Reserve in West Bengal with Manas Tiger Reserve in Assam.

(b) No such report has come to the notice of this Ministry on genetic problem due to inbreeding of tigers in wild in India.

(c) Question does not arise.

Statement

S. No.	Name of Tiger Reserve	State
1	2	3
1.	Bandhavgarh	Madhya Pradesh
2.	Bandipur	Karnataka
3.	Bhadra	Karnataka

1	2	3
4.	Buxa	West Bengal
5.	Corbett	Uttarakhand
6.	Dampa	Mizoram
7.	Dudhwa	Uttar Pradesh
8.	Indravati	Chhattishgarh
9.	Kalakad Mundanthurai	Tamilnadu
10.	Kanha	Madhya Pradesh
11.	Manas	Assam
12.	Melghat	Maharashtra
13.	Nagarjunsagar	Andhra Pradesh
14.	Namdapha	Arunachal Pradesh
15.	Nameri	Assam
16.	Pakke	Arunachal Pradesh
17.	Palamau	Jharkhand
18.	Panna	Madhya Pradesh
19.	Pench	Madhya Pradesh
20.	Pench	Maharashtra
21.	Periyar	Kerala
22.	Ranthambore	Rajasthan
23.	Sariska	Rajasthan
24.	Satpura	Madhya Pradesh
25.	Similipal	Orissa
26.	Sunderban	West Bengal
27.	Tadoba-Andheri	Maharashtra
28.	Valmiki	Bihar

[Translation]

Funds in EPF

3832. SHRI MOHAN RAWALE: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the quantum of employees funds deposited in the Employees Provident Fund (EPF) account during each of the last three years and thereafter, State-wise;

(b) the break-up of investment of the fund in different securities as on date;

(c) whether the employees have been paid interest on their deposits annually;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor;

(e) whether the Government has identified the persons found guilty in this regard; and

(f) If so, the action being taken against the guilty persons?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) The details of Provident Fund contributions received during the last three years are given in the enclosed statement.

(b) The break-up of investments of the Fund as on 31.12.2006 are given as under:

(Rs. in Crores)

Sl. No.	Categories of Investments	Holding at Face Value	% age holding
1.	Central Govt. Securities (CTG)	14,778.24	15.27
2(a)	State Development Loans (SDL)	10,751.13	11.11
(b)	Govt. Guaranteed Securities (STG)	1,532.50	1.58
3.	Special Deposit Scheme (SDS)	52,230.93	53.97
4.	Public Sector Undertakings/Financial Institutions (PSUs/PSFIs)	17,481.80	18.06
Total		96,774.60	100

(c) to (f) As per Para 60(1) of the Employees' Provident Fund Scheme, 1952, the interest shall be credited to the account of each member at such rate as may be determined by the Central Government in consultation with the Central

Board. The outgoing member is paid the amount standing to his credit alongwith the up-to-date interest. However, the rate of interest for the years 2006-07 was not paid pending declaration of rate of interest.

Statement

Details of contribution received in respect of EPF Scheme (including contribution received by way of transferred securities in respect of establishments whose exemption/relaxation was cancelled/surrendered)

(Rs. in Lakh)

Sl.No.	Regional Office	During the financial year 2003-04	During the financial year 2004-05	During the financial year 2005-06
1	2	3	4	5
1	Andhra Pradesh-Hyderabad	58,697.78	70,935.45	62,482.03
2	Andhra Pradesh-Guntur	-	-	21,914.36
3	Bihar-Patna	5,139.38	7,859.90	7,304.25
4	Chhattisgarh-Raipur	7,710.54	6,708.10	7,357.17
5	Delhi-North	62,754.41	76,253.81	46,454.67
6	Delhi-South	-	-	47,153.95
7	Goa	5,749.44	6,652.96	7,710.72
8	Gujarat-Ahmedabad	54,891.89	60,974.18	38,353.94

1	2	3	4	5
9	Gujarat-Baroda	-	-	35,842.56
10	Haryana-Faridabad	34,481.94	43,388.77	54,949.62
11	Himachal Pradesh-Shimla	5,140.16	5,915.51	8,625.63
12	Jharkhand-Ranchi	4,677.24	6,142.74	6,786.75
13	Karnataka-Bangalore	85,919.16	112,048.88	126,748.61
14	Karnataka-Mangalore	-	-	26,297.77
15	Kerala-Trivandrum	28,543.15	31,182.00	34,589.95
16	Madhya Pradesh-Indore	24,300.41	25,667.12	28,288.89
17	Maharashtra-I (Bandra)	188,159.76	231,139.32	103,624.46
18	Maharashtra-II (Thane)	-	-	81,399.10
19	Maharashtra-Nagpur	-	-	33,841.24
20	Maharashtra-Pune	-	-	60,654.58
21	North Eastern Region-Guwahati	6,121.84	6,496.27	7,765.26
22	Orissa-Bhubaneswar	11,998.42	11,881.11	14,393.28
23	Punjab-Chandigarh	36,134.94	40,201.97	23,596.81
24	Punjab-Ludhiana	-	-	20,380.44
25	Rajasthan-Jaipur	19,053.52	21,265.39	24,478.77
26	Tamil Nadu-Chennai	97,251.86	112,449.23	83,745.60
27	Tamil Nadu-Coimbatore	-	-	34,730.33
28	Tamil Nadu-Madurai	-	-	17,657.31
29	Uttaranchal-Dehradun	4,388.43	5,231.16	6,095.45
30	Uttar Pradesh-Kanpur	41,398.07	47,438.78	53,544.09
31	West Bengal-Kolkata	47,679.07	46,100.36	41,666.95
32	West Bengal-Jalpaiguri	-	-	10,832.04
Total		830,191.42	975,933.86	1,179,266.59

[English]

Study on Utility Value of Arecanut

3833. SHRI ANANT KUMAR HEGDE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any scientific study on the utility value of arecanut and its by products, other than usage in pawn and gutkha has been undertaken;

(b) If so, the details and outcome thereof;

(c) the details of the technologies developed for production of other products; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government in adopting such technologies for the betterment of arecanut growers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC

DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Scientific studies have been undertaken on the utility value of arecanut and its by products other than usage in pawn and ghutka at Central Plantation Crops Research Institute (CPCRI), Regional Station, Vittal (Karnataka) under Indian Council of Agricultural Research. The scientific studies showed that arecanut preparations can be used in tanning, fat could be extracted from arecanut and defatted arecanut could be used as a meal in compound feed formulations and fertilizers. Arecanut has been found useful in several confectionaries. Technologies have also been developed for preparing cups and plates from the arecanut leaf sheaths. Several entrepreneurs have adopted the technology and are producing the cups and plates from arecanut leaf sheaths.

(c) The technologies developed by the institute are (i) use of arecanut leaf sheaths for preparing cups and plates; (ii) utilization of defatted and de-tanned arecanut meal in compound feed formulation and fertilizer; (iii) utilization of dried leaf sheaths for production of mushroom.

(d) The Government is promoting the post harvest management and processing of horticultural produce including arecanut. Commercial production of cups and plates from arecanut leaf sheaths has been established by the entrepreneurs which now provides additional income to the arecanut growers.

[Translation]

Import of Wheat

3834. SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH "LALAN":
SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI:
SHRI SARVEY SATYANARAYANA:
DR. CHINTA MOHAN:
SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN:

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

(a) whether the Government has decided to make fresh import of wheat during 2007-08;

(b) if so, the reasons and the details thereof indicating the current procurement, stocks and quantum proposed to be imported during 2007-08;

(c) the agency/agencies assigned with the responsibility of making the said imports alongwith the time frame fixed and terms and conditions laid down for imports;

(d) the other steps taken to make wheat available to common people at affordable price; and

(e) the steps taken to protect the interest of the domestic farmers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) to (c) The procurement of wheat in Rabi Marketing Season (RMS) 2007-08 which is presently in progress is 73.8 lakh tonnes as on 26.4.2007. The stocks of wheat in the Central Pool as on 31.3.2007 were 45.63 lakh tonnes. The Government has decided that action may be initiated by STC for import of one million tonnes of wheat in suitable tranches, by July, 2007 since there can be no compromise on food security.

(d) The steps taken to contain the prices of wheat are given in the enclosed statement.

(e) The Government is carrying out Minimum Support Price (MSP) operations for wheat through the Food Corporation of India (FCI) and State agencies in wheat producing states to ensure remunerative prices for farmers. In order to protect the interest of farmers the MSP of wheat announced for RMS 2007-08 is Rs. 750 per quintal which is Rs. 100 per qtl. more than that announced for RMS 2006-07. A bonus of Rs. 100 per quintal over and above the MSP is also being given in RMS 2007-08.

Statement

Steps taken by the Government to contain prices of wheat

- (i) The MSP for wheat was fixed at Rs. 750 per quintal for RMS 2007-08, an increase of Rs.100 per quintal, in order to encourage farmers to grow more wheat. Now, according to the Third Advance Estimates of the Department of Agriculture & Cooperation, the estimated production of wheat is likely to be 73.7 million tonnes in crop year 2006-07 compared to 69.3 million tonnes in crop year 2005-06.
- (ii) Import of 55 lakh tonnes of wheat was done in 2006-07 which has improved the stock position of wheat in the central pool and the wheat stocks (as on 1.4.2007) were more than the buffer norms of 40 lakh tonnes at the start of RMS 2007-08.
- (iii) Wheat exports on private account have been banned upto 31.12.2007. Wheat exports from Central Pool are also banned.
- (iv) Decision was taken to release 4 lakh tonnes of wheat under OMSS in February and March 2007 to cool

the market prices. The wheat was made available to the States at a price of Rs. 986.06 per quintal. The issue price of wheat contained a subsidy element of 20% on Economic Cost i.e. Rs. 1232.30 per quintal. The State Govts. were asked to ensure the distribution to consumers on a no-profit-no loss basis so that the benefit of the subsidy was passed on to the consumers.

- (v) The Government is keeping very close watch on domestic and international prices of wheat.
- (vi) A notification titled "Wheat (Stock Declaration by Companies or Firms or Individuals) Order 2007" has been issued under the Essential Commodities Act 1955 on 1.3.2007. The order provides that any Company or Firm or individual which purchases wheat beyond 50,000 tonnes during 2007-08 shall furnish to the Central Government a return indicating the name/address of the company, quantity of wheat purchased and quantity of wheat held in stock.
- (vii) Department of Consumer Affairs has extended upto 31st August, 2007 notification under the EC Act enabling State Governments to impose stock limit on wheat and pulses.
- (viii) Import of wheat on private account at zero duty has been permitted upto 31.12.2007.

[English]

Assistance to Dairy Farmers

3835. SHRI C. K. CHANDRAPPA:

SHRI PANNIAN RAVINDRAN:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Kerala has enacted a law to set up Kerala Dairy Farmers Welfare Fund for imparting various welfare measures including monthly pension @ Rs.250/- to the poor dairy farmers who have completed the age of 60;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Union Government proposes to extend financial assistance for helping the old age dairy farmers; 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) and (b) Yes, Sir, Kerala State Government has passed the Kerala Ksheera Karshaka Kshemamthi Act 2007 (Kerala Dairy Farmers Welfare Fund Act, 2007) to setup Kerala Dairy Farmers Welfare Fund for imparting various Welfare measures including monthly pension @ Rs.250/- per month to the poor dairy farmers who have completed the age of 60. The Kerala Dairy Farmers Welfare Fund Act, 2007 has been notified on 13.4.07.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. This Department has no such proposal under consideration.

Legislation for Welfare of Agricultural Workers

3836. SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN:

SHRI AJAY CHAKRABORTY:

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

(a) whether the Government proposes to enact a comprehensive legislation for the Welfare of Agricultural Workers in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government is also considering to bring a National Minimum Wages Scheme for agricultural labourers; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) and (b) The Government is considering formulation of social security scheme and enactment of central legislation for unorganized sector workers, including agricultural workers, in consultation with various stakeholders, concerned Ministries/Departments and National Commission for Enterprises in Unorganised Sector. The modalities of the scheme are being worked out.

(c) and (d) At present there is no proposal to bring a National Minimum Wages Scheme for agricultural labourers. However, the Minimum Wages Act, 1948 is applicable to agricultural workers also.

[Translation]

Pending Cases in Labour Courts

3837. SHRI MANSUKHBHAI D. VASAVA:

SHRI GIRIDHARI YADAV:

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

(a) whether the Government has constituted additional Labour Courts and Industrial Tribunals alongwith Lok Adalats to ensure quick disposal of cases related to labour during the last two years;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of cases pending as on 31 March, 2007 alongwith the number of cases disposed of by these courts during the above period; and

(d) the steps being taken by the Government for disposal of the cases expeditiously?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) and (b) Five new Central Government Industrial Tribunal-cum-Labour Courts (CGITs) were made operational at Chandigarh, Delhi, Ernakulam, Guwahati and Ahmedabad during the years 2003-04 and 2004-05. In addition, a new Scheme of Lok Adalats has been introduced in the Xth Plan as an alternative grievance redressal machinery for resolution of industrial disputes. The Ministry encourages the CGITs to hold as many Lok Adalats as possible. 357, 234 and 282 industrial disputes were settled through Lok Adalats in the year 2004-05, 2005-06 and 2006-07 respectively.

(c) The details of the number of cases pending in the CGITs as on 31.03.2007 and the number of cases disposed during 1.4.2006 to 31.3.2007 are as follows:

	Pending (Cumulative upto 31.3.2007)	Disposed (During 1.4.2006 to 31.3.2007)
Cases	12,405 **	2319 **

**the figures exclude CGITs at Jaipur, Kolkata and Ahmedabad.

(d) The Government has taken following steps for expeditious disposal of industrial disputes:

- (i) Five new Central Government Industrial Tribunal-cum-Labour Courts were set up at Ernakulam, Guwahati, Chandigarh, New

Delhi and Ahmedabad during the years 2003-04 and 2004-05 in addition to the seventeen existing Central Government Industrial Tribunal-cum-Labour Courts, to expedite settlement of industrial disputes.

(ii) A new scheme for adjudication of disputes through Lok Adalats has been introduced during the 10th Five Year Plan as an alternative grievance redressal mechanism.

(iii) The pendency of cases is also monitored through monthly pendency reports sent by the CGITs.

Failure of Foodgrain Based Welfare Schemes

3838. DR. DHIRENDRA AGARWAL:

SHRI HARIKEWAL PRASAD:

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

(a) whether the schemes for providing foodgrains to the people living below Poverty Line at cheaper rates have completely failed to achieve there objectives due to the rampant corruption among the Central and State Government officials involved in the implementation of these schemes;

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

(c) whether the Government has formulated/ proposes to formulate any scheme to provide direct relief to BPL families in place of these ineffective schemes; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the action taken thereon alongwith 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 (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The foodgrains based Welfare Schemes have not failed. The allocation & offtake under such welfare schemes for 2006-07 were as under:

(fig. in lakh tonnes)

Scheme	Allocation	Offtake	% offtake
1	2	3	4
1. Mid day Meal	21.59	16.54	76.60
2. Wheat Based Nutrition Programme	5.12	4.59	89.65
3. Welfare Institutions	3.83	3.01	78.59

1	2	3	4
4. Annapurna	1.67	0.90	53.69
5. Sampurna Gramin Rozgar Yojana (SGRY)	16.93	16.43	97.04
6. Special Component of SGRY	6.64	6.23	93.82
7. Nutritional Programme for Adolescent Girls	0.48	0.52*	>100.00
		(*backlog quota lifted)	
8. Emergency Feeding Programme	0.16	0.14	87.50
9. Village Grain Bank	0.44	0.18	40.91

These welfare schemes are implemented by various Ministries of Government of India through States/Union Territories (UT) Administration. Whenever any specific complaints are received by this Ministry, they are referred to the concerned State/UT Government and the issues are pursued with the State/UT Govt. for appropriate action.

(c) No, Sir. There is no such proposal under consideration of the Government.

(d) Question does not arise.

Accident of Aircraft of BSP

3839. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Aircrafts of Bokaro Steel Plant destroyed in accidents during the last three years;

(b) the reasons behind each of the accidents alongwith the details of the loss in each of the accidents during the above period and so far;

(c) the details of the enquiry conducted in this regard and the action taken/proposed to be taken against the persons found guilty therefor; and

(d) the steps taken to prevent such accidents in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (DR. AKHILESH DAS): (a) No aircraft of Bokaro Steel Plant was involved in any accident during the last three years.

(b) to (d) In view of (a) above, question does not arise.

Per-capita Availability of Rice

3840. SHRI SUBHASH SURESHCHANDRA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the per-capita availability of rice in the States especially in backward and rural areas, as on date, State-wise;

(b) whether said availability conforms to the national average availability;

(c) If not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps taken to increase the per-capita availability of rice in the country, particularly in backward and rural areas?

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) As per provisional data, the per capita availability of rice during the year 2006 stands at 72.5 Kg. at the all-India level compared to the estimate of 64.7 Kg. during 2005. Such estimates are not worked out State-wise or area-wise.

With a view to improve the production and productivity, and thereby the per capita availability, the Government is implementing a major Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Integrated Cereals Development Programme (ICDP) for Rice under Macro-Management Mode of Agriculture since October, 2000.

[English]

Central Drug Authority of India

3841. SHRI K.S. RAO: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has decided recently that Central Drug Authority of India regulate production, pricing and marketing of drugs and provide training and education to those engaged in Pharmaceutical Sector; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Cabinet has approved constitution of Central Drug Authority. Necessary follow up action is being taken by the Department of Health in the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

Subsidy on Fertilizers

3842. SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO:
SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL:
SHRI K.C. PALLANI SHAMY:

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) the subsidy on fertilizers released by the Government during 2006-07 and earmarked for 2007-08;

(b) whether the Government is aware that the subsidy on fertilizers is not properly reaching to the farmers;

(c) if so, whether the Government has any proposal to provide subsidy directly to the farmers instead of giving it to the fertilizers producing companies; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) During the financial year 2006-07, Rs. 25,952.91 crore has been paid as subsidy. Budget Estimates for the year 2007-08 is Rs. 22,451.01 crore.

(b) The subsidy on fertilizers is released to manufacturers/importers to bridge the gap between the normative delivered cost of the fertilizers and the Maximum Retail Prices (MRP) at which they are made available to the farmers. The subsidy reaches the farmers in form of subsidized MRP.

(c) and (d) The Fertilizer Industry has agreed to work with the Department of Fertilizers to conduct study for finding alternate model of delivery of subsidy to the farmers. Fertilizers Association of India (FAI) has entrusted a study to Tata Consultancy Services Ltd. (TCS) to suggest a model for disbursement of fertilizer subsidy directly to farmers. The draft report of FAI is likely to be ready in April 2007.

Issue of Interest Rate on EPF for 2007-08

3843. SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the differences have surfaced between

the Government and the representatives of the employees on the issue of interest rate for the current financial year on Employees Provident Fund (EPF);

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the efforts made/being made to sort out the differences alongwith the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) and (b) The issue regarding rate of interest has been deliberated upon by the Central Board of Trustees, Employees' Provident Fund in its meetings wherein no consensus was reached with regard to rate of interest.

(c) The issue is to be discussed again by the Central Board.

Conservation of Chilka Lake

3844. SHRI B. MAHTAB: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government has received any project from the Government of Orissa for the conservation of Chilka Lake, a Ramsar site in Orissa;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) to (c) Yes Sir, a proposal has been received from Govt. of Orissa for the year 2005-06 and 2006-07 at a total cost of Rs. 820.00 lakhs for activities of catchment area treatment in Chilka Lake, a Ramsar site in Orissa. However, financial releases are made to the State Govt. on the receipt of utilization certificate and physical progress report of the activities undertaken in the past. So far, we have not received utilization certificate and physical progress report of Rs. 54.95 lakhs released to Orissa Govt. for catchment area treatment during 2006-07. As and when these documents are received, the proposal will be examined and processed for release of financial assistance.

Workers in Unorganised Sector

3845. SHRI AJOY CHAKRABORTY:
SHRI K.S. RAO:

Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state the total number of workers in unorganised sectors in the country at present, urban and rural separately, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): According to the survey conducted by the National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) in 2004-05, the total employment in both the organized and the unorganized sectors in the country was 459 million. Of which, 433 million are in the unorganized sector. The number of unorganized workers in urban and rural areas separately and State wise is not presently available.

Funds for Project Tiger

3846. SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to increase the budgetary allocation for 'Project Tiger' conservation programme;

(b) If so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the increase would be sufficient to relocate nearly 1,500 villages with 65,000 families in the 28 tiger reserves spread across the country;

(d) if not, the alternative measures proposed to meet the requirement; and

(e) the time by which the Government plans to rehabilitate all the families from tiger reserves?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A budget allocation of Rs. 65 crores has been provided under Centrally Sponsored Schemes of Project Tiger during 2007-08 which is definitely an increase in allocations received in a year under the scheme so far.

(c) to (e) The Wildlife Institute of India has been mandated to assess the core areas of tiger reserves where village relocation has to be undertaken, in addition to other protected areas of the country within a timeframe. Simultaneously, action has been taken for developing a model involuntary village relocation/rehabilitation package through professional agency. While initiatives have been taken for enhancing the relocation / rehabilitation package, till this is finalised and approved by the competent authority funding support is being provided to States as per existing norms under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Project Tiger. States have been requested for proposals for relocation/rehabilitation of villages from the tiger reserves.

[Translation]

Rajiv Sagar Project

3847. SHRI KRISHNA MURARI MOGHE: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the progress made so far in the construction of the Rajiv Sagar Project (Bawanthadi);

(b) whether the Government is taking any action to ensure early completion of the project being implemented under Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme; and

(c) If so, the details thereof and the time by which it is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) Bawanthadi Project which is known as Rajiv Sagar Project in Madhya Pradesh is an Interstate project between the States of Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra to provide irrigation benefits to both the States. The headwork comprises of dam on Bawanthadi river. Most of the villages affected and submergence is in the State of Maharashtra. The State Government of Madhya Pradesh has reported that 95% head works and 85% canal work (in Madhya Pradesh) have been completed up to March 2007 and total expenditure incurred up to March 2007 is Rs.298,9655 crore. The ultimate irrigation potential of the project in Madhya Pradesh is 29412 ha against which, no irrigation potential is created so far.

(b) and (c) Irrigation is a state subject and planning, execution, funding as well as priority of execution is within the purview of State Governments. However, in order to expedite completion of project, the project has been included in Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme in 2003-04 and total central assistance released under AIBP to Madhya Pradesh is Rs.54.1001 crore. The project was targeted for completion by June 2008. However its completion depends on completion of resettlement and rehabilitation works to be done by State Government and additional forest land clearance by the Union Ministry of Environment & Forest to be obtained by the State Governments.

[English]

Subsidy to Organic Fertilizers and Biogas Units

3848. SHRI P.C. THOMAS: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is giving subsidy for Organic Fertilizers and Biogas Units;

(b) if so, the details thereof during the last three years; 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) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The financial assistance for setting up of mechanized compost plants of Rs.50 lakhs for conversion of biodegradable municipal solid waste into city compost (organic fertilizer) is being provided under Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Balanced & Integrated Use of Fertilizers and Rs.40 lakhs for setting up of fruits and vegetable waste compost units, Rs.1.50 lakhs for vermiculture hatcheries and Rs.20.00 lakhs for setting up of bio-fertilizer units under Central Sector Scheme of National Project on Organic Farming.

In addition, under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of National Biogas and Manure Management Programme of Ministry of New & Renewable Energy, financial assistance ranging from Rs.2100 to Rs.11700 for different regions of the country is being provided for setting up of family type biogas plants.

New Wheat Stock Declaration Order

3849. SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to extend the stock declaration order issued with reference to wheat under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 to other essential commodities including pulses, rice, edible oil etc. to curb the spurt in prices; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the time by which it is likely to be issued?

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) There is no proposal under consideration of this Ministry to extend the purview of the Wheat (Stock Declaration by Companies or Firms or Individuals) Order, 2007 to other essential commodities.

[Translation]

Shramik Awas Yojana

3850. SHRI THAWAR CHAND GEHLOT: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of cases of the 'Shramik Awas Yojana' pending for approval with the Government. State-wise:

(b) the reasons for pendency of the said cases;

(c) the time by which the Government is likely to grant approval to these cases;

(d) the number of labourers benefited under 'Shramik Awas Yojana' during the last three years, State-wise; and

(e) the details of funds released for this scheme during the said period, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) to (e) There is no scheme, namely, 'Shramik Awas Yojana' being run by the Government. However, the Govt. is implementing the Revised Integrated Housing Scheme, 2005 for Beedi Workers and Mine Workers w.e.f. 25th May, 2005 for grant of housing subsidy for construction of houses. The State-wise details of complete proposals received, houses sanctioned, funds released and pending proposals during 2005-06 and 2006-07 are given in the enclosed Statement. During 2005-06, 7569 houses could not be sanctioned due to insufficient funds.

Statement

State-wise Number of Houses sanctioned during the years 2005-06 & 2006-07 for Beedi Workers under RIHS-2005

Sl.No.	Name of the State/District	2005-06				2006-07			
		Complete Proposals received	Proposals sanctioned	Pending proposals	Subsidy released Rs. in Lakh	Complete Proposals received	Proposals sanctioned	Pending proposals	Subsidy released Rs. in Lakh
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1.	Andhra Pradesh	16166	9595	6571	3836.00	4914	11485	Nil	3308.00
2.	Assam	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	91	91	Nil	18.20

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
3.	Karnataka	846	Nil	846	Nil	314	1160	Nil	353.40
4.	Madhya Pradesh	60	60	Nil	Nil	225	225	Nil	45.00
5.	Maharashtra	188	187	01	74.80	128	129	Nil	25.80
6.	Orissa	43	43	Nil	17.20	1634	1634	Nil	384.60
7.	Rajasthan	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	03	03	Nil	0.60
8.	Tamil Nadu	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	2898	2898	Nil	615.60
9.	Uttar Pradesh	21	21	Nil	8.40	128	128	Nil	25.60
10.	West Bengal	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	168	168	Nil	33.60
11.	Bihar	1016	1016	Nil	406.40	678	678	Nil	159.40
12.	Jharkhand	151	Nil	151	Nil	Nil	151	Nil	30.20
Grand Total		18,491	10,922	7,589	4344.80	11,181	18,750	Nil	5000.00

[English]

Decline in Food Consumption

3851. SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAI: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the food consumption in the country has been declining continuously over the years;

(b) if so, the details thereof and reasons therefor, indicating the average consumption of cereals and other agricultural products during the last three plan periods, category-wise, plan-wise; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to increase foodgrains consumption 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 (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Special Package for Goat and Piggery Development in Kerala

3852. SHRI PANNIAN RAVINDRAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to provide a special package for goat and piggery development in Kerala so as to support the farmers; 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 TASLIMUDDIN): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

Drug Research

3853. SHRI DUSHYANT SINGH: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has any proposal to enhance drug research activities in the country;

(b) if so, the steps taken in this regard during the Tenth Five Year Plan;

(c) whether greater emphasis is proposed to be laid on increasing drug research activities during Eleventh Five Year Plan;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the funds earmarked for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) to (e) Yes Sir. There are many Government Departments and agencies which are supporting drug research. The Department of Science and Technology is supporting drug research through Drugs and Pharmaceuticals Research Programme. This progra-

mme supports industry institutional collaborative R&D projects, creating state-of-the-art national facilities in research laboratories and academic institutions and soft loan with a simple interest of 3% p.a. to pharma industry R&D projects. During Tenth Five Year plan Rs. 217.63 crores have been utilized i.e. grants-in-aid of Rs. 113.63 crores for 46 Collaborative R&D projects and 25 national facilities and 31 industry loan projects to the tune of Rs. 104.00 crores. Besides this, sum of Rs. 600 lakhs was sanctioned for Pharmaceutical Research and Development Programme (PRDP) in this Department during the Tenth Five Year Plan. The thrust of this Programme had been to give a fillip to the R&D initiatives in the National Institute for Pharmaceutical Education and Research (NIPER). Considering, the importance of the drug research the Government plans to enhance the allocation for this programme in the Eleventh Five Year Plan. For 2007-08 a Budget Estimate of a sum of Rs. 118.00 crores is provided in the Budget of Ministry of Science and Technology.

[Translation]

Drying up of Valdni/Roop Kund

3854. SHRI RASHEED MASOOD: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the two world famous trekking routes of Himalyan region, Valdni Kund and Roop Kund, have dried up;

(b) if so, the reason therefor;

(c) whether the drying up of these kunds is indicative of any environmental crisis; and

(d) if so, the steps taken/being taken to protect the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) to (c) No Sir, there are no authentic studies undertaken for monitoring of trekking routes of Valdni Kund and Roop Kund in recent times and as such, there is no corroborative evidence to show drying up of these kunds or of any environmental crisis.

(d) Does not arise.

[English]

Request for diversion of Forest land

3855. SHRI G. KARUNAKARA REDDY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Karnataka has been requesting the Union Government for diverting forest land for disposal of hazardous wastes;

(b) if so, whether due to non-release of forest land, the State has been put in a precarious situation as regards disposal of hazardous wastes; and

(c) if so, the alternative measures taken to grant approval to the State Government to dispose of the hazardous wastes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) to (c) A proposal for diversion of 50 ha of forestland for disposal of hazardous waste in Ajjakadarana-halli and Maddenchally of Sidlaghatta Taluk in Kolar district of Karnataka was received from the State Govt. The proposal was processed in the Ministry and Stage-I clearance was accorded on 22.10.2002.

Sponge Iron Industry

3856. SHRI NARHARI MAHATO: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government proposes to take steps for the development of the Sponge Iron Industry;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the methods to improve the quality of such products; and

(c) the steps taken to explore national and international markets for sponge iron products?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (DR. AKHILESH DAS): (a) The Union Government has no specific proposal for development of sponge iron industry. However, Government has formulated a National Steel Policy under which sponge iron industry finds an important role. National Steel Policy envisages sponge iron production to 30 million tonne per annum by the year 2020 from the current level of about 13 million tonne per annum.

(b) Sponge iron like steel is completely deregulated industry. Therefore, initiative on quality improvement of the product rests with the entrepreneurs.

(c) Sponge iron products have a strong national market where these are used in melting furnaces for further value addition. Since the sector is deregulated, the sponge iron producers are free to explore national and international market for their products.

Establishment of Biotechnology Centre for Tissue Culture Unit

3857. SHRI SUGRIB SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has received any proposal for establishment of Biotechnology Centre for Tissue Culture unit in Orissa;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the assistance provided for the purpose?

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) Sir, a proposal for establishment of plant tissue culture laboratory in Orissa University of Agriculture & Technology (OUA&T), Bhubaneswar, at a cost of Rs.5.00 crore was received during 2005-06. The proposal had components for infrastructure facilities including buildings, furniture and fixtures, equipment, machinery, consumables, manpower etc. As per the applicable guidelines of the Department of Agriculture & Cooperation, an amount of Rs.87.50 lakh has been released to OUA&T during 2005-06 and 2006-07.

Construction of Fishing Harbour at Jakhu

3858. SHRI JASHUBHAI DHANABHAI BARAD: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the revised estimate of Rs.5291.00 lakhs for the construction of fishing harbour at Jakhu, Gujarat by the Gujarat Maritime Board has been submitted to the Union Government on May 27, 2005;

(b) if so, whether the Union Government has sanctioned the required amount;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) the time by which the amount is likely to be released; and

(e) 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 TASLIMUDDIN): (a) The Government of Gujarat had in May 2005 submitted a Revised Cost Estimate (RCE) proposal with cost escalation from the originally approved amount of Rs.1143.60 lakhs to Rs.5291 lakhs.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) and (e) After scrutiny of the RCE proposal, the Government of Gujarat has been requested to submit a comprehensive proposal addressing relevant techno-economic aspects.

Committee for Appraisal of Gir Lions

3859. SHRI MILIND DEORA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government has set up a special committee to do a spot appraisal of Gir in the wake of the recent spate of poaching of the Asiatic lion;

(b) if so, the time by which the special committee is likely to give its report;

(c) the number of lions killed in the last one month and the total present population of the lions in the sanctuary; and

(d) the steps the Government proposes to take to provide additional security to the sanctuary?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Union Government has set up a special committee for on the spot appraisal of Gir in the wake of the recent poaching of the Asiatic lions. The Committee needs to submit the report within thirty days of its constitution i.e. upto 2nd of May, 07.

(c) The State Government has reported death of 9 lions during the month of March 2007 in the Gir sanctuary area. Three of the lions have died of natural cause and six lions have been killed by the poachers. Further, the estimated population of lion in and around the Gir Protected Area and near by satellite areas is 359 \pm 10 as per the April, 2005 population estimates.

(d) Following steps has been taken by the State Government to provide additional security to the sanctuary:

1. The staff at Gir has been strengthened.
2. Intensive patrolling is organized.
3. State Reserve Police is assisting Forest Department in protection of lions.
4. Information network is being strengthened through public awareness and public contacts.

*[Translation]***Agricultural Census**

3860. SHRI GANESH SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is contemplating to conduct agricultural census during the current year;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the details of the agricultural census conducted 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 KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Agricultural Census is conducted at an interval of every 5 years. The last Agricultural Census was conducted in the year 2000-01. The Agricultural Census 2005-06 is in progress. Agricultural Census provides data on number and area of operational holdings by different size classes, social groups, gender and types of holdings. In addition to it, data on tenancy, terms of leasing, land use, irrigation, area irrigated by different sources, number of wells, tube wells etc., crops grown in irrigated and un-irrigated area and dispersal of operational holding is also collected.

Participation of Voluntary Organisations

3861. SHRI VIJAY KUMAR KHANDELWAL: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether any proposal has been received from the Government of Madhya Pradesh in regard to encourage the participation of voluntary organizations in afforestation work under Greening India Scheme;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the time by which the said proposal is likely to be accorded approval?

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

(b) and (c) The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh has recommended ten proposals relating to Tree Planting by Voluntary Organisations, under the Grants-in-Aid for Greening India Scheme, for the year 2006-07. This Ministry has accorded approval for six projects for an amount of Rs. 54.38 lakhs, out of which Rs.21.34 lakhs has been released as first instalment.

*[English]***Establishment of Trans-Boundary National Parks/Sanctuaries**

3862. SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA:
SHRIMATI NIVEDITA MANE:
SHRI EKNATH MAHADEO GAIKWAD:
SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH:
SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL:

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

- (a) whether the Government proposes to set up trans-boundary national parks and sanctuaries to protect wildlife in partnership with neighbouring countries;
- (b) if so, whether the Government has identified the national parks and sanctuaries therefor;
- (c) if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether necessary negotiations have been made/initiated in this regard;
- (e) if so, the details thereof; and
- (f) the time by which establishment of such parks/sanctuaries is likely to take place?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) In pursuance of the decision taken by the National Board for Wildlife in its 2nd meeting held on 17th March 2005, the Ministry of Environment & Forests has constituted a task Force for Trans-boundary Protected Areas with the Secretary, Environment & Forests as its chairperson to identify natural ecosystems along the International borders that can be considered for constituting Trans Boundary Protected Areas.

- (b) No, Sir.
- (c) to (e) Does not arise.

(f) Establishment of trans-boundary Protected Areas necessitates Inter-Ministerial consultations and concurrence of the concerned Departments/Ministries of neighbouring countries. Hence, no definite time frame has been envisaged.

Integrated Scheme of Oilseeds, Pulses, Oilpalm and Maize

3863. SHRI ANANT KUMAR HEGDE:
SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the targets fixed and success achieved under Integrated Scheme of Oilseeds, Pulses, Oil Palm and Maize (ISOPOM) during each of the last three years, State-wise;

(b) the funds allocated, released and utilized under the said scheme during each of the last three years, State-wise;

(c) whether the Government has proposed to expand the ISOPOM in Andaman and Nicobar Islands;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the fund allocated for the purpose?

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 State-wise & Crop-wise target and achievements made under Integrated Scheme of Oilseeds, Pulses, Oilpalm and Maize/ISOPOM) during each of the last three years are given in the enclosed Statement-I.

(b) The State-wise details of funds allocated, released and utilized under the said scheme during last three years are given in the enclosed Statement-II.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) and (e) Question does not arise.

Statement-I

State-wise, production targets and achievements of oilseeds, pulses, maize and oilpalm during last three years

(Production: in lakh tonnes)

S.No.	State	2004-05		2005-06		2006-07	
		Target	Achievement	Target	Achievement	Target	Achievement*
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Oilseeds							
1.	Andhra Pradesh	25.89	22.09	28.68	20.41	30.33	12.76
2.	Bihar	2.02	1.17	1.76	1.36	1.86	1.10
3.	Chhattisgarh	1.10	1.24	1.63	1.26	1.72	1.52
4.	Gujarat	30.39	29.87	38.69	46.82	40.92	27.34
5.	Haryana	8.10	8.40	8.18	8.25	8.65	9.79
6.	Karnataka	17.61	15.70	19.11	17.15	20.20	10.85
7.	Madhya Pradesh	64.94	47.98	64.00	57.22	67.70	54.74
8.	Maharashtra	30.44	27.44	30.00	33.73	31.72	35.03
9.	Orissa	1.83	1.79	1.77	1.88	1.87	1.78
10.	Punjab	1.55	1.00	1.33	0.90	1.40	1.19
11.	Rajasthan	38.46	55.41	39.47	59.64	41.76	47.70
12.	Tamil Nadu	19.57	10.61	17.78	11.53	18.82	11.11
13.	Uttar Pradesh	14.44	9.52	14.85	10.66	15.71	7.36
14.	West Bengal	5.66	6.53	6.24	6.10	6.59	6.51

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Pulses							
1.	Andhra Pradesh	7.70	10.19	13.00	13.76	7.70	12.52
2.	Bihar	6.00	4.67	7.30	4.47	6.80	5.00
3.	Chhattisgarh	4.65	3.68	4.80	4.53	4.65	4.11
4.	Gujarat	6.20	4.79	5.10	5.47	6.20	5.88
5.	Haryana	5.05	1.46	2.70	1.18	5.20	1.70
6.	Karnataka	7.80	7.92	11.30	9.64	7.50	8.53
7.	Madhya Pradesh	31.35	34.29	34.50	32.33	32.00	28.61
8.	Maharashtra	22.50	15.64	22.75	20.05	21.50	22.54
9.	Orissa	7.10	2.50	3.80	3.36	6.70	2.91
10.	Punjab	0.95	0.32	0.60	0.26	1.10	0.41
11.	Rajasthan	17.95	13.37	15.50	8.98	20.30	11.97
12.	Tamil Nadu	3.55	2.46	4.70	1.77	3.70	3.71
13.	Uttar Pradesh	25.75	23.75	24.60	22.32	26.45	28.30
14.	West Bengal	1.70	1.67	2.00	1.74	1.70	1.85
Maize							
1.	Andhra Pradesh	16.85	20.64	17.37	30.87	17.85	20.86
2.	Bihar	17.30	14.66	17.90	13.61	18.10	11.93
3.	Chhattisgarh	0.45	1.32	0.50	1.06	0.52	1.04
4.	Gujarat	5.55	4.12	5.85	5.60	6.15	4.62
5.	Himachal Pradesh	7.60	7.36	7.90	5.43	8.50	4.88
6.	Jammu and Kashmir	5.60	4.92	6.00	4.53	6.32	5.12
7.	Karnataka	22.20	25.12	22.80	27.28	23.50	23.86
8.	Madhya Pradesh	15.10	12.52	15.60	12.49	16.00	10.48
9.	Maharashtra	4.50	7.53	4.80	9.96	5.37	10.42
10.	Orissa	0.75	1.06	0.85	1.02	0.90	1.00
11.	Punjab	4.55	4.22	4.85	4.03	5.09	4.64
12.	Rajasthan	12.35	12.63	12.75	11.02	13.06	10.98
13.	Tamil Nadu	1.60	2.95	1.90	2.41	1.93	4.17
14.	Uttar Pradesh	17.25	14.94	17.60	10.54	18.20	12.64
15.	West Bengal	0.85	1.40	1.05	1.26	1.15	1.68

*Irrid Advance Estimates.

(Area in ha.)							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Oilpalm							
1.	Andhra Pradesh	4200	5998	4800	9563	5200	11882
2.	Karnataka	1500	1046	1500	1591	1800	3294
3.	Tamil Nadu	1900	1091	2000	1210	2200	1045
4.	Gujarat	450	3	500	24	550	53
5.	Orissa	400	0	500	0	500	250
6.	Goa	300	14	350	7	400	3
7.	Tripura	300	25	300	55	300	19
8.	Assam	250	0	300	0	300	0
9.	Kerala	400	132	400	188	400	270
10.	Mizoram	300	12	350	24	350	185

Statement-II

Funds allocated, released & utilized during 2004-05, 2005-06 & 2006-07 to various States for implementation of the Integrated Scheme of Oilseeds, Pulses, Oil Palm and Maize (ISOPOM)

(Rs. in Lakhs)

S. No.	Name of the State/ Implementing Agency	2004-05			2005-06			2006-07		
		Allocation	Amount Released	Expenditure Incurred**	Allocation	Amount Released	Expenditure Incurred**	Allocation	Amount Released	Expenditure Incurred**
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1.	Andhra Pradesh	3543.00	3559.97	3864.95	4900.00	4816.50	2649.41	4542.00	4542.00	4893.2
2	Assam	8.00	4.00	139.94	15.00	3.00		30.00	0.00	0.00
3	Bihar	290.00	145.00	421.65	245.00	245.00	149.97	385.00	385.00	266.95
4	Chhattisgarh	625.00	625.00	523.58	400.00	400.00	505.75	675.00	675.00	286.71
5	Gujarat	1883.00	1883.00	1316.71	1850.00	1850.00	1714.06	975.00	975.00	1131.22
6	Goa	20.00	10.00	7.75	16.50	16.50	3.69	3.00	0.00	2.12*
7	Haryana	559.00	497.00	495.07	434.00	434.00	339.53	411.00	411.00	522.50
8	Himachal Pradesh	40.00	40.00	55.08	75.50	75.50	64.46	75.00	75.00	70.04
9	Jammu and Kashmir	170.00	85.00	29.30	142.50	142.50	87.18	0.00	0.00	0.00
10	Karnataka	2155.00	2155.00	1560.97	1800.00	1800.00	1764.72	2700.00	2700.00	2810.65
11	Kerala	10.00	5.00	34.83	7.50	7.50	33.40	15.00	15.00	40.16
12	Madhya Pradesh	2925.00	2925.00	2627.40	2400.00	2400.00	2455.92	3750.00	3750.00	3378.34*

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
13	Maharashtra	1040.00	1040.00	991.41	2739.30	2739.00	1786.25	925.00	925.00	1536.92
14	Mizoram	107.00	107.00	221.00	90.00	90.00	10.00	180.00	102.87	117.05
15	Orissa	455.00	455.00	569.86	500.00	500.00	531.78	525.00	525.00	522.66
16	Punjab	105.00	52.50	1.76	87.50	87.50	65.84	0.00	0.00	1.15
17	Rajasthan	2000.00	2000.00	1613.21	2840.00	2840.00	2906.73	2934.50	2934.50	2912.29
18	Tamil Nadu	990.00	990.00	644.14	1245.00	1245.00	1168.65	1345.00	1345.00	988.52
19	Tripura	10.00	5.00	0.0	20.00	7.00	65.07	40.00	0.00	0.00
20	Uttar Pradesh	785.00	785.00	761.43	1065.00	1065.00	1134.3	1115.00	1115.00	1295.65*
21	West Bengal	260.00	260.00	229.97	450.00	450.00	706.51	674.50	674.50	368.93
Total		17980.00	17628.47	16110.01	16462.50	21214.00	18143.22	21300.00	21149.87	20943.06

* Based on utilization certificate furnished by the States.

** It includes the expenditure incurred from the unspent balance of previous years.

Note: The expenditure figure for the year 2006-07 is provisional.

Assistance for Development of Milk Cooperatives in Kerala

3864. SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Kerala had submitted a proposal of Rs.74 crores for developing the infrastructure for development of milk cooperatives in the State;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Union 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 TASLIMUDDIN): (a) and (b) State Government of Kerala has submitted a project for dairy development in Kerala, which includes component for developing the infrastructure for development of milk cooperatives in the State with a total cost of Rs. 72.456 crores. Out of which the anticipated assistance of Rs.44.07 crore has been sought from Central Government spanning over a period of five years from 2007-2008 to 2011 to 2012. The project has four components, namely:

1. Strengthening infrastructure for quality and Clean Milk Production - Rs.1205.7 lakh
2. Modernization of milk procurement by dairy cooperatives - Rs.4137.5 lakh

3. Green fodder production as intercrop and pure crop - Rs. 680.6 lakh

4. Cattle induction programme - Rs. 1221.8 lakh

Total : Rs.7245.6 lakh

(c) The State Government of Kerala has been asked to revise the project as Central Government is already providing assistance to the State under the schemes – Intensive Dairy Development Programme (IDDP) and Strengthening Infrastructure for Quality and Clean Milk Production Scheme. It has been conveyed that they should not include the areas already covered and should send the proposals for only uncovered areas of the state as per the guidelines of the schemes.

[Translation]

Improvement in Livestock Health

3865. SHRI MAHAVIR BHAGORA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the livestock dying due to diseases in the country during the last three years; and

(b) the details of targets fixed and achievements made for bringing improvement in the health of livestock 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 (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) The total number of deaths of livestock due to diseases during the year 2003, 2004, 2005 and 2006 are 92146, 40575, 137981 and 78016 respectively.

(b) For the improvement in the health of livestock, Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries is implementing a Centrally Sponsored Scheme called Livestock Health and Disease Control having target oriented components viz. Assistance to States for Control of Animal Diseases (ASCAD) and Foot & Mouth Disease Control Programme (FMD-CP). In order to prevent and control zoonotic and economically important diseases, grants in aid are provided to the States under the scheme Assistance to States for Control of Animal Diseases. The targets and achievements during the last four years are as under:

Year	Targets (million Vaccinations)	Achievements (million Vaccinations)
2003-04	14.00	40.00
2004-05	62.00	104.00
2005-06	100.00	149.22
2006-07	105.00	156.18

Under Foot and Mouth Disease Control Programme, four rounds of FMD vaccination has been completed in the 54 identified districts in the country. In each round 28 million animals are required to be vaccinated. Against the Target of 28.00 million vaccinations per round, the achievements are 27.71 (first round), 28.03 (second round), 27.52 (third round), 27.45 (fourth round). Fifth round of vaccination is continuing.

[English]

Expansion of Steel Sector

3866. SHRI ANANTA NAYAK: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) the performance of steel industry in terms of production and growth rates during the last three Five Year Plans, Plan-wise; and

(b) the targets set for Eleventh Plan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (DR. AKHILESH DAS): (a) The production and growth rate of finished (Carbon) steel in India at the terminal years of last three Five Years Plans are given below:-

Plan Period	Terminal Year	Production (million tonnes)	CAGR (%)
7th Plan	1991-92	14.33	
8th Plan	1996-97	22.72	9.7
9th Plan	2001-02	30.63	6.2
10th Plan	2006-07	49.35	10

(Source: Joint Plant Committee)

(b) The Working Group on Steel Industry for 11th Five Year Plan (2007-2012), constituted by the Planning Commission has projected over 77 million tonnes of finished steel availability by 2011-12.

[Translation]

Posts of SCs/STs/OBCs

3867. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the sanctioned number and percentage of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes/Other Backward Classes in various categories of posts in the cooperative organizations financed by the Government like National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Limited (NAFED), National Council for Cooperative Training (NCCT) and other cooperative organizations;

(b) whether the said ratio is below the percentage fixed by the Government under the reservation policy;

(c) if so, the reasons for failure of the Ministry to provide adequate representation to the said communities; and

(d) the steps taken to ensure them adequate representation?

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 information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Pesticide in Bottled Water

3868. SHRI SUBHASH SURESHCHANDRA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the criterion fixed by Bureau of Indian Standards for testing the quality of bottled water is proposed to be change in view of complaints regarding presence of pesticides in bottled water;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

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

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Discrimination in Release of Food Items by FCI

3869. SHRIMATI RUPATAI D. PATIL:

SHRIMATI KARUNA SHUKLA:

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

(a) whether reports of discrimination and rampant corruption prevailing in Food Corporation of India in the matter of release of foodgrains for distribution at fair price shops, under the Public Distribution System have been received by the Government recently;

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

(c) the details of the action taken by the Government to check such incidents in future?

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. The Food Corporation of India (FCI) does not supply foodgrains to Fair Price Shops directly. The FCI allocates foodgrains to the State Government or its nominated agencies who lift the foodgrains from FCI depots and further issue the foodgrains to Fair Price Shops.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

[English]

Revised Integrated Housing Scheme for Beedi Workers

3870. SHRI AJOY CHAKRABORTY:

SHRI NARHARI MAHATO:

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

(a) the total number of Beedi workers in the country in organised and unorganised sectors, State-wise;

(b) the number of applications received, sanc-

tioned and pending under Revised Integrated Housing Scheme (RIHS), 2005 during each of the last three years, State-wise;

(c) whether the housing loans are supposed to be distributed from the cess collected by the Union Government; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) State-wise total number of estimated beedi workers in the country in organized and unorganized sectors are given in the enclosed Statement-I.

(b) The Revised Integrated Housing Scheme (RIHS) 2005 is being implemented w.e.f. 25 May, 2005. The State-wise details of complete proposals received, houses sanctioned and pending proposals are given in the enclosed Statement-II.

(c) Financial assistance, not loan, of Rs. 40,000/- per worker is granted for construction of a house from Cess collected by the Union Government.

(d) State-wise details of number of houses sanctioned during 2005-06 and 2006-07 under the RIHS, 2005 are given in the enclosed Statement-II.

Statement-I

State-wise details of estimated number of Beedi workers

S.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

1	2	3
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		50,52,545

Statement-II

**State-wise Number of Houses Sanctioned during the years 2005-06 & 2006-07
for Beedi workers under RIHS-2005**

S.No.	Name of the State/District	2005-06			2006-07		
		Complete proposals received	Proposals sanctioned	Pending proposals	Complete proposals received	Proposals sanctioned	Pending proposals
1.	Andhra Pradesh	16166	9595	6571	4914	11485	Nil
2.	Assam	Nil	Nil	Nil	91	91	Nil
3.	Karnataka	846	Nil	846	314	1160	Nil
4.	Madhya Pradesh	60	60	Nil	225	225	Nil
5.	Maharashtra	188	187	01	128	129	Nil
6.	Orissa	43	43	Nil	1634	1634	Nil
7.	Rajasthan	Nil	Nil	Nil	03	03	Nil
8.	Tamil Nadu	Nil	Nil	Nil	2898	2898	Nil
9.	Uttar Pradesh	21	21	Nil	128	128	Nil
10.	West Bengal	Nil	Nil	Nil	168	168	Nil
11.	Bihar	1016	1016	Nil	678	678	Nil
12.	Jharkhand	151	Nil	151	Nil	151	Nil
Grand Total		18,491	10,922	7,569	11,181	18,750	Nil

[Translation]

**Concept Paper to Control Emission
of Carbon**

3871. SHRI KRISHNA MURARI MOGHE: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a concept paper with the objective of controlling the amount of emission of carbon in the atmosphere has been received from the Government of Madhya Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Union Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Sand Mining along Chambal River

3872. SHRI ASHOK ARGAL: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether illegal sand extraction is taking place along the Chambal river;

- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether any damage has been done to crocodiles by illegal extraction;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the remedial action proposed/taken in this regard so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) As per available reports, illegal sand extraction is taking place in some areas along the Chambal river. Such mining is relatively higher at location near to the road/bridges over the Chambal river in order to facilitate easy collection and transportation. Some areas where sand mining has been reported are Dholpur, Bundi and Karauli districts of Rajasthan, and Murena district of Madhya Pradesh.

(c) and (d) Illegal extraction of sand along the river has not caused any direct adverse impact on the crocodiles but has some impact on their nesting behaviour.

(e) The state governments have been making all efforts to stop illegal sand mining within the sanctuary. Joint Action by the District Administration, Police and Forest personnel has been taken to control the illegal sand mining. In Madhya Pradesh ex-army personnel have also been deployed along with the staff to control this activity.

[English]

Milk Production in Kerala

3873. SHRI PANNIAN RAVINDRAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Kerala has submitted any scheme aiming at attaining self-sufficiency in milk production in the State within three years; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) and (b) No, Sir. No such scheme aiming at attaining self-sufficiency in milk production in the State within three year has been received.

[Translation]

Agreement between SAIL and JP Group

3874. SHRI RASHEED MASOOD: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Steel Authority of India Ltd. and JP Group of Industries have entered into any agreement for setting up a cement plant;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the time by which the proposed plant is likely to be set up;

(d) whether the Government has formulated any scheme to set up more cement plants in order to check the increasing cement prices; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (DR. AKHILESH DAS): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) and M/s. Jalprakash Associates Ltd. (JAL) have entered into an agreement to set up cement plants at Babupur Satna, MP and Bhilai, Chhattisgarh in a Joint Venture Company with equity participation in the ratio of 26% & 74% respectively. The clinker and partial cement making will be at Babupur Satna in Madhya Pradesh. The balance cement making will be at Bhilai in Chhattisgarh. The capacity of the plant is about 2 MT and is expected to cost around Rs.600 crores.

(c) As per the terms of the agreement, signed on 21st March, 2007, the Cement Plant is to be commissioned within 37 months from the date of agreement i.e. by April, 2010.

(d) and (e) Under the liberalized economic environment, cement manufacturing is free from industrial licensing and the investment decisions are taken by entrepreneurs based on techno-economic consideration. The Government is encouraging capacity addition in the private sector by providing a conducive environment. Presently, the prices of cement are determined by market forces depending upon factors like demand and supply, distance from manufacturing centre, local taxes, imposed by the State Governments etc.

[English]

Production of Edible Oil

3875. SHRI B. MAHTAB: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the production of edible oil recorded in the country during 2006-07;

(b) the reasons for lower production of edible oil during the said period;

(c) the target fixed for production of edible oil during 2007-08; and

(d) the steps taken for increasing production of edible oil?

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 production/net availability of edible oils from all domestic sources has been estimated at 70.62 lakh tons during 2006-07 as compared to 83.16 lakh tons during 2005-06.

(b) The reasons for lower production of edible oils include lack of assured irrigation in about 77% of oilseed producing areas, poor quality of seeds, diseases and pests.

(c) A target of 312 lakh tons has been fixed for oilseeds production during 2007-08.

(d) The steps taken to increase the production of oilseeds/edible oils in the country include enhanced incentives to the farmers through fixation of Minimum Support Price (MSP), implementation of Centrally Sponsored 'Integrated Scheme of Oilseeds, Pulses, Oil Palm and Maize' (ISOPOM) in 14 major oil seeds growing States with a view to increase the production and produc-

tivity of oil seeds in the country, and development of better seeds and production technologies by Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR).

Funds for Quality Control Arrangement on Seeds

3876. SHRI SUGRIB SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of funds sanctioned and released to the Government of Orissa during each of the last three years under the scheme Quality Control Arrangement on Seeds;

(b) whether the State Government has requested the Union Government to release/revalidate the balance amount of the sanctioned fund;

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

(d) the time by which the balance amount is likely to be released?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) to (d) The details of the funds released are as under:-

(Rs. in lakhs)

Sl.No.	Name of the Component	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
1.	Strengthening of Seed Testing Laboratory/Seed Certification Agency/Grow-out-test	15.00	10.00	75.00
2.	Seed Development Training	0.50		2.00

Government of Orissa's request for revalidating the funds released has been considered and the State Government has been requested to provide justification and reasons for not utilizing the released amount.

Relocation of Lions from Gir to Kuno-Palpur Sanctuary

3877. SHRI MILIND DEORA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Gujarat has reacted adversely to the recommendations of the Wildlife Institute of India for the relocation of Asiatic lions from Gir to Kuno-Palpur Sanctuary;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the response of the Union Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) No, Sir. No communication to that effect has been received from the State Government of Gujarat.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

Payment of Provident Fund Arrears

3878. SHRI G. KARUNAKARA REDDY: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether several companies are reportedly not making the payment of Provident Fund arrears to their employees despite repeated reminders;

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

(c) the action has been taken against these companies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) to (c) So far as un-exempted establishments are concerned, the contributions payable by the employer in respect of eligible employees of the establishments is remitted to the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation and payment of Provident Fund to members is made by EPFO in accordance with the provisions of the Employees' Provident Fund Scheme, 1952. However, in respect of exempted establishments, payment of Provident Fund is made to their employees by the Board of Trustees of the exempted establishments.

There are a number of establishments in default of PF dues and the amount of arrears outstanding from 76,958 defaulting establishments was Rs. 2,530.07 crore as on 31.3.2006.

As soon as a default in PF contribution is detected or any complaint regarding non-settlement of claims by the exempted establishment or violation of the provisions of the Employees' Provident Funds & Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952 is received, appropriate action is taken by the Organization, which includes:

- (i) assessment of dues payable by the defaulting establishment.
- (ii) recovery of dues in accordance with the provisions of the Employees' Provident Funds & Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952, which includes attachment and sale of properties arrest and detention of defaulters, appointment of receiver to manage the defaulters' properties.
- (iii) intervention by the Employees' Provident Fund Organization to get the claims settled in respect of employees of exempted establishment.
- (iv) in case of violation of guidelines for grant of exemption, exemption is cancelled and necessary action is taken accordingly.

Excess Procurement of Wheat by Private Companies

3879. SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA:
SHRI CHANDRA MANI TRIPATHI:
DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY:
SHRI HANSRAJ G. AHIR:

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

(a) whether certain private companies engaged in retail business have procured wheat in excess of their prescribed quota,

(b) if so, the details of such companies;

(c) the details of the quota prescribed for the procurement and the quantum of wheat actually procured by each of the said companies;

(d) the details of the action taken by the Government against them;

(e) whether the Government proposes to recover the quantum of wheat procured by these companies in excess of their quota;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) the steps taken by the Government to monitor hoarding of wheat and stock position?

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 limit has been laid down by Central Government on procurement of wheat by private companies.

(b) to (f) Do not arise.

(g) Government has issued the Wheat (Stock Declaration by Companies or Firms or Individuals) Order, 2007 on 1.3.2007. The order provides that any Company or Firm or Individual who purchases wheat beyond 50,000 tonnes (total purchases made throughout the Country) during the Rabi Marketing Season 2007-08 shall furnish periodical returns to the Central Government about quantity purchased and quantity held in stock. The State Governments have been empowered to impose stock limits on wheat vide Order issued by Department of Consumer Affairs on 29.8.2006. The validity of this Order has been extended by another six months on 27.2.2007. Besides raids are being conducted by State Governments under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 and detention of persons is being made under the Prevention of Black-marketing & Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act, 1980 by the respective State Governments to check hoarding and blackmarketing of essential commodities.

Mercury Levels in the Air

3880. SHRI JASHUBHAI DHANABHAI BARAD: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the recommended levels of mercury in and around the hospitals;

(b) whether the air sample in and around hospitals contained mercury levels which are on an average almost seven times higher than the recommended level;

(c) if so, whether the Government has taken any action to reduce the same;

(d) whether the Union Government has sought the help of US Environment Protection Agency (EPA); and

(e) if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) to (c) The National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for pollutants viz. Sulphur dioxide, Oxides of Nitrogen, Suspended Particulate Matter, Respirable Particulate Matter (size less than 10 um) and Lead have been notified under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 for various land uses including sensitive area like hospitals. Presently the NAAQS does not cover mercury.

The CPCB has written to all the State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs)/Pollution Control Committees (PCCs) of Union Territories (UTs) to ensure, that health care facilities collect spilled mercury and send it back to the manufacturers and take measures so that spilled mercury does not become part of the bio-medical or solid waste generated.

The SPCBs/PCCs have also been asked to incorporate appropriate conditions in the authorization granted under the Bio-Medical (Management & Handling) Rules, 1998 to health care facilities.

Under the Bio-Medical Waste (Management & Handling) Rules, 1998, incineration of solid waste, including waste contaminated with mercury generated from disposable items is not permitted.

(d) and (e) The Union Government has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the United States Environment Protection Agency (USEPA) in the year 2002 under which bilateral cooperation is going on in various environmental sectors such as Air and Water Quality Management, Management of Toxic Chemicals and Hazardous Wastes, Pollution Prevention and Control, Environmental Governance, Environmental Monitoring and Assessment etc. On 2nd April, 2007 the MOU has been extended further, by mutual consent for a further period of five years, by the Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India and the USEPA.

[Translation]

National Agricultural Technology Project

3881. SHRI MAHAVIR BHAGORA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the objectives of National Agricultural Technology Project (NATP);

(b) the targets fixed and success achieved under NATP, so far;

(c) the details of the districts covered under NATP, State-wise;

(d) the details of the funds provided by the World Bank for NATP during each of the last three years;

(e) the details of the funds released to States during each of the last three years under NATP, State-wise;

(f) whether any new project has been formulated after abolition of NATP; and

(g) if so, the details and salient features of new scheme?

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 main project development objective (PDO) was to increase the availability and adoption of appropriate technologies through:

- (i) improved efficiency of Indian Council of Agricultural Research's (ICAR's) organization and management (O&M) system;
- (ii) enhanced performance and effectiveness of priority research programs and of scientists in responding to technological needs of farmers; and
- (iii) developing models to improve the effectiveness and financial sustainability of the technology dissemination system with greater accountability to, and participation by, the farming community.

Other important objectives of the project were to:-

- (i) focus research resources on less developed rainfed and marginal areas, and on sustainable management of land and water resources;
- (ii) enhance the participatory skills of researchers; and

- (iii) improve the quantity and quality of the technology flow.

(b) The targets fixed includes enhancement in the efficiency of the research system, location specific research for major production systems, and innovation in demand driven technology dissemination system. The successes included enhanced efficiency of the research system through organization and management reforms, organizing research under five agro-eco-regions, viz., hill and mountain, rainfed, arid, irrigated and coastal with major impact on farm incomes, and establishment of the Agricultural Technology Management Agency (ATMA) in twenty eight districts as models of programme convergence of line departments and linking research and extension activities with the rural farm households.

(c) The research programmes were conducted by Agro-Eco system, namely, Hill & Mountain, Arid, Rain-fed, Irrigated and Coastal. However one of the components of NATP on innovations in technology dissemination covered 28 districts (Statement-I).

(d) and (e) Statement-II is enclosed.

(f) National Agricultural Innovation Project (NAIP) has been formulated as follow up of NATP.

(g) The details of the salient and innovative features of the project include collaborative development and application of agricultural innovations among public research organizations, private sector, NGOs, development departments, farmers and other stakeholders in consortium mode, competitive funding, production to consumption approach, enhancing livelihood security focus on disadvantaged districts and strengthening basic and strategic research.

Statement-I

List of Districts covered under Innovations in Technology Dissemination Component of NATP

Andhra Pradesh

Kurnool

Prakasham

Adilabad

Chittoor

Himachal Pradesh

Shimla

Hamirpur

Kangra

Bilaspur

Punjab

Gurdaspur

Jalandhar

Sangrur

Faridkot

Jharkhand

Chaibasa

Dumka

Palamau

Jamtana

Biher

Muzaffarpur

Madhubani

Munger

Rural Patna

Maharashtra

Ahmednagar

Amaravati

Aurangabad

Ratnagiri

Orissa

Khurda

Koraput

Sambalpur

Ganjam

Statement-II

(d) The details of funds provided by the World Bank for NATP during each of the last three years are as under:

(Rs in Crore)

S.No.	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	Total
1	170.12	48.24	6.56	224.94

(e) State wise & year wise

(Rupees in lakh)

S.No.	State	Name of the University	Year			Total
			2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	Andhra Pradesh	ANGRAU, Hyderabad	363.37	131.97	0.00	495.34
2	Assam	AAU, Jorhat	153.21	76.98	6.81	237.01
3	Bihar	RAU, Samastipur	215.50	26.97	0.79	243.26
4	Chhattisgarh	IGKV, Raipur	220.90	70.67	1.30	292.88
5	Gujarat	SDAU, Dantiwada	0.00	29.66	0.52	30.18
6	Gujarat	JAU, Junagarh	0.00	10.26	0.24	10.50
7	Gujarat	AAU, Anand	0.00	32.81	1.65	34.45
8	Gujarat	NAU, Navsari	0.00	11.02	0.37	11.38
9	Gujarat	GAU, Bananskatha	311.05	0.00	0.00	311.05
10	Haryana	CCSHAU, Hissar	297.84	113.67	0.60	412.11
11	Himachal Pradesh	HPKV, Palampur	372.32	144.90	3.36	520.57
12	Himachal Pradesh	YSPUH&F, Solan	172.56	53.00	6.27	231.83
13	Jammu and Kashmir	SKUA&T, Srinagar	193.55	57.74	0.00	251.29
14	Jammu and Kashmir	SKUA&T, Jammu	127.86	31.62	0.95	160.44
15	Jharkhand	BAU, Ranchi	97.51	121.69	2.66	221.86
16	Karnataka	UAS, Bangalore	487.81	0.00	0.00	487.81
17	Karnataka	UAS, Dharwad	338.30	161.57	2.35	502.22
18	Kerala	KAU, Thrissur	287.61	136.41	0.00	424.02
19	Madhya Pradesh	JNKVV, Jabalpur	217.75	75.53	3.52	296.80
20	Maharashtra	KKV, Dapoli	168.89	50.68	0.00	219.58
21	Maharashtra	MA&FSU, Nagpur	158.83	48.49	0.00	207.31
22	Maharashtra	MAU, Parbhani	181.97	74.10	1.67	257.74
23	Maharashtra	MPKV, Rahuri	219.52	93.24	2.04	314.79
24	Maharashtra	PDKV, Akola	166.59	96.08	1.94	264.61
25	Manipur	CAU, Imphal	103.77	28.61	0.00	132.38
26	Orissa	OUA&T, Bhubaneswar	223.09	74.35	9.38	306.82
27	Punjab	PAU, Ludhiana	380.48	137.10	2.06	519.64

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
28	Rajasthan	MPUA&T, Udaipur	194.91	96.12	0.40	291.44
29	Rajasthan	RAU, Bikaner	211.85	73.25	5.66	290.76
30	Tamil Nadu	TNAU, Coimbatore	317.92	147.99	0.00	465.92
31	Tamil Nadu	TNV&ASU, Chennai	196.89	70.31	2.02	271.22
32	Uttar Pradesh	CSAU&T, Kanpur	79.27	29.43	0.27	108.97
33	Uttar Pradesh	NDUA&T, Faizabad	106.08	38.41	2.08	146.57
34	Uttar Pradesh	DDUPVV, Mathura	114.20	17.09	0.00	131.28
35	Uttar Pradesh	SVBUA&T, Meerut	72.92	18.85	0.40	92.17
36	Uttaranchal	GBPUA&T, Pantnagar	315.55	135.00	4.90	455.45
37	West Bengal	BCKVV, Mohanpur	120.07	38.14	0.01	158.22
38	West Bengal	WBUA&FS, Kolkata	110.49	39.56	7.67	157.73
39	West Bengal	UBKV, Coochbehar	109.90	18.58	0.00	128.48
Total			7412.34	2611.87	71.90	10096.10

Modern Fishing Equipments to Fishermen

3882. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has conducted any survey to find out the number of fishermen in the country;

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

(c) the number of fisherman who have been provided with the modern fishing equipments, during the last three years, State-wise;

(d) the details of the training programmes organised to train fishermen during the said period; and

(e) the number of fishermen benefited therefrom during the said period, 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) and (b) Yes Sir. The Livestock Census conducted by the Government in 2003 interalia connected information on the number of people dependent on fisheries and its allied activities as source of livelihood. The Statement-I indicating number of people dependent on fisheries and its allied activities as source of livelihood is enclosed.

(c) Central Assistance of Rs.29.40 lakh was given to National Cooperative Development Corporation during 2004-05 to 2006-07 to provide 98 Global Positioning System and Wireless sets.

(d) and (e) 313 training programmes benefiting 15875 fishermen were organized during 2004-05 to 2006-07 under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme on Fisheries Training and Extension. Statement-II indicating state wise number of fishermen trained is enclosed.

Statement-I

Number of people dependent on fisheries and its allied activities as source of livelihood

S.No.	State Name	Total Number of members			Total
		Male	Female	Children	
1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Andhra Pradesh	249386	250877	393102	893365
2	Arunachal Pradesh	1650	1376	1373	4399

1	2	3	4	5	6
3	Assam	131312	97986	161082	390380
4	Bihar	1391166	1266997	2301358	4959516
5	Chhattisgarh	621607	529697	760064	1911368
6	Goa	5521	4863	3586	13970
7	Gujarat	134475	129900	228880	493255
8	Haryana	5910	3322	7259	16491
9	Himachal Pradesh	1537	1372	2713	5622
10	Jammu and Kashmir	9628	7593	13232	30453
11	Jharkhand	577908	571584	781428	1930920
12	Karnataka	55809	52898	50245	158952
13	Kerala	224007	317758	206072	747837
14	Madhya Pradesh	213888	200607	302479	716974
15	Maharashtra	63354	46603	61873	171830
16	Manipur	25009	24091	21368	70468
17	Meghalaya	525	504	1354	2383
18	Mizoram	5498	5312	7097	17907
19	Nagaland	5762	5519	3581	14862
20	Orissa	70971	48334	60721	180026
21	Punjab	2150	1874	5061	9085
22	Rajasthan	2638	1693	2985	7316
23	Sikkim	9893	8353	6568	26814
24	Tamil Nadu	171992	156107	148519	476618
25	Tripura	15966	13177	17590	46733
26	Uttar Pradesh	70373	48892	59799	179064
27	Uttaranchal	32	23	35	90
28	West Bengal	587214	205198	119210	911622
29	Andaman and Nicobar	9859	7693	0	17552
30	Chandigarh	198	109	172	479
31	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	0	0	0	0
32	Daman and Diu	7649	7756	10080	25485

1	2	3	4	5	6
33	Delhi	485	475	1555	2515
34	Lakshadweep	10408	2621	0	13029
35	Pondicherry	12378	12799	12797	37974
Total		4696158	4033963	5755233	14485354

Statement-II

Number of fishermen trained during 2004-05 to 2006-07 under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme on Fisheries Training and Extension

S.No.	State /UT	No. of Fishermen
1	2	3
1	Andhra Pradesh	1680
2	Arunachal Pradesh	200
3	Assam	530
4	Bihar	294
5	Chhattisgarh	683
6	Goa	0
7	Gujarat	0
8	Haryana	1565
9	Himachal Pradesh	0
10	Jammu and Kashmir	1800
11	Jharkhand	700
12	Karnataka	431
13	Kerala	0
14	Madhya Pradesh	267
15	Maharashtra	0
16	Manipur	125
17	Meghalaya	0
18	Mizoram	600
19	Nagaland	800
20	Orissa	0
21	Punjab	0

1	2	3
22	Rajasthan	50
23	Sikkim	50
24	Tamilnadu	0
25	Tripura	4100
26	Uttar Pradesh	1000
27	Uttaranchal	0
28	West Bengal	1000
29	Andaman and Nicobar	0
30	Chandigarh	0
31	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	0
32	Daman and Diu	0
33	Delhi	0
34	Lakshadweep	0
35	Pondicherry	0
Total		15875

[Translation]

New Guidelines for Drought Relief

3883. SHRI SUBHASH SURESHCHANDRA
DESHMUKH:
SHRI HARIKEWAL PRASAD:
SHRI JIVABHAI A. PATEL:
SHRI BHUPENDRASINH SOLANKI:
SHRI JASWANT SINGH BISHNOI:
SHRI DUSHYANT SINGH:
SHRIMATI JAYABEN B. THAKKAR:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Governments particularly Rajasthan have requested to the Union Government to increase fund allocation to meet the drought situation in the States;

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

(c) whether the Government has issued new guidelines to provide relief to drought affected States in which there is the provision of one time waiving of payment of interest on loan taken for kharif crops, increasing the limit of agriculture investment subsidy and providing additional assistance to these States; 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) There is ready availability of funds with the States under Calamity Relief Fund (CRF) to take necessary measures in the wake of natural calamities including drought. Additional assistance, over and above CRF, is considered from the National Calamity Contingency Fund (NCCF), if necessary, for natural calamities of severe nature, in accordance with an established procedure, on submission of a Memorandum for assistance from the NCCF by the State Government. During 2006-07, while Rajasthan declared parts of the State as drought affected, no Memorandum seeking assistance from the NCCF has been received from the State Government. The State Government, however, requested for release of 5.04 lakh MTs of wheat for taking up drought relief employment works during January to June, 2007. 1 lakh MTs of wheat has already been released to the State under the special component of Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana (SGRY) scheme.

(c) and (d) There are standing instructions from the RBI to the banks for providing credit related relief to the farmers in the event of natural calamities. The focus of these measures is on the conversion of short-term loans into medium term loans and rescheduling thereof to enable farmers to get fresh loans to carry on their agricultural operations. Further, in order to provide appropriate relief to the chronic defaulting farmers who are unable to repay the principal amount together with accumulated interest due to circumstances beyond their control, banks have been advised to consider the possibility of one time settlement of such overdue which may include partial waiver of loan/interest.

[English]

Maize Cultivation in Orissa

3884. SHRI ANANTA NAYAK: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any step has been taken to increase

the areas under maize cultivation in the scheduled and hilly districts of Orissa;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the quantum of funds and incentives granted to the maize growers during each of the last three years in Orissa particularly in Keonjhar district?

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) Government of India has taken various steps to increase the area under maize cultivation through a Centrally Sponsored "Integrated Scheme of Oilseeds, Pulses, Oil Palm & Maize (ISOPOM)" in 15 major maize growing states including in the scheduled and hilly districts of Orissa. The details of district-wise area covered under maize cultivation during the last three years is given in the enclosed statement.

(c) Under the scheme, financial assistance is provided for purchase of breeder seed, production of foundation seed, production and distribution of certified seed, distribution of minikits, infrastructure development, block demonstrations on improved technology, Integrated Pest Management Technology, distribution of Plant Protection Chemicals, Plant Protection equipment, weedicides, supply of Rhizobium culture/Phosphate Solubilising Bacteria, distribution of gypsum/pyrite/liming/dolomite, distribution of sprinkler sets, farmers training, staff & contingencies, officers training and publicity, etc. The details of funds provided to the state of Orissa including Keonjhar District (Rs. in lakhs) during the last three years under ISOPOM are given below:

Year	Orissa State	Keonjhar Distt.
2004-05	58.41	3.23
2005-06	45.82	3.32
2006-07	42.60	4.98

Statement

District-wise Area cultivated under Maize ('000 ha) during last 3 years (2004-05 to 2006-07) in the State of Orissa

S.No.	District	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-07 (Provisional)
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Balasore	0.39	0.37	0.37
2.	Bhadrak	0.09	0.09	0.12

1	2	3	4	5
3	Bolangir	3.22	3.07	3.10
4.	Sonepur	0.31	0.33	0.30
5.	Cuttack	1.77	1.52	1.52
6.	Jagatsingpur	0.31	0.25	0.21
7.	Jaipur	2.53	3.02	2.65
8.	Kendrapara	0.14	0.40	0.45
9.	Dhenkanal	2.83	2.90	2.96
10.	Angul	4.23	4.15	4.29
11.	Ganjam	7.70	8.80	9.22
12.	Gajapati	6.94	8.06	8.60
13.	Kalahandi	4.65	5.44	11.74
14.	Nawapara	1.80	1.74	2.85
15.	Keonjhar	24.34	24.34	25.75
16.	Koraput	15.86	16.51	16.69
17.	Malkangiri	12.11	8.53	8.39
18.	Nawarangpur	37.09	38.79	40.57
19.	Rayagada	11.04	11.08	11.23
20.	Mayurbhanj	14.22	13.43	13.64
21.	Phulbani	14.73	15.70	16.43
22.	Boudh	1.03	1.00	1.00
23.	Puri	0.20	0.24	0.15
24.	Khurda	0.94	0.82	0.85
25.	Nayagarh	4.75	4.73	4.47
26.	Sambalpur	1.42	1.37	1.38
27.	Bargarh	1.24	1.31	1.42
28.	Deogarh	0.50	1.03	1.10
29.	Jharsuguda	0.57	0.87	0.93
30.	Sundargarh	7.82	7.50	6.98
Total		184.76	187.39	199.36

Tree Monitoring Authority

3885. SHRI MILIND DEORA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to set up a Tree Monitoring Authority to minimize felling of trees in the National Capital Region;

(b) If so, the role that will be assigned to the Tree Monitoring Authority;

(c) whether the Authority will be a permanent body or a temporary one; and

(d) the States where Tree Monitoring Authority exists as on date?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) The Government of NCT of Delhi has constituted "Tree Authority" vide notification dated 08.06.1999.

(b) The duties of the Tree Authority are defined in section 7 of the Delhi Preservation of Trees Act, 1994. The Tree Authority shall, subject to any general or special order of the Government, be responsible for-

- (i) the preservation of all trees within its jurisdiction;
- (ii) carrying out census of the existing trees;
- (iii) development and maintenance of nurseries, supply of seeds, saplings and trees to persons;
- (iv) getting planting and transplanting of trees necessitated by construction of buildings, new roads or widening of new roads;
- (v) organization of demonstrations and extension services;
- (vi) undertaking critical study of the proposals of various departments and private bodies for construction of buildings, roads, factories, irrigation works, laying of electric, telephone and other transmission lines.

(c) The Constitution of the Tree Authority is defined under section 3 of the Delhi Preservation of Trees Act, 1994. The Government may, from time to time, appoint such officers and servants as may be considered necessary.

(d) The information is being collected from the States and will be placed before the House after compilation.

Construction of Parapet Walls

3886. SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA:

SHRI DALPAT SINGH PARSTE:

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

(a) whether certain Corporate Houses have offered to build parapet walls in the Gir Forest around open wells, which have turned into death traps for the Asiatic Lions;

(b) if so, the response of the Union Government thereto; and

(c) the steps initiated by the Union Government in that direction so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) No, Sir. No such offer from Corporate Houses has been received.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

Setting up of ESI Dispensaries and Hospitals

3887. SHRI SUGRIB SINGH: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Employees' State Insurance (ESI) dispensaries and hospitals functioning in the country, State-wise;

(b) the details of the norms for setting up of ESI dispensaries and hospitals in the country;

(c) the States in which new dispensaries and hospitals are proposed to be opened during 2006-07 and 2007-08;

(d) the details of the requests received by the Union Government in this regard, State-wise; and

(e) the details of action taken by the Government on such requests?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) The number of ESI Dispensaries and Hospitals functioning in the country, State-wise is furnished in Statement-I.

(b) The norms for setting up of ESI dispensaries and hospitals are furnished in Statement-II.

(c) ESI Corporation gives approval for setting up of dispensaries and hospitals based on the specific

requests of the State Governments and norms laid down in this regard. For dispensaries, ESI Corporation gives its approval to the State Government. The detail of the dispensaries for which approval has been given by ESI Corporation during 2006-07 & 2007-08 is furnished in Statement-III.

(d) and (e) The ESI Corporation had received requests from the State Governments of Uttaranchal, Chhattisgarh and Himachal Pradesh for setting up of hospitals in the State. ESI Corporation has given, in principle, approval for setting up of 50 bedded hospital in Baddi, Himachal Pradesh. In Chhattisgarh, ESI Corporation has sanctioned 10 bedded Diagnostic Centre in Raipur and has asked the State Government for giving its consent for setting up of 50 bedded hospital in Raipur. For Uttaranchal, as the number of Insured Persons is less, a 10 bedded Diagnostic Centre has been sanctioned at Dehradun.

Statement-I

Infrastructure of Hospitals & Dispensaries

Sl.No.	State	Hospitals 2005-06	Dispensaries 2005-06
1	2	3	4
1.	Andhra Pradesh	11	133
2.	Assam	1	27
3.	Bihar	3	24
4.	Chandigarh Admn.	1	2
5.	Chhattisgarh	-	11
6.	Delhi	4	43
7.	Goa	1	9
8.	Gujarat	12	125
9.	Haryana	05	57
10.	Himachal Pradesh	01	9
11.	Karnataka	09	118
12.	Kerala	13	137
13.	Madhya Pradesh	07	47
14.	Maharashtra	14	72
15.	Meghalaya	-	2
16.	Orissa	06	49

1	2	3	4
17.	Pondicherry	01	15
18.	Punjab	07	69
19.	Rajasthan	05	64
20.	Tamilnadu	09	187
21.	Uttar Pradesh	16	143
22.	Uttaranchal	-	7
23.	West Bengal	14	35
24.	Jammu and Kashmir	01	8
25.	Jharkhand	03	29
Total		144	1422

Statement-II*Norms for setting up of ESI Dispensaries*

- (A) A two doctor dispensary is set up for 3000 IP family units. 3 Doctor dispensary for 5000 IP family units and 5 doctor dispensary for 10000 IP family units. In case a dispensary is providing services to 25000-30000 Insured Persons within a radius of 7-8 kilometers, then a new dispensary may not be set up till the number of IP coverage exceeds 30000. Normal services can be provided through up gradation of the existing dispensary and provision of additional staff as per work load. Keeping this in view, the reorganization of dispensaries should be done.
- (B) In areas having strength of population of less than 3000 IP family units, OPD services may be provided through mobile dispensaries/Insurance Medical Practitioners.

Norms for Setting up of ESI Hospitals

- | | | |
|----|---------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. | 50 bedded hospital | 25,000 IP family units. |
| 2. | 100 bedded hospital | 1,00,000 IP family units. |
| 3. | 150 bedded hospital | 1,50,000 IP family units. |
| 4. | 200 bedded hospital | 2,00,000 IP family units. |
| 5. | 250 bedded hospital | 2,50,000 IP family units. |
| 6. | 300 bedded hospital | 3,00,000 IP family units. |
| 7. | 400 bedded hospital | 4,00,000 IP family units. |
| 8. | 500 bedded hospital | 5,00,000 IP family units. |
| 9. | 600 bedded hospital | 6,00,000 IP family units. |

Statement-III*Details of Dispensaries & Hospitals Sanctioned by ESI Corporation during 2006-07 & 2007-08***Dispensaries sanctioned during 2006-07**

1. Karnal, Haryana
2. Murthal, Haryana
3. Hissar, Haryana
4. Tohana, Haryana
5. Jaggiapet, Andhra Pradesh
6. Nainital, Uttrakhand
7. Visakhapatna, Andhra Pradesh
8. Gundla, Andhra Pradesh
9. Chita Valasa, Andhra Pradesh
10. Kundain, Goa

Dispensaries sanctioned during 2007-08

11. Udham Singh Nagar, Uttrakhand

Hospitals sanctioned during 2006-07

1. Haldia 50 bedded, West Bengal
2. Baddi 50 bedded, Himachal Pradesh
3. Raipur 10 bedded Diagnostic Centre, Chhattisgarh
4. Dehradun 10 bedded Diagnostic Centre, Uttrakhand

Hospitals sanctioned during 2007-08

Nil

[Translation]

Works under TAR-IVLP and ATIC

3888. SHRI MAHAVIR BHAGORA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Technology Assessment and Refinement through Institution Village Linkage Programme (TAR-IVLP) and Agricultural Technology and Information Centres (ATICs) working in the country at present, State-wise;

(b) the details of the work to be undertaken under the TAR-IVLP and ATICs during each of the last three years, State-wise;

(c) the targets fixed and success achieved by the

said centres during each of the last three years, State-wise;

(d) the details of the funds allocated released and utilized by these centres during each of the last three years, State-wise;

(e) whether there is separate provision for women and tribals under the said project; and

(f) if so, the details thereof and the number of beneficiaries during each of the last three years, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) There was a project on Technology Assessment and Refinement through Institution-Village Linkage Programme (TAR-IVLP), implemented through 70 centres of State Agricultural Universities (SAU) and ICAR Institutes aiming at assessment and refinement of technology before its actual transfer to the users.

The Agricultural Technology Information Centres (ATIC) were established in 44 SAUs and ICAR Institutes to create a single window delivery system for availability of technology products, diagnostic services and technology information to the farmers.

The projects were funded under National Agricultural Technology Project and completed during 2003-04. The state-wise number of centres of TAR-IVLP and ATIC is given in Statement-I and II, respectively.

(c) and (d) The questions do not arise.

(e) and (f) There was no separate provision for women and tribals under the project.

Statement-I

State-wise Number of TAR-IVLP Centres

S.No.	State	Number of Centres
1	2	3
1.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	1
2.	Andhra Pradesh	3
3.	Assam	1
4.	Bihar	3
5.	Chhattisgarh	1

1	2	3
6.	Delhi	1
7.	Goa	1
8.	Gujarat	1
9.	Haryana	3
10.	Himachal Pradesh	5
11.	Jammu and Kashmir	2
12.	Jharkhand	1
13.	Kerala	6
14.	Karnataka	3
15.	Madhya Pradesh	3
16.	Maharashtra	6
17.	Meghalaya	1
18.	Orissa	3
19.	Punjab	1
20.	Rajasthan	5
21.	Tamil Nadu	5
22.	Uttar Pradesh	7
23.	Uttaranchal	3
24.	West Bengal	4
Total		70

Statement-II

State-wise Number of Agricultural Technology Information Centres (ATIC)

S.No.	State	Number of Centres
1	2	3
1.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	1
2.	Andhra Pradesh	1
3.	Assam	1
4.	Bihar	1
5.	Chhattisgarh	1
6.	Delhi	1

1	2	3
7.	Gujarat	1
8.	Haryana	2
9.	Himachal Pradesh	3
10.	Jammu and Kashmir	1
11.	Jharkhand	1
12.	Kerala	5
13.	Karnataka	3
14.	Madhya Pradesh	2
15.	Maharashtra	5
16.	Meghalaya	1
17.	Orissa	2
18.	Punjab	1
19.	Rajasthan	3
20.	Tamil Nadu	2
21.	Uttar Pradesh	4
22.	Uttaranchal	1
23.	West Bengal	1
Total		44

[English]

Land Erosion

3889. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian territory is being lost to Pakistan as a result of land erosion;

(b) if so, the total area India has lost as a result thereof so far;

(c) whether Pakistan has diverted the course of Ravi and Sutlej rivers; and

(d) if so, the remedial measures contemplated by the Government to prevent the land erosion?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) and (b) Government of Punjab has informed

that no area of land is being lost to Pakistan due to land erosion.

(c) As per information available with Government of Punjab, Pakistan has built some works to push the course of the river Sutlej towards Indian side. Government of Punjab has further informed that the course of river Ravi has shifted gradually towards India due to normal country slope and some works constructed by Pakistan in their territory and that there is no major diversion of the course of the rivers Ravi and Sutlej in the India territory.

(d) A Committee constituted by the Ministry of Water Resources visits vulnerable spots every year before and after monsoon in the border Districts and suggests counter remedial measures on these rivers and reviews the prevailing ground conditions and recommends flood control/anti erosion schemes to be executed by the State Government. Government of Punjab undertakes counter remedial measures from its own resources. Union Government is also providing financial assistance in the form of special loan and grant-in-aid as well as technical expertise to the Government of Punjab for undertaking the works.

Market Intervention Schemes

3890. SHRI G. KARUNAKARA REDDY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the amount allocated, released and utilized on Market Intervention Schemes and Market Support Operations during the last three years, commodity-wise, year-wise and State-wise; and

(b) the details of results achieved during the said period, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) The Ministry of Agriculture is implementing two schemes namely Price Support Scheme and Market Intervention Scheme. The budget is allocated collectively for both these schemes. The budget is not allocated scheme-wise, commodity-wise and State-wise.

The budget amount allocated, released to NAFED and utilized for both schemes for meeting losses incurred in implementation of the schemes during the last three years from 2004-05 to 2006-07 is given in the enclosed Statement-I.

Price Support Scheme (PSS)

The Price Support Scheme (PSS) is implemented for procurement of oilseeds and pulses through NAFED which is the Central nodal agency at the Minimum Support Price (MSP) declared by the Government. NAFED undertakes procurement of oilseeds and pulses under PSS as and when prices fall below the MSP. Procurement under PSS is continued till prices stabilise at or above the MSP. Losses, if any, incurred by NAFED in undertaking MSP operations are fully reimbursed by the Central Government. Profit, if any, earned in undertaking MSP operations are credited to the Central Government.

Market Intervention Scheme (MIS)

Market Intervention Scheme (MIS) is implemented on the request of a State/UT Government for procurement of agricultural and horticultural commodities generally perishable in nature and not covered under Price Support Scheme. The MIS is implemented in order to protect the growers of these commodities from making distress sale in the event of bumper crop when there is glut in the market and the prices tend to fall below economic levels/cost of production. Procurement under MIS is made by NAFED as Central agency and by the State designated agencies. Losses, if any, incurred by the procuring agencies

are shared between Central Government and the concerned State Government on 50:50 basis (75:25 in case of North-Eastern States). However, the amount of loss to be shared between Central Government and the concerned State Government is restricted to 25% of the procurement cost. Profit, if any, earned by the procuring agencies is retained by them.

Statements-II and III showing commodity-wise, year-wise and State-wise procurement of various commodities by NAFED under PSS and by NAFED as central nodal agency and State designated agencies under MIS from 2004-05 to 2006-07 are enclosed.

Statement-I

Amount of funds allocated, released to NAFED and utilized for Price Support Scheme (PSS) and Market Intervention Scheme (MIS) from 2004-2005 to 2006-2007

(Amount in Rs. crore)			
Year	Allocated	Released	Utilised
2004-2005	171.88	120.00	120.00
2005-2006	260.00	260.00	260.00
2006-2007	560.00	560.00	560.00

Statement-II

Commodity-wise/State-wise/Year-wise procurement of oilseeds, pulses & cotton by NAFED under Market Support Operations (Price Support Scheme) from 2004-2005 to 2007-2008

S.No.	Year	Commodity/ Crop Season	State	Quantity procured (in MTs)	MSP (Rs. Per Qtl.)
1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	2004-2005	Gram	Madhya Pradesh	155699	1400
		Rabi-2004	Maharashtra	3717	
			Rajasthan	46306	
			Gujarat	5392	
			Andhra Pradesh	4067	
			Chhattisgarh	43134	
			Uttar Pradesh	24225	
			Total	262540	
2.	2004-2005	Mustardseed	Rajasthan	18491	1600
		Rabi-2004	Chhattisgarh	86	
			Total	18577	

1	2	3	4	5	6
3.	2004-2005	Sunflower seed Rabi-2004	Bihar	2330	1250
4.	2004-2005	Safflower seed Rabi-2004	Madhya Pradesh	71	1500
5.	2004-2005	Groundnut Kharif 2004	Uttar Pradesh	247	1500
6.	2004-2005	Urad Kharif 2004	Uttar Pradesh	280	1410
7.	2005-2006	Mustard seed Rabi 2005	Rajasthan Uttar Pradesh Gujarat Madhya Pradesh Haryana Punjab Delhi Chhattisgarh	1403781 39823 188255 137509 306275 6718 8978 2159	1700
			Total	2093298	
8.	2005-2006	Toria Rabi-2005	Madhya Pradesh	89	1665
9.	2005-2006	Safflower seed Rabi-2005	Maharashtra Karnataka Andhra Pradesh	21458 5971 4376	1550
			Total	31805	
10.	2005-2006	Sunflower seed Kharif-2005	Karnataka	30	1340
11.	2005-2006	Gram Rabi-2005	Madhya Pradesh Maharashtra Rajasthan Gujarat Chhattisgarh Uttar Pradesh	92322 22 4388 38 10502 545	1425
			Total	107797	
12.	2005-2006	Masoor Rabi-2005	Madhya Pradesh	5454	1525
13.	2005-2006	Urad Rabi-2005	Uttar Pradesh	529	1410
14.	2005-2006	Sesamum seed Kharif-2005	West Bengal	2196	1500
15.	2005-2006	Cotton Rabi-2005	Gujarat Punjab Maharashtra Madhya Pradesh	13152 4282 276 652	1640 & 1960 1815 1675 1835
			Total	18362	

1	2	3	4	5	6
16.	2005-2006	Groundnut Kharif-2005	Uttar Pradesh Karnataka Andhra Pradesh Total	1265 1172 1026 3463	1520
17.	2005-2006	Copra 2005 season	Andaman and Nicobar Islands Tamil Nadu Kerala Total	2834 519 397 3750	3570
18.	2005-2006	Sunflower seed Kharif 2005	Karnataka	3121	1500
19.	2005-2006	Soyabean Kharif 2005	Chhattisgarh Andhra Pradesh Total	761 133 894	1010
20.	2006-2007	Groundnut Rabi 2006	Orissa	116	1520
21.	2006-2007	Sunflower seed Rabi 2006	Chhattisgarh Andhra Pradesh Bihar West Bengal Punjab Total	1094 14 1000 1187 1947 5242	1500
22.	2006-2007	Safflower seed Rabi 2006	Maharashtra Andhra Pradesh Karnataka Total	32855 6392 11532 50779	1565
23.	2006-2007	Mustard seed Rabi 2006	Rajasthan Haryana Gujarat Madhya Pradesh Uttar Pradesh Delhi Punjab Chhattisgarh Total	14,18,000 4,58,000 1,04,000 2,00,000 17,000 3,000 4,000 1,000 22,05,000	1715
24.	2006-2007	Soyabean Kharif 2006	Andhra Pradesh	7	1020
25.	2006-2007	Seasam seed Kharif 2006	West Bengal	377	1550
26.	2006-2007	Copra milling 2006 season	Tamil Nadu Kerala Lakshadweep Andaman and Nicobar Islands Total	896 2589 2524 2778 8787	3590

1	2	3	4	5	6
27.	2007-2008	Ball Copra 2007 season	Karnataka	15775	3870
28.	2007-2008	Mustard seed Rabi 2007	Rajasthan Madhya Pradesh Gujarat Haryana Chhattisgarh	20,055 156 224 184 5	1715
Total				20,624	
29.	2007-2008	Safflower seed Rabi 2007	Maharashtra Andhra Pradesh	17 50	1565
Total				67	

Statement-III

*Commodity-wise/State-wise/Year-wise procurement of various commodities under
Market Intervention Scheme from 2004-2005 to 2008-2007*

Sl.No.	Name of Commodity	State	Year/period of Procurement	Quantity for Procurement (in MTs)	Procurement Price (MIP) (Rs. per Qtl.)
1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	Coriander seed	Rajasthan	2004-2005 29.3. to 28.5.04	2000	1450
2.	Cumin seed	Rajasthan	2004-2005 29.3 to 28.4.04	2000	5200
3.	Ginger	Mizoram	2004-2005 15.4.to 15.6.04	5900	500
4.	Onion	Rajasthan	2004-2005 11.6. to 25.7.04	5000	280
5.	Hatkora	Mizoram	2004-2005 17.8.to 16.9.04	1410	450
6.	Apples 'C' Grade	Himachal Pradesh	2004-2005 1.8. to 31.10.04	32500	400
7.	Apples 'C' Grade	Jammu & Kashmir	2004-2005 15.10.04 to 31.12.04	45000	300
8.	Ginger	Mizoram	2004-2005 1.2.to 15.03.05	6400	500
9.	Black Pepper	Kerala	2004-2005 15.2. to 15.4.05	5050	7000
10.	Chillies	Andhra Pradesh	2004-2005 23.3.to 31.5.05	30,000	Premium- 2700 Common- 2500

1	2	3	4	5	6
11.	Garlic	Rajasthan	2005-2006 10.5.to 10.6.05	2000	700
12.	Onion	Rajasthan	2005-2006 1.6. to 31.7.05	5000	250
13.	Apples 'C' grade	Himachal Pradesh	2005-2006 1.8. to 31.10.05	50,000	425
14.	Apples 'C' grade	Uttaranchal	2005-2006 1.8. to 31.10.05	10,000	350
15.	Malta	Uttaranchal	2005-2006 15.12.05 to 15.2.2006	8,000	400
16.	Hatkora	Mizoram	2005-2006 2.10. to 10.11.05	564	450
17.	Chilli	Mizoram	2005-2006 15.2. to 15.3.06	1250	2800
18.	Onion	Rajasthan	2006-2007 29.5. to 28.6.06	5000	280
19.	Apples 'C' grade	Uttaranchal	2006-2007 1.9.to 30.11.06	1000	425
20.	Malta	Uttaranchal	2006-2007 7.12.06 to 15.2.07	2000	425

**Requirement of Gas for Gas based
Fertilizer Units**

3891. SHRI ANANTA NAYAK: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of gas based fertilizer units set up in the country, State-wise;

(b) the approximate requirement of natural gas of each of those fertilizer units;

(c) whether the fertilizer units are getting adequate quantum of gas;

(d) If not, the shortfall in respect of each such unit recorded so far; and

(e) the steps taken to meet the shortage of gas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a)

Sl.No.	States	No. of gas based fertilizer units
1.	Andhra Pradesh	2
2.	Assam	2
3.	Gujarat	3
4.	Madhya Pradesh	2
5.	Maharashtra	1
6.	Rajasthan	2
7.	Uttar Pradesh	7

(b) to (d) A statement is enclosed.

(e) An Inter-Ministerial committee has been constituted under the Chairmanship of Secretary(Petroleum) with Secretary (Expenditure), Secretary(Fertilizers) and Member, Planning Commission as members of the committee to examine the pipeline connectivity and supply of Gas to urea units and also to develop appropriate mechanism for fixing the price of gas in a transparent manner.

Statement
Approximate requirement/shortage of gas for gas based fertilizer units

Sl.No.	Name of fertilizer unit	Reassessed urea capacity (Annual)	NPS-II preset energy norm (plant)	Approximate total requirement of gas wrt. existing present energy norm for 100% capacity utilisation based on reassessed capacity	Actual usage of gas during the year 2005-06 nominated at 100% capacity utilisation	Unitwise approximate shortage of gas wrt. actual consumption for normated 100% capacity utilisation based on reassessed capacity (Col 5 - Col 6)
		(MT/Yr.)	(Gcal/MT urea)	(Million SMP)	(Million SMP)	(Million SMP)
		3	4	5	6	7
1.	BVFCL - Namrup-III	315000	12,688	383.00	363.00	0.00
2.	BVFCL Namrup-II	240000	12,610	297.00	204.60	92.40
3.	CFCL Gadepan-I	864600	5,712	533.90	457.28	76.63
4.	CFCL-Gadepan-II	864600	5,678	530.72	336.80	193.92
5.	GSFC-Baroda	370590	6,935	277.84	246.67	31.17
6.	IFFCO Aonla-I	864600	5,938	555.03	482.65	72.37
7.	IFFCO-Aonla-II	864600	5,880	529.04	418.16	110.89
8.	IFFCO Phulpur-I	551100	7,847	487.51	397.51	70.00
9.	IFFCO Phulpur-II	864600	5,883	549.89	314.89	235.00
10.	IFFCO-Kabot	544500	6,836	402.40	324.04	78.36
11.	Indo-Gulf - Jagdishpur	864600	5,874	549.04	421.92	127.13
12.	Kutchco - Hazira	1729200	5,952	1112.67	1042.69	69.98
13.	KSFL - Shahjahanpur	864600	5,712	533.90	518.23	15.68
14.	NFL - Vijapur-I	864600	5,952	556.34	497.18	59.15
15.	NFL-Vijapur-II	864600	5,712	533.90	443.86	90.04
16.	NFCL Kakinada-I	597300	5,712	368.84	307.31	61.53
17.	NFCL-Kakinada-II	597300	5,712	368.84	152.94	215.90
18.	RCF-Thal	1706760	7,004	1292.34	655.62	636.72
19.	TCL-Babrala	864600	5,507	514.74	418.67	96.07
	Total			10336.95	8004.01	2332.94
				= 10440		= 2330

Notes:

- The units namely, IFFCO-Phulpur-I (presently under pre-1992 naphtha group), CFCL-Gadepan-II & IFFCO-Phulpur-II (presently under post-1992 naphtha group), GSFC-Baroda, IFFCO-Kabot, RCF-Thal (presently under mixed feed group) have been considered as gas based units for the purpose of estimating requirement/shortage of gas.
- Approximate requirement/shortage of gas, in respect of each of the gas based fertilizer units has been estimated considering 100% capacity utilisation of urea (w.r.t. reassessed capacity) at respective existing preset energy norms and assuming that there would be usage of only gas (at normative NCV of 9250 Kcal/Sm³) for both feedstock and fuel for production of urea.
- The above assumptions are made to estimate approximate requirement/shortage of gas in order to have a common basis of calculation for all the gas based urea units in order to have normative figures which could be worked upon for different levels of capacity utilisation.
- It is likely that there would be some variations in requirement/shortage of gas depending upon actual mode of plant operation.
- For BVFCL-Namrup-II & III and IFFCO-Phulpur-I & II units, estimated data in respect of requirement/shortage of gas has been collected from the respective companies over telephone.
- On the basis of above assumptions, the requirement and shortage of gas for the 19 gas based urea units, as considered above, are estimated to be approximately at the level of 10440 million SMP and 2330 million SMP per annum respectively.

[Translation]

Hospital for Beedi Workers

3892. SHRI SUBHASH SURESHCHANDRA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of hospitals established in the country for beedi workers till date, State-wise;

(b) whether the Government proposes to open some more hospitals for them in the country particularly in Sholapur district of Maharashtra; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): (a) The Labour Welfare Organisation has established 4 hospitals and 206 dispensaries to provide health care & family welfare measures to the beedi workers and their dependents. The 4 hospitals are located at (i) Gurusahalganj (Uttar Pradesh), (ii) Dhuliyan (West Bengal), (iii) Kodarma (Jharkhand) and (iv) Mysore (Karnataka).

(b) and (c) Efforts are being made to open three more hospitals i.e. one each at Mukkudal in Tamilnadu, Sagar in Madhya Pradesh and Biharsharif in Bihar. An additional hospital has been sanctioned for Beedi Workers at Jhalda, Dist. Purulia, West Bengal. At present there is no proposal to open a new hospital in Sholapur district of Maharashtra. However, Labour Welfare Organisation is operating a Static dispensary at Sholapur for providing primary medical and health care to the beedi workers and their dependents.

Land Conservation

3893. SHRI V.K. THUMMAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the names of schemes being run regarding land conservation in the country, State-wise;

(b) the details of funds allocated, released and utilized for land conservation during each of the last three years, State-wise; and

(c) the targets fixed and success achieved by the Government under land conservation during each of 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 KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) to (c) Government of India, Ministry of Agriculture is implementing four Watershed Development Programmes/Schemes, namely, National Watershed Development Project for Rainfed Areas (NWDPA), Soil Conservation for Enhancing Productivity of Degraded lands in the Catchments of River Valley Project & Flood Prone River (RVP & FPR), Reclamation of Alkali Soils (RAS) and Watershed Development Project in Shifting Cultivation Areas (WDPSA) for development of degraded lands including soil & water conservation. The State-wise details of target and achievement, the fund allocated and utilized during each of last three years (2004-07) are given in Statement-I (A to D).

In addition to these, Ministry of Rural Development is also implementing three area development programmes, namely, Drought Prone Area Programme (DPAP), Desert Development Project (DDP) and Integrated Wasteland Development Project (IWDP) which also have a component of land conservation. During tenth plan an area of 183.14 lakh ha. was covered against the target of 181.00 lakh ha under these three programmes. The State-wise details of release of fund during each of last three years (2004-07) are given in Statement-II (A to C).

These Watershed Development Programmes have been found effective in conservation of degraded lands and sustaining agricultural production, besides helping in in-situ moisture conservation and ground water recharge in the watershed areas.

Statement-I A

Year-wise outlay and targets and physical & Financial Achievement under Programme of National Watershed Development Project for Rainfed Areas (NWDPA)

(Area in 000 hec. & Rs. in Lakh)

S. State No.		Years											
		2004-05				2005-06				2006-07 (Tentative)			
		Physical		Financial		Physical		Financial		Physical		Financial	
		Targets	Achievement	Outlay	Expenditure	Targets	Achievement	Outlay	Expenditure	Targets	Achievement	Outlay	Expenditure
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1	Andhra Pradesh	19.66	15.96	884.50	718.37	12.79	10.061	665.60	449.67	15.27	15.27	686.93	686.93

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
2	Arunachal Pradesh	4.99	3.11	299.00	184.93	8.04	8.055	368.55	482.47	9.09	9.09	547.75	547.75
3	Assam	2.57	0.51	135.13	45.00	15.40	3.18	750.00	135.13	10.83	10.83	700.00	700.00
4	Bihar	7.63	1.44	343.51	64.70	9.94	4.889	447.38	219.92	9.71	9.71	436.89	436.89
5	Jharkhand	17.38	12.98	1437.75	1244.31	46.30	43.68	1397.04	1136.93	42.30	42.30	1050.96	1050.96
6	Goa	3.50	2.11	191.40	97.78	5.00	5.32	260.00	202.55	7.00	7.00	400.00	400.00
7	Gujarat	67.50	34.73	2764.00	1536.15	24.00	23.25	919.44	918.10	40.00	40.00	1800.00	1800.00
8	Haryana	3.61	2.04	122.30	117.59	3.69	3.483	180.00	165.93	6.82	6.82	257.00	257.00
9	Himachal Pradesh	4.09	4.01	300.00	274.40	3.26	5.144	352.18	277.75	9.71	9.71	373.96	373.96
10	Jammu and Kashmir	26.00	0.73	522.37	65.72	21.20	0	0.00	0.65	9.14	9.14	548.37	548.37
11	Karnataka	32.90	34.63	2479.39	1717.71	28.46	40.29	3077.66	2001.80	33.00	33.00	1700.00	1700.00
12	Kerala	19.57	15.84	1174.88	808.80	29.31	12.4	700.00	631.99	14.58	14.58	886.37	886.37
13	Madhya Pradesh	53.33	44.82	2400.00	1195.99	57.78	55.312	1546.87	2016.85	62.22	62.22	2800.00	2800.00
14	Chhattisgarh	39.21	18.68	1582.69	914.44	44.60	37.232	1060.33	1601.60	42.33	42.33	1350.00	1350.00
15	Maharashtra	55.58	33.39	2679.21	1609.34	29.05	29.033	1400.00	1395.39	29.88	29.88	1440.00	1440.00
16	Manipur	10.78	6.62	591.73	374.17	8.37	13.2	661.20	724.50	15.15	15.15	831.30	831.30
17	Mizoram	15.07	15.07	1087.40	1097.94	15.96	15.955	1131.00	981.00	19.57	19.57	819.50	819.50
18	Meghalaya	8.23	6.16	494.00	369.95	8.73	7.462	447.70	447.70	11.16	11.16	669.50	669.50
19	Nagaland	8.59	8.82	631.00	631.00	8.48	8.224	700.00	700.00	15.41	15.41	965.00	965.00
20	Orissa	37.16	9.47	1672.24	425.26	16.33	16.414	1231.31	828.89	28.89	28.89	1300.00	1300.00
21	Punjab	0.00	0.00	396.44	0.00	8.30	8.3	0.00	498.71	14.00	14.00	831.74	831.74
22	Rajasthan	83.50	81.71	3475.00	3401.61	124.16	111.57	3500.00	4878.96	141.83	141.83	7534.81	7534.81
23	Sikkim	5.41	4.20	262.08	265.46	3.71	3.156	203.35	203.35	3.98	3.98	230.32	230.32
24	Tamil Nadu	46.42	46.42	2069.06	2069.06	78.93	44.227	2060.16	1990.16	83.08	83.08	3738.70	3738.70
25	Tripura	5.84	5.84	344.36	336.45	6.25	6.313	375.00	314.56	7.98	7.98	380.11	380.11
26	Uttar Pradesh	34.00	34.22	1952.02	1950.96	65.12	65.128	1459.76	1760.74	65.16	65.16	1335.92	1335.92
27	Uttaranchal	24.73	25.77	1483.76	1785.22	19.21	21.698	1090.97	1148.88	22.50	22.50	1193.51	1193.51
28	West Bengal	12.33	4.10	504.71	184.39	2.94	14.16	686.78	637.20	15.36	15.36	794.13	794.13
29	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
30	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	1.08	0.82	64.77	51.01	1.10	0.48	30.50	28.92	0.84	0.84	51.00	51.00
Total		650.66	474.39	32364.70	23557.71	706.41	619.62	26724.78	26786.30	786.78	786.78	35653.77	35653.77

Statement-I B

Year wise outlay and targets and physical & financial achievement under Programme of Soil Conservation for Enhancing Productivity of Degraded Land in the Catchment of River Valley Project & Flood Prone River (RVP & FPR)

(Area in 000 hec. & Fig. Rs. in Lakh)

S. No.	State	Years											
		2004-05				2005-06				2006-07 (Tentative)			
		Physical		Financial		Physical		Financial		Physical		Financial	
		Targets	Achievement	Outlay	Expenditure	Targets	Achievement	Outlay	Expenditure	Targets	Achievement	Outlay	Expenditure
1	Andhra Pradesh	9.07	6.63	767.10	542.61	3.99	3.53	315.00	405.97	8.44	8.44	802.38	802.38
2	Arunachal Pradesh	0.28	0.02	25.50	5.67	0.55	0.85	78.33	38.690	0.90	0.90	126.50	126.50
3	Assam	1.23		60.00		2.80	1.02	100.00	47.91	1.50	1.50	150.00	150.00
4	Bihar	0.99		49.49		0.77	0.01	38.38	0.830	2.00	2.00	90.00	90.00
5	Chhattisgarh	3.63	2.15	111.22	119.68	3.00	3.97	400.00	179.36	5.184	5.184	789.05	789.05
6	Gujarat	11.01	13.32	867.00	1102.61	4.83	16.87	1244.44	1422.64	14.96	14.96	1184.78	1184.78
7	Haryana	5.07	4.20	150.00	178.20	4.00	2.68	180.00	164.73	4.000	4.000	180.00	180.00
8	Himachal Pradesh	4.25	3.83	676.62	627.27	4.67	4.85	746.24	759.01	7.550	7.550	1379.48	1379.48
9	Jharkhand*	2.77	9.66	391.00	1256.90	9.10	6.63	1000.00	900.47	12.58	12.58	1362.20	1362.20
10	Jammu and Kashmir**	34.24	18.09	3628.00	1512.98	22.55	22.07	2055.00	2091.87	38.91	38.91	3969.48	3969.48
11	Karnataka	19.18	21.77	800.00	816.68	26.61	27.08	1300.00	1082.51	30.00	30.00	1500.00	1500.00
12	Kerala	5.29	2.60	300.00	231.11	3.00	2.17	250.00	297.39	4.437	4.437	413.62	413.62
13	Madhya Pradesh	23.03	16.27	993.34	808.54	21.62	6.67	816.90	460.61	24.80	24.80	2757.99	2757.99
14	Maharashtra	12.99	16.75	700.00	879.92	8.80	13.64	1400.00	1400.24	18.600	18.600	3800.00	3800.00
15	Manipur	0.00		0.00					0	1.00	1.00	127.85	127.85
16	Meghalaya	0.17		15.00		6.00			0.00	0.40	0.40	40.00	40.00
17	Mizoram	0.72	0.79	132.28	99.85	2.68	2.24	234.50	294.50	3.324	3.324	336.00	336.00
18	Nagaland	0.67	2.56	60.00	174.00	6.49	2.26	150.00	120.00	3.00	3.00	300.00	300.00
19	Orissa	1.85	1.51	80.00	81.46	1.70	1.77	90.00	95.18	3.08	3.08	200.00	200.00
20	Punjab	0.80	0.00	40.00	0.00	0.66	2.12	53.00	78.57	1.800	1.800	106.70	106.70
21	Rajasthan	22.34	23.59	1700.00	1837.91	28.25	29.38	2000.55	2096.83	24.10	24.10	2026.85	2026.85
22	Sikkim	0.63	0.42	60.00	58.20	1.18	1.16	100.00	100.00	0.67	0.67	200.00	200.00
23	Tamil Nadu	4.79	5.97	700.00	627.52	8.56	7.41	800.00	831.95	7.700	7.700	900.00	900.00
24	Tripura	0.32	0.37	52.35	27.46	1.11	0.48	52.50	20.35	0.49	0.49	50.98	50.98
25	Uttar Pradesh	41.22	42.34	1690.00	2165.65	22.16	24.67	1821.30	1453.20	24.78	24.78	1923.00	1923.00
26	Uttaranchal	2.35	4.08	302.00	285.35	3.15	2.10	235.00	235.00	3.537	3.537	650.00	650.00
27	West Bengal	0.51	7.98	270.80	198.26	6.50	0.36	160.00	32.98	3.000	3.000	108.35	108.35
	Grand Total	209.40	204.93	14623.70	13644.05	200.73	186.38	15621.14	14610.79	250.73	250.73	25475.21	25475.21

Statement-I C

State-wise Physical and Financial Progress of Reclamation of Alkali Soils (RAS) during last three years of X Plan.

Phy. Area in lakh hec. & Fig. in Rs. lakh

S. No.	Name of State	2004-05				2005-06				2006-07			
		Physical		Financial		Physical		Financial		Physical		Financial	
		Targets	Achievement	Outlay	Expenditure	Targets	Achievement	Outlay	Expenditure	Targets	Achievement*	Outlay	Expenditure*
1	Andhra Pradesh	0.004	0.000	35.00	0.00	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.015	0.015	158.00	158.00
2	Bihar	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00
3	Gujarat	0.013	0.172	125.00	253.35	0.083	0.085	347.36	447.55	0.112	0.112	708.47	708.47
4	Haryana	0.120	0.104	200.00	200.00	0.100	0.132	200.00	280.00	0.170	0.170	400.00	400.00
5	Karnataka	0.007	0.006	71.00	71.00	0.050	0.006	89.00	73.15	0.010	0.010	133.33	133.33
6	Madhya Pradesh	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00
7	Maharashtra	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.002	0.000	40.00	0.00	0.010	0.010	100.00	100.00
8	Punjab	0.015	0.000	150.00	0.00	0.050	0.000	100.00	0.00	0.030	0.030	200.00	200.00
9	Rajasthan	0.014	0.051	137.00	50.97	0.120	0.031	170.00	86.36	0.010	0.010	293.00	293.00
10	Tamil Nadu	0.005	0.012	50.00	31.13	0.050	0.030	50.00	62.90	0.100	0.100	113.31	113.31
11	Uttar Pradesh	0.010	0.000	98.00	0.00	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00	0.008	0.008	10.00	10.00
Total		0.188	0.345	866.00	808.45	0.435	0.284	996.36	929.96	0.465	0.465	2116.11	2116.11

*Anticipated

Statement-I D

State-wise Target, Achievement, Outlay and Expenditure of Watershed Development Projects in Shifting Cultivation Areas (WDPSCA) during last three years of X Plan.

Phy. Area in lakh hec. & Fig. in Rs. lakh

S. No.	Name of State	2004-05				2005-06				2006-07 (Tentative)			
		Physical		Financial		Physical		Financial		Physical		Financial	
		Targets	Achievement	Outlay Rel.	Expenditure	Targets	Achievement	Outlay Rel.	Expenditure	Targets	Achievement	Outlay Rel.	Expenditure
1	Arunachal Pradesh	0.010	0.010	100.00	100.51	0.030	0.015	300.00	150.00	0.0350	0.0350	350.00	350.00
2	Assam	0.025	0.024	250.00	250.00	0.045	0.030	400.00	315.00	0.0550	0.0550	550.00	550.00
3	Manipur	0.020	0.026	200.00	250.00	0.040	0.035	350.00	350.00	0.0600	0.0600	600.00	600.00
4	Meghalaya	0.030	0.048	300.00	300.00	0.050	0.132	500.00	500.00	0.0550	0.0550	550.00	550.00
5	Mizoram	0.050	0.036	500.00	350.00	0.060	0.054	550.00	700.00	0.0550	0.0550	550.00	550.00
6	Nagaland	0.045	0.043	450.00	450.00	0.060	0.052	600.00	600.00	0.1050	0.1050	1050.00	1050.00
7	Tripura	0.020	0.023	200.00	226.74	0.030	0.030	300.00	300.61	0.0350	0.0350	350.00	350.00
Total		0.200	0.210	2000.00	1927.25	0.315	0.348	3000.00	2915.61	0.4000	0.4000	4000.00	4000.00

* Anticipated Out-outlay Rel-release

Statement-II A*Funds released under DPAP during the period 2004-05 to 2006-07*

(Rs. in lakhs)

S.No.	Name of District	Funds Released			
		2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	Total
1	Andhra Pradesh	968.625	968.625	1215	3152.25
2	Bihar	229.5	303.75	303.75	837
3	Chhattisgarh	391.5	455.625	472.5	1319.625
4	Gujarat	843.75	978.75	995.625	2818.125
5	Himachal Pradesh	135	158.625	158.625	452.25
6	Jammu and Kashmir	222.75	259.875	259.875	742.5
7	Jharkhand	675		479.25	1154.25
8	Karnataka	766.125	894.375	894.375	2554.875
9	Madhya Pradesh	1240.7625	1043.25	1123.875	3410.8875
10	Maharashtra	1022.625	1215	1471.5	3709.125
11	Orissa	3291.57	573.75	583.875	4449.195
12	Rajasthan	324	388.125	405	1117.125
13	Tamil Nadu	540	641.25	702	1883.25
14	Uttar Pradesh	540	320625	678.375	321843.375
15	West Bengal	243	270	270	783
16	Uttaranchal	303.75	354.375	245.25	903.375
	Total	11738	329133	10258.9	351130

Statement-II B*Funds Released under DDP during 2004-05 to 2006-07*

S.No.	Name of District	Funds Released			
		2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	Total
1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Andhra Pradesh	371.25	452.25	499.5	1323.00
2	Haryana	398.25	472.5	536.625	1407.38
3	Himachal Pradesh	128.25	155.25	162	445.50

1	2	3	4	5	6
4	Gujarat	1005.75	1248.75	1417.5	3672.00
5	Jammu and Kashmir	135	168.75	209.25	513.00
6	Karnataka	560.25	668.25	742.5	1971.00
7	Rajasthan	1495.125	1903.5	2163.375	5562.00
8	Rajasthan - Special Project	1306.125	1680.75	1930.5	4917.38
	Total	5400	6750	7661.25	19811.25

Statement-II C*Funds Released under IWDF during the period 2004-05 to 2006-2007*

(Rs. in lakhs)

S.No.	Name of District	Funds Released			Total
		2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	
1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Andhra Pradesh	2958.32	4046.95	3563.06	10568.33
2	Bihar	434.63	990.00	951.41	2376.04
3	Chhattisgarh	1723.96	2026.44	2295.67	6046.07
4	Delhi (CAPART)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
5	Goa	0.00	24.10	0.00	24.10
6	Gujarat	1072.40	2418.52	2713.08	6204.00
7	Haryana	512.40	594.32	547.99	1654.80
8	Himachal Pradesh	1345.22	2662.514	1822.549	5830.28
9	Jammu and Kashmir	422.915	1120.45	661.74	2205.11
10	Jharkhand	205.65	303.250	232.928	741.83
11	Karnataka	2466.935	2495.94	3206.49	8169.36
12	Kerala	159.70	778.17	260.05	1197.91
13	Maharashtra	1660.06	2051.93	2010.38	5722.37
14	Madhya Pradesh	2906.39	4898.63	3111.57	10916.59
15	Orissa	1457.37	2307.44	2062.00	5826.81
16	Punjab	193.88	302.87	350.80	847.55
17	Rajasthan	2121.18	2401.666	4276.320	8799.17
18	Tamil Nadu	2470.624	2600.44	2692.45	7763.52
19	Uttar Pradesh	1802.86	3222.78	4736.16	9761.80
20	Uttaranchal	1227.52	1688.02	1123.27	4038.81
21	West Bengal	156.90	464.57	627.18	1248.66
	Total	25299.00	37398.9948	37245.1099	99943.104

North Eastern States

1	Arunachal Pradesh	804.050	1061.365	2583.769	4449.18
2	Assam	3202.77	3373.90	3102.23	9678.90
3	Manipur	545.87	553.52	1634.93	2734.32

1	2	3	4	5	6
4	Meghalaya	194.38	804.01	1202.51	2200.91
5	Mizoram	974.03	1122.00	857.86	2953.88
6	Nagaland	1711.46	3886.19	1098.17	6695.82
7	Sikkim	324.27	165.55	274.95	764.77
8	Tripura	386.63	303.48	538.08	1233.19
	Total of NE	8143.47	11275.0052	11292.50	30710.973
	Total of IWDP	33442.467	48674.000	48537.609	130654.077

[English]

Coastal Plantation Projects

3894. SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATEL:

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY:

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

(a) whether the Government has implemented the Coastal Shelter Belt Plantation Projects in various States;

(b) if so, the details of the area covered under the said projects;

(c) the funds sanctioned and allocated to various States during the Tenth Plan period;

(d) the extent to which the objectives of such projects has been achieved; and

(e) the cases of non-utilisation of funds reported thereunder alongwith the remedial measures taken/proposed in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) Yes Sir, the Coastal Shelter Belt Plantation projects have been implemented during 9th Five year Plan in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala, Orissa, Pondicherry, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal under the Integrated Afforestation and Eco-Development Project Scheme (IAEPS) of the Ministry of Environment and Forests. During 10th Plan only maintenance cost for the plantation raised during 9th Plan is being provided. An area of 14,530 ha has been covered under Coastal Shelter Belt Plantations.

(c) Statement indicating the financial allocation and amount released is given below:

S.No.	State	Allocation for 9th & 10th Plans	Amount released		
			9th Plan	10th Plan	Total
1.	Andhra Pradesh	472.44	184.96	0.00	184.96
2.	Gujarat	618.93	415.00	203.93	618.93
3.	Karnataka	55.58	42.65	0	42.65
4.	Kerala	408.59	264.85	0	264.85
5.	Orissa	1922.61	607.25	989.51	1596.76
6.	Pondicherry	90.32	20.12	0	20.12
7.	Tamil Nadu	412.40	184.55	103.82	288.17
8.	West Bengal	30.02	23.82	0	23.82
	Total	4010.89	1743.20	1297.06	3040.26

(d) The Coastal Shelterbelt Plantation projects envisaged protection of the hinterland from high winds

and prevention of soil erosion as their principal objectives. These objectives have been largely served.

(e) No such instance has been reported to the Ministry.

Payment of Additional Bonus to Farmers

3895. SARDAR SUKHDEV SINGH LIBRA:
SHRI SUKHDEV SINGH DHINDSA:
SHRI HANSRAJ G. AHIR:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has received any request for payment of additional bonus to the farmers to compensate than for the lower yield of crops;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto indicating the quantum of bonus demanded and that proposed to be paid by the Government, Crop-wise;

(c) the number of farmers likely to be benefited therefrom, State-wise;

(d) whether there have also been requests for the merger of additional bonus with Minimum Support Price for procurement of food crops particularly wheat; and

(e) if so, the details thereof alongwith 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 (e) Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Kerala, Orissa, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal had requested for extension of period of applicability of incentive bonus for paddy beyond 31.3.2007. Punjab had requested bonus for wheat crop to be marketed in 2007-08.

An additional incentive bonus of Rs.40 per quintal over and above the Minimum Support Price (MSP) of Rs.580 per quintal for Common variety, and Rs.610 per quintal for Grade A variety of paddy was payable on their procurement during 2006-07 between 01.10.2006 to 31.3.2007. Its applicability has been extended upto 31.05.2007 in case of Bihar & Kerala. In case of Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Orissa, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal the same has been extended upto 30.09.2007. For wheat, the Government has announced, in March 2007, the payment of incentive bonus of Rs.100 per quintal on procurement of wheat over and above the MSP of Rs.750 per quintal during the marketing season 2007-08.

[Translation]

Special Agriculture Zones

3896. SHRI HANSRAJ G. AHIR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is contemplating to set up Special Agriculture Zones (SAZs) on the lines of Special Economic Zones (SEZs);

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government has allocated the amount for the implementation of the special agriculture zone project; 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, Sir. There is no proposal under consideration to set up Special Agriculture Zones on the lines of Special Economic Zones.

[English]

Decline in Foodgrain Production

3897. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the production of foodgrains has declined in North East Region considerably;

(b) if so, the average rate of production recorded during each of the last three years, grain-wise and State-wise;

(c) whether the Government has identified the reasons for the downward trend in the production rate;

(d) if so, the details thereof alongwith the action taken by the Government to enhance the production of foodgrains; and

(e) the extent of support price being provided item-wise and quantity of foodgrain procured by the Government during last three years in the region?

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) Table below shows the changes in production of foodgrains in

the States of North East Region during 2003-04, 2004-05 and 2005-06:

State	Production ('000 Tonnes)		
	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Arunachal Pradesh	244.1	226.9	240.9
Assam	4035.0	3618.2	3677.8
Manipur	391.9	447.8	398.5
Meghalaya	233.8	225.2	183.1
Mizoram	139.4	124.6	129.8
Nagaland	409.8	403.5	424.8
Tripura	529.1	556.4	563.6

(b) The State-wise and grain-wise rate (yield) of production during the years 2003-04 to 2005-06 is given in the enclosed Statement.

(c) and (d) Deficient rainfall, unfriendly weather, lack of irrigation facilities, shifting cultivation, soil erosion, floods and lack of hybrid seeds have been responsible for the downward trend in the production. In order to increase the production of cereals in the country, including North East Region, Centrally Sponsored Schemes "Integrated Cereals Development Programme in Rice Based Cropping Systems Areas (ICDP-Rice), Wheat Based Cropping Systems Areas (ICDP-Wheat) and Coarse Cereals Based Cropping Systems Areas (ICDP-Coarse Cereals)" are in place since October 2000. Under the scheme, assistances are provided for propagation of improved/hybrid production technology, integrated pest management, transfer of technology, farm implements, installation of sprinkler irrigation system, varietal replacement and production of certified seeds.

For pulses, a Centrally Sponsored Scheme "Integrated Scheme of Oilseeds, Pulses, Oil Palm and Maize" (ISOPOM) is under implementation since 01.04.2004. Under this scheme, assistance is provided for production of breeder/foundation/certified seeds, crash programme for quality seed production, distribution of certified seed, and Minikits, infrastructure development and integrated Pest Management.

(e) In the foodgrains, only Rice has been procured during 2003-04 to 2005-06 in Assam and Nagaland among the States of the Region. Procurement of Rice of 17 thousand tonnes in 2003-04, less than 500 tonnes in 2004-05 and 1 thousand tonne in 2005-06 was done in Assam. In Nagaland 11 thousand tonnes of rice was procured in 2004-05. Table below shows the item-wise Minimum Support Price (MSP) announced by the Government for the marketing season 2006-07:

(Rs. per Quintal)			
Crop	MSP (2006-07)	Crop	MSP (2006-07)
Paddy Common	580*	Ragi	540
Paddy Grade 'A'	610*	Barley	565
Wheat	750**	Tur	1410
Jowar Hybrid	540	Gram	1445
Jowar Maldandi	555	Moong	1520
Bajra	540	Urad	1520
Maize	540	Masur (lentil)	1545

* An additional bonus of Rs. 40 per quintal is payable on procurement between 01.10.2006 to 31.03.2007.

** An additional incentive bonus of Rs. 100 per quintal is payable on wheat.

Statement

*State-wise and Grain-wise rate of production (yield)
from 2003-04 to 2005-06*

State	Rice			Wheat			Coarse Cereals			Total Pulses			Total Foodgrains		
	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Arunachal Pradesh	1297	1110	1195	1500	2023	1525	1245	1269	1241	1088	1046	1078	1277	1178	1212
Assam	1534	1480	1468	1043	1066	1074	643	662	659	557	571	537	1472	1405	1416
Manipur	2416	2472	2322	NG	NG	NG	3261	2781	2724	508	380	523	2355	2390	2241

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Meghalaya	1830	1737	1508	1667	1778	1714	1434	1349	1347	745	1385	750	1733	1674	1455
Mizoram	1926	1900	1778	NG	NG	NG	1933	2093	1940	865	1297	1215	1854	1888	1754
Nagaland	1600	1698	1682	2000	1585	1583	1690	1675	1612	1000	797	1281	1561	1577	1615
Tripura	2173	2247	2260	4250	2545	2636	1300	1071	1000	619	618	629	2121	2179	2194

NG: Not Grown

Uniform Prices of Drugs

3898. SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATEL:

SHRI UDAY SINGH:

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY:

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government's efforts to introduce Uniforms Prices of Drugs throughout the country has resulted in higher drug prices as reported in the Times of India' dated March 31, 2007;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and the reaction of the Government thereon; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken for implementation of Uniform Drug Pricing in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) to (c) Vide S.O. No. 946(E) dated the 26th June, 2006, the Maximum Retail Price (MRP) of medicines inclusive of all local taxes has been made effective from the 2nd October, 2006. The batches manufactured after 2nd October, 2006 are required to carry the MRP inclusive of all taxes. However for imported formulations, MRP inclusive of all taxes has been made applicable w.e.f. 1-3-2007.

Price impact in respect of Scheduled formulations due to introduction of MRP inclusive of all taxes is about 0.45% only taking into account 4% VAT and 40% abatement on MRP for calculation of excise duty. After the increase in abatement rate from 40% to 42.5% in January, 2007 for calculation of excise duty, the price impact of 0.45% due to introduction of MRP inclusive of all taxes will be neutralized.

The 74 bulk drugs specified in the First Schedule of the Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 1995 (DPCO, 95) and the formulations based thereon are under price control

and their prices are fixed/revised by the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) in accordance with the provisions of the DPCO, 95. These drugs have been kept under price control on the basis of criteria mentioned in 'Modifications in Drug Policy, 1986', announced in September, 1994. The price fixation/revision of the Scheduled Drugs and formulations is a continuous process under DPCO, 95.

Prices of non-Scheduled formulations are fixed by the manufacturers themselves keeping in view the various factors like cost of production, marketing/selling expenses, R&D expenses, trade commission, market competition, product innovation, product quality etc. The Government takes corrective measures where the public interest is found to be adversely affected.

The monitoring of prices of non-scheduled formulations is currently on the basis of data from ORG IMS.

Companies are short listed where there is an increase in price of a non-scheduled formulation by more than 20% (10% since January, 2007) in one year and the annual turnover of the formulation pack exceeds Rs.1 crore. Further, the share of the formulator in that segment of the formulation is required to be at least 20% (10% since January, 2007) of the market or the medicine is one of the top 3 selling brands of that group. The criteria, namely, high turnover and 20% (10% since January, 2007) price increase are designed to identify cases of mass consumption and to meet the requirement of 'public interest', referred to in para 10(b) of the DPCO, 1995.

Monitoring of prices of non-Scheduled formulations is an ongoing exercise undertaken by the NPPA. Recently, this Department/NPPA has issued orders for reduction in the prices of 14 formulations by 0.50% to 24.54%. Now the NPPA has been authorized to take up such cases itself and reduce prices to the permissible level, if necessary. In case a company fails to adhere to the price so fixed by the NPPA, a case of overcharging will be processed against that company by NPPA.

[Translation]

Hybrid Varieties

3899. SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL:

SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the hybrid varieties of grains, cash crops, species, fruits, vegetables, pulses and oilseeds developed under the National Agriculture Research System during each of the last three years, product-wise;

(b) the details of the funds sanctioned, released and utilized during the each of the last three years;

(c) whether any foreign aid/financial assistance is provided for the purpose during the said period; and

(d) if so, the details thereof, 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 (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) A number of hybrids have been developed in cereals, cash crops, spices, fruits, vegetables, pulses and oilseeds under National Agricultural Research System. The details are given in the enclosed Statement.

(b) to (d) Funds released to the various ICAR Institutes/ Directorates/ National Research Centres/All India Coordinated Research Projects are partly used for development of hybrids also in various crops. A specific Project on "Development of hybrid Crops" under National Agricultural Technology Project (NATP) was in operation where a sum of Rs. 328.78 lakhs was incurred during 2004-05, specifically for development of hybrids in nine crops viz. Rice, Maize, Pearl Millet, Sorghum, Pigeonpea, Cotton, Sunflower, Castor and Rapeseed Mustard. This project was in operation during 1997-2005 where total expenditure of Rs. 2135.11 lakhs was made.

Statement

Hybrids developed in various crops during last three years (2004-06)

S.No.	Name of the Crop	No. of hybrids
1	2	3
I. Cereals		
1.	Rice	12
2.	Maize	17

1	2	3
3.	Sorghum	3
4.	Pearl Millet	10
II. Cash Crops		
5.	Cotton	8
III. Fruits		
6.	Ber	1
IV. Vegetables		
7.	Potato	6
8.	Tomato	2
9.	Brinjal	2
10.	Chilli	4
11.	Sweet Pepper	1
12.	Okara	2
13.	Cucumber	1
14.	Cauliflower	1
15.	Cabbage	1
V. Spices		
16.	Black Pepper	2
17.	Small cardamom	1
VI. Pulses		
18.	Pigeonpea	1
VII. Oilseeds		
19.	Sunflower	5
20.	Safflower	2
21.	Castor	2

[English]

Japanese Loan for Environmental Projects

3900. SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Japan has offered soft loan for environmental projects;

(b) if so, the details thereof including the terms and conditions therefor;

(c) the details of projects identified, State-wise; and

(d) the time by which these projects are likely to be implemented/completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) to (d) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Procedure for Sale of Elephants

3901. SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATEL: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether various States have requested the Union Government to simplify the procedure for sale of elephants;

(b) if so, the details in this regard; and

(c) the action taken by the Union Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Some States like Assam, Bihar, Kerala and Union Territory of Andaman & Nicobar Islands have requested the Central Government to make necessary amendments in the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 for relaxing the prohibition on sale of domesticated live elephants. The matter is under consideration.

12.01 hrs.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table a copy of the Outcome Budget (Hindi and English versions) of the Ministry of Labour and Employment for the year 2007-2008.

[Placed in Library, See No. L.T. 6234/07]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): Sir, 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 619 A of the Companies Act, 1956:-

(a) (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Madras Fertilizers Limited, Chennai, for the year 2005-2006.

(ii) Annual Report of the Madras Fertilizers Limited, Chennai, for the year 2005-2006, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon & Reasons for delay.

[Placed in Library, See No. L.T. 6235/07]

(b) (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Fertilizer Corporation of India Limited, New Delhi, for the year 2005-2006.

(ii) Annual Report of the Fertilizer Corporation of India Limited, New Delhi, for the year 2005-2006, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon and Reasons for delay.

[Placed in Library, See No. L.T. 6236/07]

(c) (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Pyrites, Phosphates and Chemicals Limited, Rohtas, for the year 2005-2006.

(ii) Annual Report of the Pyrites, Phosphates and Chemicals Limited, Rohtas, for the year 2005-2006, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon & Reasons for delay.

[Placed in Library, See No. L.T. 6237/07]

(d) (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Projects and Development India Limited, Noida, for the year 2005-2006.

(ii) Annual Report of the Projects and Development India Limited, Noida, for the year 2005-2006, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon & Reasons for delay.

[Placed in Library, See No. L.T. 6238/07]

(e) (i) Review by the Government of the working of the FCI Aravali Gypsum and Minerals India Limited, Jodhpur, for the year 2005-2006.

- (ii) Annual Report of the FCI Aravali Gypsum and Minerals India Limited, Jodhpur, for the year 2005-2006, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.
- (2) Five statements (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. L.T. 6239/07]

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): Sir, on behalf of my colleague, Shri Kanti Lal Bhuria, I beg to lay on the Table:

- (1) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the National Cooperative Development Corporation, New Delhi, for the year 2005-2006.
- (ii) A copy of the Annual Accounts (Hindi and English versions) of the National Cooperative Development Corporation, New Delhi, for the year 2005-2006, together with Audit Report thereon.
- (iii) A copy of the Annual Accounts (Hindi and English versions) of the National Cooperative Development Corporation (Employees Provident Fund), New Delhi, for the year 2005-2006, together with Audit Report thereon.
- (iv) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the National Cooperative Development Corporation, New Delhi, for the year 2005-2006.
- (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. 6240/07]

- (3) A copy each of the following papers (Hindi and English versions) under section 619 A of the Companies Act, 1956:
 - (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Madhya Pradesh State Agro Industries

Development Corporation Limited, Bhopal, for the year 2003-2004.

- (ii) Annual Report of the Madhya Pradesh State Agro Industries Development Corporation Limited, Bhopal, for the year 2003-2004, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.
- (4) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (3) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. L.T. 6241/07]

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): Sir, 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 2005-2006, along with 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 2005-2006.
- (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. 6242/07]

- (3) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Voice Society, New Delhi, for the year 2005-2006, along with 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 2005-2006.
- (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. 6243/07]

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table:

- (1) A copy of the Notification No. S.O. 513 (E) (Hindi and English versions) published in Gazette of India dated the 3rd April, 2007 relating to utilisation/disposal of fly ash, issued under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.

[Placed in Library, See No. L.T. 6244/07]

- (2) A copy of the Notification No. S.O. 253 (E) (Hindi and English versions) published in Gazette of India dated the 19th February, 2007, making certain amendments in the Notification No. S.O. 489 (E) dated the 30th April, 2003, issued under section 3 of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.

[Placed in Library, See No. L.T. 6245/07]

- (3) A copy each of the following papers (Hindi and English versions) under sub-section (1) of section 619 A of the Companies Act, 1956:

- (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands Forest and Plantation Development Corporation Limited, Port Blair, for the year 2005-2006.

- (ii) Annual Report of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands Forest and Plantation Development Corporation Limited, Port Blair, for the year 2005-2006, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

- (4) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (3) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. L.T. 6246/07]

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): Sir, 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 619 A of the Companies Act, 1956:

- (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Hindustan Vegetable Oils Corporation Limited, New Delhi, for the year 2001-2002.

- (ii) Annual Report of the Hindustan Vegetable Oils Corporation Limited, New Delhi, for the year 2001-2002, along with 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. 6247/07]

- (3) A copy of the Sugar Development Fund (Amendment) Rules, 2007 (Hindi and English versions) published in Notification No. G.S.R. 188 (E) in Gazette of India dated the 9th March, 2007, under sub-section (3) of section 9 of the Sugar Development Fund Act, 1982.

[Placed in Library, See No. L.T. 6248/07]

12.03½ hrs.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

- (I) **Successful Launch of Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV-C 8) on April 23, 2007**

[English]

*THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN): Sir, I am happy to inform this august House about the launch of India's Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle, PSLV-C8 on Monday, April 23, 2007 from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota. This mission launched the AGILE satellite of the Italian Space Agency and an Advanced Avionics Module (AAM) of ISRO.

This is the first time that a PSLV Mission has carried and placed in orbit a commercial primary satellite belonging to an international party. Along with the Italian satellite, the PSLV-C8 also carried the AAM module consisting of next generation avionic packages. The current PSLV-C8, without the use of six solid strap on motors, is the first flight of the PSLV with such a configuration and has been developed so as to provide for lower satellite launch mass requirements, in a cost effective manner.

PSLV has emerged as the workhorse launch vehicle

*[Placed in Library, See No. L.T. 6249/07]

of ISRO with ten consecutively successful flights so far. This PSLV-C8 mission has demonstrated its reliability and versatility to launch satellites in various types of orbits as well as to carry out multiple satellite missions.

I am sure this House will join me in congratulating the entire ISRO team involved in the realization and management of this mission.

MR. SPEAKER: I am sure the hon. Minister will convey the feelings, the great appreciation and pride that this House has for the achievement of our scientists. We compliment them on behalf of the House. I am sure all sides of the House will join me in thanking them.

12.04 hrs.

- (II) **Correcting reply to Unstarred Question No. 2795 dated 19th March, 2007 regarding 'Relocation of villages from Sariska Reserve' alongwith the reasons for delay**

[English]

*THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): Sir, this is regarding the reply given on March 19, 2007 to Unstarred Question No. 2795 by hon. Member of Parliament Shri Madan Lal Sharma regarding 'Relocation of villages in Sariska Reserve' during the Budget Session 2007. The error in the answer to parts (e) and (f) of the said Question were pointed out by the hon. Member of Parliament and necessary action to correct them was initiated immediately. Due to adjournment of the Budget Session, a notice of the intension to make correcting the reply given in the said Question could not be submitted. Now, a notice of the intention to make a statement correcting the reply given in the said Question during the Budget Session on April 30, 2007, i.e. the day allotted in Lok Sabha for Questions relating to Group II of Department/ Ministries wherein the Ministry of Environment and Forests is included, is moved. The corrected version of the reply is given as under:

(e) & (f) As informed by the State, the hon. High Court of Rajasthan has constituted a fact finding Committee to report on the closure of State Highway No. 13. The said Committee has recommended for diversion of traffic in the highway from Kushalgarh to Jaipur via Ghatabandrol, where an alternate road exists. The matter is subjudiced.

*[Placed in Library, See No. L.T. 6250/07]

12.05 hrs.

RE: NOTICE OF QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: No question arises on this; there are other methods.

SHRI ARJUN SETHI (Bhadrak): I have given earlier a Privilege notice.

MR. SPEAKER: Can you raise anything without taking my consent? Well, just wait.

SHRI ARJUN SETHI: With due honour to the Chair, I have submitted earlier in writing. That is why I raised the question. When I raised the matter on the floor of the House, you were kind enough to observe that you will certainly examine the matter and let me know after getting the answer from the concerned Minister; the Minister of Human Resource Development.

MR. SPEAKER: I have disallowed that matter. It will be intimated to you. You cannot raise a question on my decision; you cannot question it.

SHRI ARJUN SETHI: I do not question your decision. This is the difficulty. Is it possible that one Minister says that it will be done; another Minister says that unless they get approval from the competent authority it cannot be done? The senior Minister, hon. Shri Arjun Singh has assured me that the Central School at Bhadrak — it is a matured proposal — will be sanctioned soon. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I have asked them to inform you about the reasons.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: It is very unfortunate. I can only express my great sorrow.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI ARJUN SETHI: The hon. Minister says unless we get approval of the authority, we cannot do that. Is it proper that senior hon. Minister says something positive and. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: With all humility I say it is not proper for you, knowing the decision - everything has been communicated - to raise the question again. Then there is no finality of any decision. There has to be finality. If you do not agree with me, you have got other course.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI ARJUN SETHI: I am sorry; you perhaps understood me. I am not questioning your decision. I honour you. My request to the hon. Chair is that if we are the hon. Members of Parliament. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: You could have written me; you could have met me instead of making it controversial issue here.

SHRI ARJUN SETHI: I have given it in writing.

MR. SPEAKER: Arjun ji, I earnestly request you to cooperate.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Kindly allow me to speak one sentence. It is because it came from you; such a senior and responsible Member, I again, second time, saw to it. I find it is not admissible. I can assure you that I have no intention of protecting anybody.

You may raise it as a different matter and not as a privilege issue. You may raise it as a different matter and I will consider it.

SHRI ARJUN SETHI: Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: I have decided and I have communicated. You are always welcome to come and see me.

12.08 hrs.

SUBMISSION BY MEMBERS

Re: Reported derogatory remarks made by a Union Minister, (Dr. Raghuvansh Prasad Singh) against Chief Minister of Bihar

[Translation]

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH (Maharajganj, Bihar): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to raise a serious matter.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: May I make a submission to all the hon. Members? I do not know whether it is correctly reported; nobody can support it. The Minister is here. Mr. Minister, would you like to respond on this question?

[Translation]

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, let me have my say. I do not want to utter even a single word that

would hurt the feelings of any person. Ours is a federal system with democratically elected Governments at the Centre and the state having clearly demarcated jurisdiction for each for exercise of their respective powers. But contrary to this on his visit to Bihar, a particular Union Minister's attitude is at variance with his stature. For example at times he says that the funds belong to the Centre. Sir, it is the State's share that the Centre provides. The Centre does not give any loans to the States. Further he says that the amount is not being spent. Sir, the situation becomes worse when a Union Minister goes to the extent of announcing that he would take the Chief Minister of the State, Shri Nitish Kumar, to task and adds that the latter would be removed. Mr. Speaker, Sir, this creates an atmosphere of tension in the state and hinders the development works. It further leads to the possibilities of acrimony between the Centre and the State. Such things were said by none other than the Union Rural Development Minister, Shri Raghuvansh Prasad Singh. It was highlighted by the electronic as well as the print media. When the media asked him again, Raghuvansh Prasad Singh ji said he stood by his statement. And that he would not spare him. The media wrote 'Nitish ki jeebh khichne ki baat par Raghuvansh Kayam'.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I have requested the Minister to come here today.

[Translation]

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, my submission is that. ...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I am not protecting. I am trying to protect each other's dignity, everybody's dignity.

[Translation]

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: Sir, either the Union Minister should apologize to the nation, through the House or the Prime Minister should dismiss such a Minister. It does not behave of a Union Minister to abuse the Chief Minister of a State, nor of the MLAs and the Minister of the State concerned that they should abuse the Union Minister. ...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Syed Shahnawaz Hussain and Shri Rajiv Ranjan Singh 'Lalan' are associating with this.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN (Balasore): Sir, please allow Shri Syed Shahnawaz Hussain to speak on this.
...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Syed Shahnawaz Hussain, I have mentioned your name also.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI SYED SHAHNAWAJ HUSSAIN (Bhagalpur): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I do not want to say anything contrary. Shri Nitish Kumar ji represents nine crore people of Bihar. He is the icon of Bihar. ... (Interruptions)

THE MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH): Since they have raised the Question, let them listen to the answer also.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing more will be recorded except the Minister's statement.

...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Syed Shahnawaz Hussain, please cooperate. You are also saying the same thing. You are a very able person.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Rajiv Ranjan Singh 'Lalan', your name has already been recorded.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing more will be recorded.

...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing more is being recorded. I would not allow this. It is not a debate. I have allowed it because

[Translation]

it is a big issue.

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, hon. Prabhunath Singh ji has raised a good question. The main issue raised by him is about the centre-state relations. What is the responsibility of the Chief Minister,

*Not recorded.

Ministers and other functionaries of the State and the ministers and other functionaries of the Union Government, should be understood, and fulfilled by all concerned.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, for the purpose of converting 980 kilometer long road of national highway into four lane, the Union Government. ... (Interruptions) Listen to me. ... (Interruptions) Listen to me first, you are reading out newspaper reports but are not listening to me. ... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Tempers do not help. Please sit down.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Shrimati Kiranji, please sit down.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I have already made an observation. The whole country is watching us. Shri Prabhunath Singh, you have raised serious objection about certain observations which appeared to have been made, as you say by an hon. Minister at the Centre. I have said that if it is correct, probably some explanation can be given.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN: He is not giving. ... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Just listen to him. He is entitled to get respect. As Shri Nitish Kumar, who is a very respected leader of this country, entitled to get respect, he is also entitled to get respect.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA (South Delhi): Please tell the House whether the hon. Minister has stated this or not?

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: Shall I have to give him the reply? Shri Prabhunath Singh ji has raised the question; I will give reply to his question only.
...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: You cannot dictate. Nobody can dictate.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

KUNWAR DEVENDRA SINGH YADAV (Etah): Sir, your orders are being violated. ...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: You have no patience. Please listen to the hon. Minister.

[Translation]

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: Sir, they do not want to listen the truth. Shri Lalu Prasad Yadav and Shri Balu ji together took the decision to convert the 980 km. road of N.H. in Bihar into four lane. This proposal came before the Cabinet in December. ...(Interruptions)

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: What is he saying?

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: It came to the Cabinet in December. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please do not beat about the bush.

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: Sir, the road was sanctioned with a fund of Rs. 8000 crore and the expenditure of Rs. 8 crore per kilometer seemed to be exorbitant, so it was delayed. Recently, it has been passed in the month of April. In the mean time from December to April, the Chief Minister, the Deputy Chief Minister and the Minister of Road Transport of the State made statements umpteen times that the Minister of the Union Government is hampering it. There is no place for such an incoherent and irresponsible statement aimed at misguiding the people in this parliamentary system. Whenever I go to Patna. ...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: But Mr. Minister, whatever may be the provocation. I am sure you would agree such a language may be avoided. Therefore, I am sure, you would withdraw those words.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: Sir, I have to

make one more submission. The Chief Minister and the Minister of any State have every right to doubt the bonafides of a union minister and say things against the State that. ...(Interruptions) Money is sent by the Centre but it is not being utilised. This is not in the interest of the people of Bihar. They are being cheated. ...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: But that language may have been avoided.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: Therefore, Sir, how can one react to the question which has been raised in the newspapers; hence rustic dictum was used. There are dicta in Hindi related to many parts of the body like hands, ears, nose and teeth. They should not go by the words but understand the intent but these people do not understand. People say in rural areas "Juban band kar dunga, dant khatte kar dunga, dhool chata dunga" all these are idioms. Doubt was raised about the intention of the Union Minister, but money being sent from here is not being spent. ...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Therefore, you are withdrawing those words.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: Not only this, the government of Bihar did not accept money from region grant fund. Bihar could not get Rs. 540 crore. This move was not in the interest of Bihar. Keeping in view the interests of the people, I cannot tolerate this, so. ...(Interruptions)

12.18 hrs.

(At this stage Shri Ashok Pradhan and some other hon. Members came and stood on the floor near the Table)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Go back to your seats.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, please go back to your seats.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: Listen please. Please come back. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Go back to your seats.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I have already expressed my views.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: He is an efficient Minister. I am sure; he did not mean those words physically.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, he is withdrawing those words. He has withdrawn those words. Kindly go back to your seats.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I am treating them as withdrawn.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: You withdraw those words. Okay, those words have been treated as withdrawn.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Those words have been withdrawn.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I am recording them as withdrawn.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: May I appeal to you? You have sufficiently expressed your views. I have also made some observation. I am sure he does not wish to reiterate that and I treat it that he has withdrawn it.

[Translation]

You say you have withdrawn.

...(Interruptions)

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: How can I say like that, let them take their seats first. I have not yet concluded. ...(Interruptions) Let them take their seats first. Sir, I will obey your orders. But let them take their seats. ...(Interruptions) How can I speak in this situation. ...(Interruptions)

They are behaving in an un-parliamentary manner. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please go to your seats.

[English]

Please go to your seats. Where are your leaders?

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: I will give reply to them from here itself. ...(Interruptions)

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV (Jhunjharpur): They are unable to understand the meaning of the idiom. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Let him speak. Please go to your seats.

12.21 hrs.

(At this stage Shri Ashok Pradhan and some other hon. Members went back to their seats)

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Let him speak. How will he be able to speak in such a situation? Honourable members will take their seats only then he will be able to speak. Please you take your seats.

[English]

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: Sir, he should withdraw the remarks.

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: You must listen to what he is saying. Sumitra Ji. Please sit down.

[English]

Let us listen to what he says.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: You take your seats, leave it, what is going on. You have said sorry.

SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN' (Begusaral): He is telling an idiom instead of saying sorry. ...*(Interruptions)*

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: Sir, the hon. member Shri Prabhunath Singhji has raised a question about observation. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Please take your seats. What is going on? Please take your seats.

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: Hon. member, Shri Prabhunath Singh raised a question about some observation in the newspapers and media. You have allowed me to respond to his queries. I am ready to respond to his queries. I have yet to conclude my speech but I do not know what these hon. members want to say in between. There is the procedure that if a member raises any question, he should be given proper response. You have allowed me to give response to the query and I was speaking about its background that what is happening. The interests of the people of Bihar are being harmed. The funds released by the centre are not being spent. ...*(Interruptions)* The Government of Bihar could not obtain the amount of Rs. 540 crores from Backward Region Grant Fund and the amount of Rs. 900 crore for National Development Fund was not spent and yet, whenever anything is said in the interest of Bihar then. ...*(Interruptions)*

12.23 hrs.

(At this stage Shri Ashok Pradhan and some other hon. Members came and stood on the floor near the Table)

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: When something is uttered in the interest of Bihar, they make such comments that it is a union minister who is hampering it. ...*(Interruptions)* Sir, you have the power to expunge. So whatever statements are unparliamentary, may be expunged. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: It has been expunged, he has asked me to expunge the remarks.

[English]

He has said that. He is withdrawing that.

...*(Interruptions)*

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI): Sir, he himself said that anything that he had said derogatory may be expunged.

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Malhotra, you may speak.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: He told that he withdrew it. He himself expunged it.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: What will I do? I have already told him.

[English]

He has expunged it.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I have expressed my view. I do not approve of the use of such language. I have said that. He said whatever has been said that has been expunged.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I can only appeal to all the hon. leaders to see that the House continues and functions. You are going to raise an important issue. I want to do that.

.. *(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: What has got to be expunged? ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

Sir, you made an observation that he should withdraw these words. He only, simply said it may be expunged. ...*(Interruptions)* He made a statement outside. You ask him to withdraw it. ...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: It is called as expunged in English.

...*(Interruptions)*

12.26 hrs.

(At this stage Shri Ashok Pradhan and some other hon. Member went back to their seats)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Prof. Vijay Kumar Malhotra to speak on your issue.

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Malhotra, you may speak.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I said these words are not part of record.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: Which part of the statement should be expunged?

[English]

If he does not withdraw, what to do? ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Instead of the word 'withdraw' he said 'expunge'.

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: From where will it be expunged?

MR. SPEAKER: From his earlier statement.

[Translation]

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: Sir, when you have observed that such language should not be used, he must withdraw these words. What is the problem in it? ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: He has already said it. He has said 'expunge' in place of 'withdraw'.

...(Interruptions)

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: I withdraw the idiom which I used here that hurt them. ...(Interruptions) but these people cheat Bihar, what to do about that. This should also be considered. ...(Interruptions) The people of Bihar are being cheated and the funds are not being spent. ...(Interruptions) and *... this should also be considered. ...(Interruptions) We are ready to do everything in the interest of the people of Bihar. We have done everything and will do so further. I announce this in the House. The UPA Government is extending full support to the States so that the poor may get their due rights, respect and work and make progress so that Bihar may get rid of backwardness. We will work for that but these people are

* Expunged as ordered by the Chair.

bringing curse to Bihar. ...(Interruptions) NDA is cheating the State. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: All right. This is over.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN' : What happened during the last 15 years? ...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Rajiv Ranjan Singh 'Lalan', please take your seat.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Lalan, the matter is over now.

[English]

The matter is over.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please allow the House function. We have to discuss the Finance Bill which is such an important matter.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, unabated violence has once again erupted in Nandigram yesterday. Three people were killed there. ...* ...(Interruptions) The situation is very fluid there. ...*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: This is not the way to function.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Prof. Malhotra, please do not raise any State matter.

...(Interruptions)

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: Sir, civil war is going on there. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I will not allow further.

...(Interruptions)

* Expunged as ordered by the Chair.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (Hooghly): Sir, what is this? How can he speak on State matter? ...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: Sir, 24 people have been killed there and after killing of 24 people there. ...* ...*(Interruptions)* situation is very tense there. ...*(Interruptions)*

MD. SALIM (Kolkata, North-East): Mr. Speaker, Sir, he is levelling a baseless allegation. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: You have said your bit. Please conclude.

...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: We would like the hon. Leader of the House to make a statement. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: No, this is not the way.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Please have some mercy on the Chair.

...*(Interruptions)*

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: Let the hon. Leader of the House respond. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Please have some mercy for the Chair.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: You have mentioned these points. It is a State matter. Even then, because of your feelings I allowed you.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Then, every State matter will be raised. Every law and order in every State will be raised from tomorrow.

...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA (South Delhi): Sir, situation is rather bad there. A civil war like situation is

* Expunged as ordered by the Chair.

prevailing there. ...*(Interruptions)* ...** the people of Minority Community are being killed ...*(Interruptions)* The Government must give a statement in this regard. ...*(Interruptions)*

MD. SALIM: Mr. Speaker, Sir, he is levelling false allegations. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Kindly take your seat.

...*(Interruptions)*

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: Will the centre intervene there or not?

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing more will be recorded on this.

...*(Interruptions)**

MR. SPEAKER: This is a State matter. Since you felt very much concerned, I allowed it.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI GURUDAS DASGUPTA (Panskura): Sir, I am on a point of order. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Only Shrimati Rupatai D. Patil's statement should be recorded.

...*(Interruptions)**

12.30 hrs.

(At this stage, Prof Vijay Kumar Malhotra and some other hon Members left the House.)

MR. SPEAKER: Not a single word should be recorded.

...*(Interruptions)**

SHRI GURUDAS DASGUPTA: Sir, I am on a point of order. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: There is no business before the House. Hence, there cannot be any point of order.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI GURUDAS DASGUPTA: Sir, I am submitting very respectfully that Parliament cannot discuss law and order situation prevailing in a particular State of the country.

** Expunged as ordered by the Chair.

* Not recorded.

Therefore, it should be expunged. ...*(Interruptions)* Sir, it must be expunged. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I will look into it and I will decide about it. Please bring it to me.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Not a single word will be recorded.

...*(Interruptions)**

MR. SPEAKER: I am not making any comment on it. The point to be taken into account is whether it can be raised, and where.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Shrimati Rupatai D. Patil, do you wish to complete your submission? I had called her name, but she went out of the House as a loyal Member.

...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRIMATI RUPATAI D. PATIL (Latur): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am grateful to you for giving me an opportunity to speak on this important matter. There are no Kendriya Vidyalayas in certain states of the country particularly in several Districts of Maharashtra, due to which the children of middle class families living there are being deprived of quality education. I would like to make a special mention of my Distt. Latur as I represent this Distt. Latur Distt in Maharashtra is leading in the field of education since upper class families can afford the expenses of educating their children in private schools which may impart quality education but the middle and lower class families are not able to provide good education to their children as they do not have sufficient resources to get their children enrolled in private schools. Kendriya Vidyalaya is the only option where their children can get quality education.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Government have done injustice with Latur by not setting up Kendriya Vidyalayas there. The Government issues two coupons to each member of parliament to enable the member to get two children enrolled in Kendriya Vidyalayas falling in his constituency and the coupons have been issued for the current year also for the places where there are Kendriya Vidyalayas. I would like to know from the Government as to why provisions cannot be made to pave way for the children of those middle and lower class families who are either living in such areas where there are no Kendriya Vidyalayas or are settled in big cities like Pune, Aurangabad and Mumbai and can not afford to educate their children

in private schools to get enrolled in the Kendriya Vidyalayas of neighbouring districts. I would like to urge the hon. Minister of Human Resources Development, Shri Arjun Singh, to relax the rules to enable the members of Parliament to get two students enrolled in any of the Kendriya Vidyalaya of the country. In addition, he should make an announcement to the effect of opening Kendriya Vidyalayas in my Constituency, Latur. Latur is the constituency which was once represented by the former Speaker, Lok Sabha and the present Home Minister, Shri Shivraj Patil and the present Chief Minister of Maharashtra Shri Vilas Deshmukh also represents that area. Hence, I would like to urge upon the hon. Minister of Human Resources Development, Shri Arjun Singh, to make an announcement in the current session itself regarding opening up of a Kendriya Vidyalaya in my Constituency, Latur. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Has this work regarding your constituency assumed a national importance?

SHRIMATI RUPATAI D. PATIL: My only demand is that two coupons may be issued for Latur. I would also like to state that whenever I raise an important issue, you start ringing the bell. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I seek your apologies. I offer you my seat to discharge my duties. You better ask Sumitra ji, how difficult it is when you occupy this chair? Please do not get angry. I seek your apologies.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Think of a person who is being punched from left, right and centre. What to do?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Not from the Left! ...*(Interruptions)*

12.35 hrs.

- (ii) **Re: Need to fill up posts of various functionaries lying vacant in the National Commission for Scheduled Castes at the earliest.**

[Translation]

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN (Firozabad): Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Government of India set up the National Commission for Scheduled castes and Scheduled Tribes in 1992 keeping in view the problems faced by the Scheduled castes and Scheduled Tribes and atrocities being perpetrated on them in the country. Sometime back it was bifurcated into National Commission for Scheduled Castes and National Commission for Scheduled Tribes.

* Not recorded

Under Article 338 of the Constitution, the powers of a civil court were conferred on this commission to protect the people of weaker sections from the atrocities committed on them. Mr. Speaker, Sir, presently at least 40000 complaints are lying unattended gathering dust in the office of this Commission. There is no separate budget for this Commission. I would like to mention an important thing in this regard that the chairman of this Commission, Shri Suraj Bhan passed away on 6 August, 2006 and term of this Commission expired on 5 February, 2007. Mr. Speaker, Sir, presently, the Commission has no chairman, Deputy Chairman or a member. This Commission has virtually become non-functional and for around last two months the office of the Commission has been lying closed. This Government has not been able to set up a new Commission so far. One chairman, one Deputy Chairman and three members are to be appointed in the said Commission. A large number of complaints regarding the problems of weaker sections are pending in the office of the Commission. There is neither any law officer nor any senior officer of the police there. Altogether the Commission has outlived its utility. I charge this Government that it is not concerned at all about the problems of 'Dalits' and weaker sections. This is not a matter where consultation with the national parties or legal opinion of the experts is required. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: At least allow him to conclude.

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Government itself has to do the nomination of members of the Commission. The Government has not been able to nominate the members of this Commission. This Commission has lost its significance. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: It is enough, I am sorry, I have to review the time for raising important matters.

...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is a constitutional body. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Everyone must sit down. It is becoming limitless. You are there not to dictate to anybody.

[Translation]

SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN (Khurja): I would also like to associate myself with him.

MR. SPEAKER: We have a process for that. Send your names. It would go in the record. You are interrupting.

[English]

I think I will have to appeal to the Leaders. Are we really utilizing this hour for really raising important issues or not? You have agreed with me that only five nationally important matters will be raised. Now, from State matters, also constituency matter, everything is being raised. I am being abused that I am not allowing Members to speak. There is a limit to this.

[Translation]

SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I associate myself with the issue of revamping of National Commission for Scheduled Castes raised by hon. Ramji Lal Suman ji.

[English]

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI): Through you, I would like to inform the House a very important matter. The Government under the leadership of Dr. Manmohan Singh, the Prime Minister attaches the greatest importance to the UPA programmes and policies, the conditions of the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes, weaker sections and the Minorities. This is a wing which is fully a constitutional body. In March, 2007, almost the entire process has been worked out by the desk of the Ministry. Since it is a constitutional matter, some follow up matters are required to be carried out. I want to confidently inform the House that this matter will be resolved within a week. Cabinet is also addressing the issue and I have been given the assurance by the concerned Ministry that very soon we are composing the full body, consisting of Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Members and others. Technical procedures and the constitutional arrangements of the system are being followed up. It is not an ad-hoc appointment of the Government; it is a constitutional appointment. Therefore, parameters - as to how it appears and how it goes - have to be followed up. Therefore, I would like to say that it would be done very soon. Hopefully, it will be done before the end of this Session. We would be coming back to the full Scheduled Castes Commission as the Constitution desires and as per the provisions of the Constitutions. Therefore, there is no confusion about it. So far as the second allegation that law officer is not there and works are not being done. I would like to say that it is not correct. I would like to inform the House that all the works pertaining to the Scheduled Castes issues and grievances are being addressed on a day to day basis by the Government.

12.40 hrs.

(iii) Re: Reported constitution of a commission by Central Government to review the Centre State relations

[English]

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN (Chirayinkil): Sir, I rise to raise an important constitutional matter. It has been reported in the Press that the Government of India had recently appointed a Commission with the former Chief Justice as its Chairman and Shri Madhav Menon as its Secretary, for reviewing certain issues concerning the functioning of the Constitution. It has been specifically ruled in the Keshavanand Bharti case that federalism and separation of powers are the basic features of the Constitution. This decision has been upheld by the Nine-Member Bench recently also. That decision has even constrained the position of Parliament.

MR. SPEAKER: What is your point?

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: That being so, can the Executive appoint a Commission to review the basic features of the Constitution? It has been decided that the Central Paramilitary forces can be sent to any State without its consent. This is clearly a law and order matter and it is clearly a State subject.

MR. SPEAKER: But this Committee is to review the Centre-State relations. You are asking questions which are not relevant.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: Is the Central Government competent to appoint a Commission to review the matter concerning Centre-State? ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Krishnadas, please sit down; it has become a bad habit to stand up always.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: Sir, it is a federal matter; it is the basic feature of the Constitution. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Okay. You have raised it.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: It cannot be reviewed. So, I request the Government to review that decision of the Government. The Government has no power to do it. ...*(Interruptions)*

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: Sir, it is a very important matter and we should discuss. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I agree with you. Let a proper notice

come; certainly we will do it. I have allowed him to raise the matter.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN: Sir, the Government has no power to interfere with that. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI K. FRANCIS GEORGE (Idukki): Sir, the Government of India had announced the setting up of a Commission to examine and to re-define the Centre-State relations. In fact, I welcome that step. Why? The first Commission in this regard was headed by Justice Sarkaria, 20 years back. Many developments have taken place in this country after that, politically and economically, and also in matters relating to the internal security. So, it is only a right step that we examine the Centre-State relations. But the point is in the way it was done. There is something lacking there, in the sense that this kind of a Commission should have been set up after proper consultations with the States.

MR. SPEAKER: Very well. You welcome the appointment of the Commission, but you do not like the method.

SHRI K. FRANCIS GEORGE: The terms of reference as reported in the Press is that it adds to the powers of the Centre, which are very vital issues concerning the States. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Please conclude.

SHRI K. FRANCIS GEORGE: Let me conclude.

They are very vital issues concerning the States.

MR. SPEAKER: Everything is vital. Your personal issues are vital; your constituency matters are vital; everything is vital.

SHRI K. FRANCIS GEORGE: There are important matters like sharing the Central assistance, transfer of Centrally-sponsored schemes, etc.

MR. SPEAKER: No, sorry; nothing more will be allowed.

SHRI K. FRANCIS GEORGE: No commitments have been made in the National Common Minimum Programme.

So, I would request the Government to have wider consultations with the Chief Ministers through the forum of NDC and then only finalize it. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Anwar Hussain.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Okay; please sit down. I have called another hon. Member. When I call the next hon. Member, you should sit down. Please sit down. Shri Hussain.

SHRI ANWAR HUSSAIN (Dhubri): Sir, I thank you for giving me the opportunity to raise a very important matter.

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL): Sir, I want to say something.

MR. SPEAKER: Okay.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: Sir, a very important issue has been raised by the hon. Members in the House. This matter was discussed between the UPA partners and a decision has been taken.

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: Sir, it is not the question of UPA partners. The whole House is concerned about this. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Yes, I agree certainly with your suggestion.

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: If he wanted to discuss it, he should have discussed it with all the leaders of the House. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I have already agreed to allow a discussion, as you have suggested. Please give a notice and we shall have it.

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: It would have been better if a regular notice would have been given and a right opportunity would have been given. But I would like to bring to the notice of the hon. Members of the House that the Sarkaria Commission was appointed; it gave a report. That report was discussed in the Inter-State Council meeting.

The recommendations of the Inter-State Council were discussed in the Cabinet and decisions have been taken. This Committee is going to discuss different issues. Commission is not going to come to any conclusions without discussing with the Chief Ministers and other concerned parties, as mentioned earlier. It will take a long time. The Chief Ministers and Party Leaders will be involved in the discussion. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Interrupting the hon. Minister without the permission of the Chair and without the Minister yielding is a very bad habit. Anything can be done in this House! Please take your seat.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: At least hear me what I am saying. As is suggested by the hon. Member, all concerned will be consulted. Then the outside people, the jurists, the judges, the lawyers, administrators and social workers will also be consulted. After that the Report will be given. That Report is not directly going to be the law of the country. It has to be considered, as we did with respect to the Sarkaria Commission in the Inter-State Council. In the Inter-State Council, there are Chief Ministers coming from other States. After that if any decision is taken, it will be considered by the Government. If any change has to be made after that, that can be made only with consultation. This was something which was suggested by many people. In deference to their suggestions this has been done. At this stage, let us not comment on this issue without going into the details because if we comment on this issue without going into the details without referring to the Terms of Reference and other things carefully, misunderstanding may develop which should not develop. I am willing to discuss this issue with the hon. Members privately, in the House or anywhere in detail but please do not make comments on this. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I thought it was obvious. For appointment there is no necessity to consult.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: This Report will definitely come to the Parliament. ...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV: Sir, I have also given a notice. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: What can I do? You have to wait for it. Everybody cannot speak together. I have received notices from 23 hon. Members. Should I call all 23 Members together?

SHRI ANWAR HUSSAIN: I would like to raise a very important issue. It is regarding price hike in North-eastern region. While the nation is fully concerned with the price hike the Central Government must not take any direct or indirect step by which price hike is promoted. In North-eastern region the Railway Department has directly or indirectly done two such things. I would like to mention those two things here.

In the first place there was an exemption of six per cent on the railway freight for North-eastern region. It has been withdrawn by the Railway Department. Secondly,

Sir, though this year freight charge has not been increased but it has increased indirectly due to gradation or classification of goods. This has resulted in 11 per cent increase in the freight charges. I would urge upon the Central Government to withdraw 11 per cent hike, as also the classification and allow the North-eastern States to enjoy six per cent exemption on the Railway freight.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI KIRAN MAHESHWARI (Udaipur): MR. Speaker, Sir, I am grateful to you for giving me an opportunity to speak. I would like to draw the attention of the Government towards a very important issue.

Under the prime ministership of hon. Atal Bihari Vajpayee ji, the NDA Government made the LPG cooking gas distribution system so easy that gas cylinder was easily available. At that time, rural women also started cooking food on gas stoves instead of 'kachha chulha'. Rural people living in nearby towns used to pick LPG Cooking gas from the towns for cooking their food. Today I would like to draw your attention towards the scarcity of gas cylinders because of which even women living in cities are also not able to get gas cylinders. The situation is such that the cylinder of Rs.300 which is its authorized price is being black marketed for Rs.600/- to Rs.700/- in metros. In the capital also, the gas cylinder is being sold for Rs.600/-, 650/- & 700/-.

Mr. Speaker, Sir through you, I would like to know whether the Government intend to find out the way to meet this shortage of gas and put a check on its black marketing? With that whether the Government plan to allot LPG gas agencies in the rural areas also so that rural women could also get the LPG gas. Is the Government focussing on it? Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the Government towards it through you.

SHRI DUSHYANT SINGH (Jhalawar): I associate myself with the issue raised by Kiran Maheshwari ji.

[English]

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU (Srikakulam): Mr. Speaker, Sir, this is a matter of urgent public importance. Forty-two lakh people depend on the bidi industry and in Andhra Pradesh alone, 10 lakh women are working in the bidi industry. The Government of India, in its notification GSR No.402/E dated 5.7.2006 of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare prescribed the warning to be displayed covering half of the labels that the bidi products contain skull, bones and also corpus. This is a labour intensive trade. There is a serious agitation going on all over the

State. The Constituency of Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmuni is also having this problem. The notification will be implemented from 1st June onwards. The bidi workers are committing suicide in Medak and Karimnagar districts of Andhra Pradesh. On 11th December, the Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly passed a unanimous resolution requesting the Government of India to withdraw the notification and protect poor bidi workers. An all party delegation including Shri Chandrababu Naidu under the leadership of Shri Rajsekhar Reddy met the hon. Prime Minister and requested him to withdraw the notification which is meanwhile put in abeyance. The agitations are going on throughout the State. The hon. Minister for Parliamentary Affairs is here.

MR. SPEAKER: So what?

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU: Sir, he knows the problem. Therefore, he has to put some influence on the Ministry of Health to withdraw the notification. Otherwise, 42 lakh bidi workers will suffer.

MR. SPEAKER: He is reminded of the problem.

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU: Sir, in West Bengal also, there are bidi workers.

MR. SPEAKER: Just because bidi workers are there in West Bengal also, should I give you special favour?

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing more will be recorded. I seek cooperation from all sides.

...(Interruptions)*

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (Hooghly): Sir, today, the women from different parts of the country have assembled outside Parliament pressing for the demand for 33 per cent reservation for women which has been pending for quite some time. The Government has promised several times on the floor of this House that the UPA will bring this legislation and pass it. At least, on the recommendation that was made by the previous Committee, let the Bill come and the different sections of the House respond so that the people of this country know what is what.

Women have come from different parts of the country. Therefore, the Government should consider it and they should bring a Bill as early as possible. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: All are associating themselves with this matter. You send your slips.

* Not recorded.

SHRI A. KRISHNASWAMY (Sriperumbudur): Sir, on behalf of DMK Party, I associate myself with the matter raised by Shri Rupchand Pal regarding 33 per cent reservation for women.

MR. SPEAKER: Dr. Arun Kumar Sarma – Not present.

Dr. Babu Rao Mediyam – Not present

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing else to be recorded.

...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Why should he respond immediately?

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: You insist on an answer and it does not suit you. Therefore, you want the House should stand adjourned for the sake of sorting it out.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing is being recorded. Why are you saying all this? Only Dr. Babu Rao Mediyam's observation will be recorded.

...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: The best way to deal with you is to make you a Minister.

...(Interruptions)

DR. BABU RAO MEDIYAM (Bhadrachalam): Sir, I would like to put forward the following point for favourable consideration by the Ministry of Rural Development. With the onset of summer, there is an acute scarcity of drinking water in the tribal areas of Andhra Pradesh. People there are not able to get even a glass of drinking water. Usually, their sources of drinking water were streams and water tanks. But those sources of water have got dried up owing to scorching rays of the Sun.

So, I would like to request the Ministry to take up the gravitation schemes that are pending with the Ministry for a very long time now. Bore wells should also be provided in those areas to offset this crisis of drinking areas and also there should be an effort made to improve upon the existing water sources in those areas.

MR. SPEAKER: The matter is over. So, there is no need.

* Not recorded.

Shri Devendra Prasad Yadav. The best way to deal with you is to bring you here.

[Translation]

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV: We are being given time in the end.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: It is because I know what will happen immediately.

[Translation]

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the Government towards a very important issue. The Government have set up Panchchhi Commission. ... (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Please do not mention any State.

[Translation]

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV: The Central Government have set up Panchchhi Commission to assess the situation in the States where fake encounters or the killings of innocent people, take place. A central team could be directly sent to those states after reviewing the situation. Whether a Central agency could be authorized to investigate into such incidents because whenever a CBI enquiry is conducted, permission of the concerned state has to be sought. But in a particular State, such incident making target the innocent people of minorities took place only when a national leader stated that the network of Lashkar-e-Toiba was expanding. What was all this? This is a very dangerous aspect. The finger was raised towards the 20-25 crore minority population the country. The secular and peace-loving minority people of India are unnecessarily being targeted by linking them with various terrorists outfits. They are being attacked and killed in fake encounters. The country is facing a tough time. And, Panchchhi Commission would submit its report in two years.

I would like to submit that the terms and conditions laid down by the Central Government that constitutional amendment should be brought under Section 353 of the Constitution before two years by which the Central Government may be conferred such power, if in case there is a threat to secular set up of the country, if secular principles of Preamble of Constitution of India are being threatened, that the Government may intervene in those

particular situation and fight the fundamentalist elements. The influence of Naxalites have been increasing in 14 States in recent times. If network of fundamentalist elements will spread in more and more places, the crores of minority people will feel insecure and scared, Gujarat has faced the same situation recently. Three IPS officers have been arrested there. If the court would have not interfered, the truth would have never come out. I, therefore, request the Government through you. ...*(Interruptions)*

MD. SALIM (Calcutta-North East): Immolated. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV: Immolated and the sequence of event started as well. This should be stopped so that crores of people of minorities living in an atmosphere of terror may come out of it, democratic system and secularism may prevail in the country. ...*(Interruptions)*

DR. SHAFIUR RAHMAN BARQ (Moradabad): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I totally support the proposal put forth by Shri Devendra Prasad Yadav and like to submit that an immediate attention should be paid on it. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SANDEEP DIKSHIT (East Delhi): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I associate myself with the issue raised by Shri Devendra Prasad Yadav.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: If any hon. Member wants to associate with this, he may send their names. Other matters would be taken up at the end of the day.

There will be no luncheon recess today.

The House would now take up item no. 11.

12.59 hrs.

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Matters under Rule 377 are treated as laid on the Table of the House.

- (I) **Need to open a vocational Training Institute in district Gumla, Jharkhand.**

[Translation]

DR. RAMESHWAR ORAON (Lohardaga): Sir, Jharkhand's 27 percent population belongs to Scheduled Tribes. There is shortage of employment opportunities in these

* Treated as laid on the Table.

tribal areas. Therefore, people migrate to other States in search of work. Creation of employment opportunities is necessary to stop migration. Vocational training is essential for it. Scheduled Tribes dominated districts of Jharkhand have no vocational training institute.

Hence, I would request the Government of India to open a vocational training institute in Gumla district which has the largest population of tribals.

- (II) **Need to divert few Express trains via New Guntur Station, Andhra Pradesh**

[English]

SHRI RAYAPATI SAMBASIVA RAO (Guntur): Sir, I would like to bring to the kind attention of the Hon'ble Railway Minister, through you, for diversion of the following trains through New Guntur Station: Garib-rath proposed to be run between New Delhi-Chennai be diverted via New Guntur;

Navajeevan Express between Ahmedabad and Chennai;

Seshadri Express between Kakinada and Bangalore;

Pinakini Express between Vijayawada and Chennai;

Jana Shatabdhi Express between Vijayawada and Chennai;

Tamil Nadu Express between Chennai and New Delhi;

Kerala Express between Trivandrum and New Delhi;

Janmabhumi Express between Tenali and Visakhapatnam;

Simhapuri Express between Secunderabad and Gundur (Via Nalgonda-Nadikudi-Guntur);

Ratnachal Express between Vijayawada and Visakhapatnam;

Tirupati-Chirala Passenger train to be extended to Guntur;

There is also a demand for rescheduling of Repalle-Secunderabad Delta Fast Passenger to its earlier timings, as it was found inconvenient for the passengers for whom this was meant.

I hope the Hon'ble Minister for Railways would consider the genuine requests of the railway passengers taking into consideration the benefits it is likely to accrue to them.

- (III) **Need to provide railway connectivity on Aligarh-Palwal-Ahwar route.**

[Translation]

SHRI AVTAR SINGH BHADANA (Faridabad): Sir, in my parliamentary constituency, Faridabad the people of

Mewat have been demanding to lay Aligarh-Palwal-Alwar railway line via Mewat, convert Palwal station into a junction and construct an underpass at old Faridabad crossing. On the occasion of inauguration of Rahimpur Bridge about 25 years ago late Prime Minister Shri Morarji Desai, in 1989 Shri Bansilal and in 1997 during the Mewat visit Shri Deve Gowda had promised to get this railway line laid. A survey in this regard was also conducted 13 years ago. I myself had raised this issue in Parliament in 1991. Mewat in Faridabad is very close to Delhi and still it is very backward. It does not even have proper roads. This railway line will facilitate rapid economic development of Mewat.

So, I request the Minister of Railways to direct the Ministry of Railways to take action immediately to fulfil these three demands of people of Mewat.

During the last one year, I had written 5 times about the problems being faced by daily passengers in my constituency and demanded to extend Delhi-Palwal shuttle upto Kosi but this work has not been completed till date. I would request the hon. Minister to get this work completed.

(iv) Need to take steps to construct an over-bridge at Udyog Nagar railway crossing on Amrell-Lathi Road, Amrell, Gujarat.

SHRI V.K. THUMMAR (Amrell): Sir, in my parliamentary constituency Amrell there is a railway crossing at Lathi Road, which is also a road to Ahmedabad from Amrell. Udyog Nagar is located near this crossing which has various industrial units. Often there is traffic jam at this railway crossing and vehicles get lined up there as a result movement of traffic is far from smooth at this railway crossing.

So, through the House I would request the Government to take action immediately to construct an over bridge at Udyog Nagar railway crossing on Amrell Lathi Road.

(v) Need to provide reservation to OBCs under central quota seats in State-run medical colleges

[English]

DR. KARAN SINGH YADAV (Alwar): Central Pre-medical Test (CPMT) of Central Pre Postgraduate Entrance Tests (Pre P.G.) are conducted by CBSE of AIIMS respectively at all India level on behalf of Central Government.

Seats at undergraduate as well as postgraduate level

are reserved under central quota in all the State Government medical colleges. The admission in these Central Quota seats are done from merit list of CPMT and Pre-PG test in General Category and also on reserved seats for ST & SC.

So far there is no reservation for OBC students in the Central seats of various State Government run medical colleges. I would request Human Resource Development Minister of Health to ensure 27% reservation for OBC category students under Central Quota of CPMT and Central Pre-PG entrance seats.

(vi) Need to start work on Erode-Palani via Dharampuram New Railway Scheme

SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN (Palani): In my Palani Parliamentary Constituency, the towns of Palani, Kangayam, Sivanmalai and Sennimalai are abodes of Lord Karthik and another town in between the above towns is Dharapuram an ancient historic town. The places Kangayam, Sennimalai are famous for textiles, rice mills, oil mills and milk products and have a large number of Export Oriented Industries.

After assumption of UPA Government in Centre in 2004, I raised the issue of connecting Erode to Palani via Dharapuram by a train route during the discussion on Railway Budget 2004-05 and also wrote a number of letters to Hon'ble Railway Minister. After much persuasion, Hon'ble Railway Minister announced the Erode-Palani via Dharapuram New Railway scheme for Survey in the Railway Budget 2005-06 and allocated funds for survey. The survey was conducted by the Southern Railway authorities and a report also submitted to Railway Board on 30.11.2006.

I now request the Railway Ministry to approve the survey report and take up this New Railway BG line between Erode-Palani via Dharapuram on priority basis and allocate necessary funds so that the work can be started immediately.

(vii) Need to provide adequate wages and other social security benefits to Beedi workers of Bhandara and Gondia districts in Maharashtra.

[Translation]

SHRI SHISHUPAL N. PATLE (Bhandara): Sir, Beedi manufacturing is done on a large scale in Bhandara and Gondia districts of Vidharbha region in Maharashtra. At present 2 lakh workers are engaged in Beedi manufacturing but only 10,000 Beedi workers have been issued

cards as a result no. P.F. is being deducted from the wages of remaining workers and they are being deprived of health facilities and pension and their children are being denied scholarships. Not only this only Rs. 19 are being paid to them instead of Rs. 59 for manufacturing 1000 Beedi. In this way these workers are being exploited. So, I would request the Government to conduct an enquiry in this regard to stop exploitation of workers by company owners.

- (viii) Need to provide a special Central assistance to the landless agricultural workers of Nawarangpur Parliamentary Constituency, Orissa, with a view to check their migration from the region in search of jobs**

[English]

SHRI PARSURAM MAJHI (Nowrangpur): The tribals in Nawarangpur Parliamentary Constituency, Orissa are facing a major livelihood crisis. Most of them are migrating to other states in search of job. The main reason of their migration is not far to seek. The agricultural workers get job hardly for 130 days in a year. There are three lakh agricultural workers and 2.5 lakh marginal farmers in my Constituency who get income generation jobs hardly for 130 days in a year. Apart from them about 50 per cent of tribals including Kondhas, Paraja's, Shatras and Gonds are landless labourers who have not been able to get (pattas) records of rights from the Government. Also, 40 percent of the marginal tribal farmers own less than 1 acre of land which they are not able to cultivate due to poor irrigation facilities. Poverty is also a stumbling block in cultivating their land. Being landless most of them are not able to get loan from the bank.

Under the circumstances, I demand that the farmers of Nawarangpur Parliamentary Constituency may be sanctioned special Central assistance for cultivating of the land. The banks should extend loan to them at low rate of interest. A Central scheme be sponsored for providing jobs to the landless people throughout the year. I demand the Government of India to make all out efforts to stop migration of the people of these district.

- (ix) Need to take steps to disengage teachers from non-teaching works under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan in Rajasthan.**

[Translation]

SHRI DHAN SINGH RAWAT (Banswara): Sir, teaching has to come to a halt in schools in Rajasthan. Teachers

have been entrusted the responsibility of construction work of classroom under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. Teachers are busy in construction works. They are not worried about the future of these students and their only concern is the ongoing construction work. Teaching is no longer their priority as a result the future of students is in peril. In these circumstances continue to prevail then this would result in debilitation of the educational infrastructure of our country.

I would like to draw the attention of the honourable Minister of Human Resource Development towards this important issue of public interest and request him to assign the responsibility of construction works to Panchayati Raj Department or any other Department.

- (x) Need to undertake steps for providing road connectivity linking all the administrative centre in Arunachal Pradesh**

[English]

SHRI KIREN RIJU (Arunachal West): Arunachal Pradesh is the largest state in the North East and situated in the strategically most sensitive location which is bound by Burma in the East, China in the North and Bhutan in the West. The road connectivity in the state is the lowest in the country and more than 70% area is still without road linkages. The local people in the border areas still walk for several days to reach their nearest administrative centres in very difficult and inhospitable topography. There is also long pending demand of the state to construct East West highway connecting all the district head quarters.

I would like to request the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways to undertake immediate steps to connect at least all the administrative centres in the State of Arunachal Pradesh and provide necessary funds for immediate completion of widening of Defence road from Tezpur to Tawang which is maintained by BRO.

- (xi) Need to fill up the posts lying vacant in paramilitary forces.**

[Translation]

SHRI KRISHNA MURARI MOGHE (Khargone): Sir, the incidents of suicides and killing of officers by soldiers due to tension have been continuously increasing in paramilitary forces in the last few years. The Union Government is spending crores of rupees on its efforts to lessen this tension among the soldiers by adopting methods like Yoga, meditation, laughing therapy and counselling but no attention is being paid towards the root cause of the problem. Shortage of soldiers is the main reason for mental

tension among soldiers. Tension among soldiers is increasing because they are unable to meet their families for months. As a result they either commit suicide or shoot their officers. The figure regarding such incidents are 55 in 2002, 64 in the year 2003, 52 in 2004, 65 in 2005, and 84 in 2006. The soldiers are in such a small number in para-military forces that they are compelled to be on duty for long hours as a result resentment brews among them. Central Reserve Police Force has the maximum number of vacant posts i.e. 28 thousand 4 hundred posts are lying vacant there. Same is the case with CISF, ITBP, BSF, SSB and Assam Rifles. Almost seven to nine thousand posts are lying vacant in all these forces. Considering the fact that the country is at present grappling with Maoism and Naxalism, the Government should fill up these vacancies as early as possible so that the problem of Naxalism could be solved and the soldiers might be saved from being a prey to tension.

(xii) Need to expedite the completion of Railway Over Bridges in Kerala

[English]

SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN (Kasargod): I would like to draw the attention of the Railway Minister to the construction of Railway Over Bridges in the State of Kerala. The construction work of Railway Over Bridge are progressing slowly and also in some pending in many places. Even in national Highway, there is no progress at all. This creates hardship to the people, in many places the State Government has completed the work but the Railway Ministry has made no progress and the Ministry is not taking any initiative to complete the work. The funds allotted in the Budget for this purpose are also inadequate to complete these works. The undue delay in completing the ROB would cause huge loss and also accidents at many level crossing points cannot be ruled out. This is a matter of serious concern.

Therefore, I urge upon the Government to take concrete steps, in this regard and the implement time-bound programme construction work of ROB.

(xiii) Need to take steps to transfer the land owned by M/s Burn Standard Company Ltd at Lal Kothi & Raniganj, West Bengal, to the State Government

SHRI BANSAGOPAL CHOUDHURY (Asansol): I would like to draw the attention of the House to a very important matter. In July, 2001, State Government of West Bengal had requested for handing over the land held by

M/s Burn Standard Company Ltd. (BSCL) at Lalkothi and Raniganj works in West Bengal to the Industrial workers co-operatives formed by the ex employees of the BSCL. An assurance to this effect was also made in the context of a reply furnished to a Lok Sabha Question during the Winter Session of Parliament in 2003.

All necessary papers and documents including updated economically viable scheme for revival, as desired, have also been furnished to the Government of India by the State Government of West Bengal, at the very beginning of this year. However, there has been undue delay in the process. Also, valuable plants & machinery is getting rusted and eroded with the passing of each day. I, therefore, urge upon the central Government to take necessary steps and transfer the land to the State Government.

(xiv) Need to review the decision to allow cent percent Foreign Direct Investment in higher education Sector.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN (Firozabad): Sir, the Government has made up its mind to allow 100 percent investment for Foreign Universities in the country. The Government has failed to check the growth and functioning of fake Universities in the country. Lakhs of students getting degree from these universities have failed to achieve their goals and it is certainly not in interest of the country to allow hundred per cent foreign investment for foreign universities in the country.

As of now 144 Foreign Universities, colleges and Institutes are running in the country out of which 117 are teaching their own country's syllabus for which no mechanism has been developed by the Government so far to control them. In such a situation how would the Government propose to allow hundred per cent foreign investment for Foreign Universities which will not be in the interest of the country at all.

One thing is clear from the above decision that this investment will definitely wide the gap between the poor and the rich as the education in these foreign Universities will become unaffordable for poor people. These universities will view everything from a commercial angle. In such a situation they would fix the admission fee keeping into account their benefits and other interest which is likely to make it impossible for a poor person to take admission in these Universities.

Therefore, I would like to request the Government to

take any decision on the above issue only after holding an extensive debate on this issue.

(xv) Need to provide special Central relief package to victims of fire accidents in Samastipur, Bihar

SHRI ALOK KUMAR MEHTA (Samastipur): Sir, a few days back thousands of homes were gutted by fire incidence in Bihar. In Sarairanjan, Mohanpur and Kalyanpur blocks of Samastipur district alone 1600 houses caught fire and were burnt completely. All these homes were reduced to ashes. Four people died in the fire but the local administration made only inadequate arrangements. Even if relief was made available according to the present provisions then also it would not have been sufficient. In such a situation 1600 families have lost everything and have nothing left. For their survival there is nothing except for a few pieces of burnt clothes on their body. I would like to urge the Union Government to provide additional special relief package in addition to the existing provisions to these families.

(xvi) Need to provide sufficient financial assistance for excavation and preservation of Buddhist monasteries at Mogulmari PS-Dantan of district-Paschim Medinipur, West Bengal

[English]

SHRI PRABODH PANDA (Midnapore): The Department of Archaeology, University of Calcutta resumed excavation at Mogulmari PS-Dantan of District-Paschim Medinipur, West Bengal. The excavation has so far revealed the existence of a Pre-Pala (possible 7th century A.D.) Buddhist monistic complex with extensive stucco and/or lime decoration, which is unique in eastern India. Embellishments on the frontal wall in particular and the monastic establishment in general, will definitely throw significant light not only on the early medieval history of Paschim Medinipur but also on that of the entire West Bengal. The observation of the excavators, the Head of the Department and his staff members is that the Buddhist character stucco figures is supported by the discovery of two Buddhist stone sculpture from a stratified context, one of them representing the figure of the Buddha in the well-known Bhumisparsa pose. According to them, the discovery is unquestionably comparable to the monasteries of Nalanda (South Bihar), Raktamrttika (Murshidabad) and Nandadirghika (Malda). To complete the excavation work of such a big Buddhist monasteries and its conservation requires sufficient financial assistance. I urge upon the Union Government to extend necessary financial assistance in this regard, so that the excavation and conservation of the old heritage can be done.

(xvii) Need to declare Karaikal district of Puducherry as a backward district

PROF. M. RAMADASS (Pondicherry): The Union Territory of Puducherry is spread in four regions namely, Puducherry, Karaikal, Mahe and Yanam. Recently, Karaikal region has been declared as a separate district while the three region were clubbed together to form Puducherry district. Historically, Karaikal region has remained backward for various socio-economic factors. The agricultural character of the region and its dependence on the Cauvery water, lack of industrialization and poor manpower have contributed to the backwardness of this region. The parameters such as per capita income, productivity, production, literacy, infant mortality rate are assuming low values as compared to other regions. Karaikal district is surrounded by Nagapattinam District which is declared as a Backward district. Therefore, it is requested that in view of the continued socio-economic backwardness of Karaikal. It should be immediately declared as Backward district and financial assistance extended under Backward Districts Development Grant Fund so that its development can be accelerated. In the absence of such a status the region will continue to remain backward and the people would be subjected to neglect and backwardness. Therefore, the Government of India is urged to confer the status of a Backward District to Karaikal.

(xviii) Need to speed up the doubling of Sonarpur-Canning railway line and upgrade Betberia Gholia Railway Station in West Bengal

SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL (Joynagar): Upon recognizing the economic as well as tourism potential of the Sundarbans region, the work of doubling of the railway line between Sonarpur and Canning in the South Section under Sealdah Division (West Bengal) has been started and the First Phase (Sonarpur to Ghotiaisharif) is complete. However, the Second Phase (Ghotiaisharif to Canning) is yet to be started.

Sundarbans is the largest delta of the planet consisting large mangrove forests, world famous Royal Bengal Tigers, National Park housing a wide range of wild animals, attracting thousands of tourists from all over the world. Canning is the gateway of Sundarbans having tourism potential of hundreds of inland as well as foreign tourists since October of every year. Moreover, in the absence of double line, lot of hardships are experienced in the transportation of huge volumes of sea food, vegetables, dairy products, etc., produced in Sundarbans. In view of the revenue potential of the line and the Sundarbans, the execution of the doubling work of Phase-

II (Ghotiarisherriff to Canning) be expedited and the work relating to modernization of Canning Station be taken up.

There is a halt station namely Betberia Ghola, situated between Taldi and Ghotiarisherriff, in this railway line, running 12 pairs of trains daily. This halt station should be upgraded with facilities like ticket counter and other facilities available at normal stations. A large number of labourers and employees heading for Kolkata and boarding from this stations are facing lot of difficulties.

Therefore, I urge upon the Government to speed up the doubling of Sonarpur-Canning railway line modernization of Canning Station and the upgradation of Betberia Ghola Railway station in the public interest.

(xix) Need to expedite the passage of Women's Reservation Bill providing, inter alia, 33% reservation for Women in Parliament

[Translation]

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE (Pandharpur): Sir, A Bill regarding providing reservation to women was introduced by the NDA Government during the year 2000. But even after passing of many years it has not been finalized yet. Therefore, we would like to urge the Government to provide women 33 percent reservation and accordingly number of 543 seats of Lok Sabha should be increased to 724 seats which means 181 more seats should be added.

If the ceiling on increasing number of seats upto 2025 is kept in view then out of 543 seats women and men both may be permitted to contest on 181 seats and if any political party desires it may field women candidates on these 181 seats in place of men candidates. Thus the law should provide for electing dual candidates on these seats and 61 seats out of these may be reserved for SC and ST candidates separately.

Through this august House I would like to request the Union Government to take the required action in this regard alongwith appropriate steps to get the Women Reservation Bill passed in the House.

13.00 hrs.

FINANCE BILL, 2007

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: The Finance Minister, Shri Chidambaram, may say a few words.

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): Sir, the Bill is before the House and it may debate it. I beg to move:

"That the Bill to give effect to the financial proposals of the Central Government for the financial year 2007-08 be taken into consideration."

MR. SPEAKER: Motion moved*:

"That the Bill to give effect to the financial proposals of the Central Government for the financial year 2007-08 be taken into consideration."

Shri Harin Pathak may initiate the discussion.

[Translation]

SHRI HARIN PATHAK (Ahmedabad): Mr. Speaker, Sir, under Article 112 of the constitution we present the Budget in the House and pass the same and under Article-110 we bring in the Financial Bill, which means the amendments in the budget proposals. Financial Bill is just a formality.

13.01 hrs.

(SHRI V. J. KALA RADHAKRISHNAN in the Chair)

Mr. Chairman, Sir, there must have been a lot of discussion on the Budget. This time I. ... (Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Except that you did not allow me to reply. ... (Interruptions)

SHRI HARIN PATHAK: At that time I was not present in the House because I had a major surgery and hence, I did not participate in the Budget discussion.

[Translation]

I believe that as far as Financial Bill is concerned it is meant to implement the financial proposals of the Government. It believes that as far as Financial Bill is concerned it is meant to implement the financial proposals of the Government. We all are sitting here. I do not want to level allegations against any political party. I have told many a time that I have personal relations with Chidambaram ji and everybody else. I have been in this House for the last 17-18 years and whenever I see a young Member on television, it makes me feel really happy. They have a lot of zeal and zest. They come in the House with a vision for future of our nation. They come with a vision envisaging plan for the majority of population of this

*Moved with the recommendation of the President.

[Shri Harin Pathak]

country which has been suffering all along and has been exploited, for them, to free them from all the evils and to improve their standard of living. With deep anguish and disappointment. I have to say that after six terms, i.e., after completing 18 years I feel that nothing is being done over here. There are only two three months remaining in completion of 60 years of Independence. I am aware of the tradition of this House and also know as to what is the difference between Budget and Finance Bill. At lot of discussion must have taken place on the Budget because I was not present at that time. In these 60 years, there must be many such hon'ble Members who are 5,10,17,20 or 25 years senior Members and the new Members elected to this House must be desiring that the face of this nation should change. We came with a hope that from a country which remaining under slavery for 1200 years, poverty, unemployment and anarchy would be removed and there would be certain improvement. I do not want to get into further details but would like to draw the attention of hon'ble Finance Minister towards the current economic condition of the country. This is really sad and a grave situation. Yes, I believe that it is not possible to resolve the economic problems of such a big nation in mere two, five or ten years time but 60 years is not a small period. As I have said that four months have left to complete 60 years, I would request all the representatives of the people of this country, who are sitting here to listen carefully to the findings of survey conducted by the National Sample Survey Organisation. The findings of the survey contains real picture of this country.

[English]

Ten per cent people of this country who are living in villages cannot afford to spend more than Rs. 9 a day.

[Translation]

They cannot afford, it means there are total 10 crore people, who cannot afford to spend more than Rs. 9 a day.

[English]

Thirty percent people of this country cannot afford to spend Rs. 12 a day; and thirty percent people who are living in urban areas cannot afford to spend more than Rs. 19 a day.

[Translation]

They cannot afford to spend 12 percent. Even after 60 years why we do not realize their problems. I am not

talking about farmers only, this condition is prevailing in the entire country. About 28 percent people are living below poverty line, 32 crore people are living on poverty line and 25 percent people belong to the lower middle class. 10 percent people including Government employees, fourth class employees etc. belong to middle class, if we compare the above mentioned data. They comprise about 95 percent who are striving for bread, clothes and shelter even after 60 years. The data also include farmers and labourers. When I was sick I read in a newspaper that there are 96,000 people whose income is around Rs. 4 crore. There are 3.5 crore tax payers. Stringent action should be taken against those who do not pay tax. Even if you include 3 crore people the number does not exceed more than 10 crore. What has been done for the 95 percent people of the country, who are poor, and are facing the problems of hunger and unemployment? In every budget except making promises nothing concrete has been done. I have read the poem of Trivalluvar, which was on page no 12 of the budget speech made by Minister of Finance, but I do not find it proper what he has said.

[English]

It says:

"If ploughmen keeps their hands folded

Even sages claiming renunciation cannot find salvation."

[Translation]

Our farmers are not sitting idle. They are ready to work. Our labourers go to gulf countries for employment, they are not sitting idle. Farmers and labourers work hard throughout day and night but they do not get water, seed and fertilizer in time and they do not even get fair price for their crops in the market. Hence this poem is irrelevant to this situation.

[English]

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Obviously, you have not understood the Tamil couplet. You have misunderstood the couplet.

The couplet occurs in a set of ten couplets. Ten couplets in the Chapter are devoted to agriculture. The ten couplets are in praise of agriculture and in praise of farmers. Please read the previous sentence. The Saint warns us, all the rest of us, If the farmer is unable to work in the sense that he has to keep his hands folded then the sages cannot find salvation.

Please understand the context. I think you have understood it in exactly the opposite way.

[Translation]

SHRI HARIN PATHAK: Sir, but the situation will remain the same. I can understand that the situation will remain same because even after the lapse of 60 years, we are unable to provide basic amenities to farmers, labourers. Neither they get water nor electricity. ... (Interruptions) I have not named anybody but we cannot escape from our responsibility. I am not accusing anybody.

[English]

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: You should understand correctly and then speak.

SHRI HARIN PATHAK: It is the duty of the House, of all the hon'ble Members and all the Governments because many years have passed.

[Translation]

Since Independence 60 years have elapsed. Even after such a long time farmers are forced to commit suicide and there is a steep price hike. Today the country is leading towards economic slavery. There is inflation. I have all the data from the year 2004 to 2007. In 2004 price of wheat was Rs. 9/- per kg. Today its price is between Rs. 12 to 16. Flour was Rs. 10/-, now it is between Rs. 14-15, rice was Rs. 10/- now it is between Rs. 16-22, Maida was Rs. 12/- now it is between 16/-. Just now Minister of Agriculture Shri Sharad Pawar said that price of sugar has reduced. In 2004 the price of sugar was between Rs. 12 to 13 per kg but today it is between Rs. 17 to 18. Price of mustard oil has also increased from Rs. 40/- per litre to Rs. 70/- per litre and the condition is same in case of pulses, desi ghee etc. what more can I talk about. You have seen the result of Punjab. I am warning you and it is our responsibility. Do not get on sensex. Increasing sensex in the capital market.

[English]

It is a parallel economy.

[Translation]

There is a parallel economy similar to GDP. I was a member of the Committee constituted in 1992 to enquire the Harshad Mehta Scam. At that time I had a detailed study. Do not link the problems of poor people of our country with the capital market. There is inflation. See the entire budget. I was watching it on TV. People have given

you 1 or 2 points out of 10, Expectations of the people are not fulfilled. As a result prices are increasing in the country. I was giving the data of inflation in the country after February. Prices of kerosene, cement, steel, brick are increasing. What will the common man do, how will he meet its expenses? We increase the tax rebate from Rs. 1 lakh to Rs. 1 lakh 10 thousand, hon'ble Minister.

[English]

please do not play mockery with the common or middle class people.

[Translation]

Tax rebate is increased upto Rs. 10,000 and Rs. 1000 is reduced in tax still there is inflation. For women exemption limit may be increased from Rs. 1,35,000 to Rs. 1,45,000 and for senior citizens from Rs. 1,85,000 to Rs. 1,95,000 what will be the outcome of such a low rebate? How will the people manage their livelihood with such an inflation? I do not want to speak further more because

[English]

I am not even advised to speak more. I am speaking for the first time after my surgery.

[Translation]

Government keeps on promising that they will check the inflation but they do not take any concrete steps. They gave lame excuses that there was inflation because of NDA Government or there was inflation because of rainfall, I would like to submit that during the past 10 years the best rainfall was in last three years. We should stop giving such excuses.

[English]

there is not a single measure mentioned in the Budget where you desire to control inflation.

[Translation]

You suggest concrete measures to check inflation and implement them accordingly. How long will you wait? You have completed almost three years in power. Prices are increasing day by day, pulses are being imported. During the tenure of hon'ble Atal ji godowns were full of foodgrains but today they are empty. I would like that the amount for exemption in tax may be increased to Rs. 1,50,000 from Rs. 1,10,000. Women were misguided, they run the houses. They know it better. Rate of pulses are Rs. 65, when we say to cook two types of vegetables

[Shri Harin Pathak]

then wife replies, how can I cook two types of vegetables, do you know the rate of vegetables, oil, pulses in the market? Due to inflation tension is prevailing in the upper middle class also. I would like that for women the amount for exemption in tax may be increased to Rs. 2,00,000 from 1,50,000 and for senior citizens it should be increased upto Rs. 2,50,000. We can provide some relief to them by doing so. I have pointed out a common thing that there should be some limit, make a vision for 2020 that after 2020 farmers of our country will not commit suicide. You have to do so because if I speak on political terms you will get annoyed.

Since 1947 you are in power. You remained in power for 48 years from Lok Sabha to Panchayats. Who stopped you to remove poverty, inflation and unemployment in the country? Is 60 years of time is not sufficient to build up a country? Japan did not take so much time in its nation building. Israel took less time. Malaysia took less time. Taiwan also took less time. You tell us how much time we will have to wait for it so that we are in position to tell the people of our constituency that they will have to wait for 50 years more and, then, you will get kerosene oil at the rate of Rs. 100 a litre. In this way, where will be our country? The situation is worsening. I would like to say that inflation should be checked.

After that I would say about service tax. The imposition of this tax was introduced in the regime of hon'ble Manmohanji in 1994. Now, the service tax is from 5 to 12 percent. The way by which the tax collection is done is very factful. I have all data but I do not want to go into details. I was not present at that time, otherwise, I would have told all the things regarding budget. Tax is heavy. In the past jazia tax was collected.

[English]

during the last ten years, up to 2003-04, the Service Tax collection was about Rs. 7800 crore.

[Translation]

Now, this amount has gone up to Rs. 50,000 crores.

[English]

Hundred services are covered under Service Tax.

[Translation]

I will give you an example which you could consider if you feel it to be proper. There is a poor man, whatsoever

they may be, either we or you, if they give their houses on rent, the income accrued in this way will be considered as a service tax.

[English]

I am amazed to know what sort of service the landlord is giving to a tenant! Is it a service?

[Translation]

If the house is given on rent, then, the income accrued from rent will be covered under the service tax. 6 percent tax is payable on such an income. Income is generated from all around, how will so much money be utilized ultimately? House owners are already paying corporation taxes, and you have imposed one more tax, in the form of service tax.

Non-plan expenditure is increasing. Gradually it is going upto 70 percent. During the last year it was 69 percent and this time you are going to increase it around 70 percent i.e. only 30 percent expenditure is left out for development. Chidambaramji, if I am wrong

[English]

being a good friend, kindly correct me, if I am wrong. Yesterday, when I came late night from Ahmedabad, I was just going through the Budget speech. I found a mistake in that. On page 21, in para 120, it is stated that Non-Plan expenditure in 2007-08, net of the SBI share acquisition is estimated at Rs. 4,35,421. I think the word 'crore' needs to be added here. Am I right?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): That is correct.

SHRI HARIN PATHAK: It is a financial document and financial documents have to be properly corrected.

[Translation]

It should be Rs. 4 lakh, 35 thousand, 421 crore. There cannot be so much amount in this head. Non plan expenditure is increasing. As I stated, there are lots of things to be said. Price hike has taken place, but there is no measure to check it. Non-plan expenditure is increasing. You have provided us booklet along with the budget, statement of revenue forgone.

[English]

This book was also distributed to us along with Budget papers.

[Translation]

How much exemption you have given is mentioned in page no. 37, table 8 and 9. If you see, you will find it that you have given exemption of about Rs. 2,88,959 crore in the table no. 9. I would like to inform the House who got exemptions, where does they really gone. The exemption of Rs. Two lakh and eighty eight thousand crore has been given. This is not sufficient for the common people. Exemption of Rs. 50 thousand 75 crore was given in Corporate tax. You should have given some exemption to cooperative sector, banks but instead you have abolished, the facility of 80 P. and now you are imposing income tax on the cooperative sector banks who are associated with the poor people as well as with the common men of villages. If the cooperative bank earns even a little benefit, they will have to pay 33 percent tax. In this way, how will the cooperative banks survive. These banks are providing loans in villages to poor and small farmers, women and those who run cottage industries in their houses. Cooperative banks have zero exemption. Senior citizens got 3,258 crore exemption, women have 1712 crore tax relief and the tax benefit of Rs. 10,540 crores is accounted on the investment. Thus, the total amount of exemption comes to Rs. 13 thousand crore. The rest exemption of Rs. 2 lakh 70 thousand crore has been given to those who have Mercedes cars and are industrialists millionaires. I would like to say here that when I say that the amount of tax exemption limit should be increased from one lakh ten thousand to one lakh fifty thousand, you are reluctant to do so. When I say that more exemption should be given to women you are reluctant to do so. Since so much relief of Rs. 2 lakh 70 thousand crore is being given to the industrialists, I would request our learned Minister for Finance to consider this fact. I raise the issues which are concerned to the common people. We, the people of grass roots, are sitting here along with the officials and have been playing with the web of datas for the last 60 years. But such a playing with the data is killing the poor, common people, farmers and labourers. Now, it is the time for all of us when the new generation will ask us, when the history will ask us if Japan, Israel and the other countries can be self dependent, why can the country like Hindustan whose population is more than hundred crore having sufficient hands and capacity to work hard and even the farmers are ready to do hard work day and night, not be in the race. We do not provide them power, water and fertilizers. When the crop is yielded, the poor farmers supply it by loading in trucks, but they do not get support price. It is sure the history will seek reply from us. I would like to request you to consider this thing very carefully. I would not like to say about fringe

benefits. I will discuss it next time. But my very request is about the small companies which are already there. I would like to give you an example that so many people come to meet me.

[English]

I do not know whether you are implementing it or not. At the time of Budget preparation, you call some experts from various sections of the society. Would you call some of the Members of Parliament, who are interested in that process? It is not necessary to accept whatever they say or the proposals they give

[Translation]

because they are associated with the ground reality. They have some things in their minds. You will get some hints, that is what things are going in the minds of the people. In this case the situation will not be like that of Punjab, Uttarakhand and UP. Your people themselves will say that this is not going well. Kindly correct it any how.

[English]

As you have already extended the limit in service tax from Rs. 4 lakh to Rs. 8 lakh.

[Translation]

You have fixed its limit upto 8 lakh. In this limit there are a number of small companies and traders having each of them one peon, to whom they pay Rs. 1500/- to 2000/-. There is also a clerk in such a companies, to whom they pay Rs. 2000-2500. They get telephone bill between Rs. 1000-1500. Now they are also coming under tax network. My demand is that you may give some relief out of the amount limit upto one lakh so that these small people could save it at least.

At last, I would like to say that you are bringing an income tax code.

[English]

You have said that in your Budget Speech.

[Translation]

I was shocked to know when I found that

[English]

Out of 134 amendments, 84 amendments

[Translation]

are only for the finance bill.

[Shri Harin Pathak]

[English]

If income tax code is to be brought, then what is the need for 84 amendments in the Finance Bill? So many of them are not only retrospective in nature, but are having far reaching consequences.

[Translation]

Please think it, I do not wish to go into these technical details. I want to raise the voice of the poor and this is the duty of all of us. I am not laying any allegations on you. Lot of time has passed. 60 years have been passed. It is the responsibility of the Parliament as well as of the Government to build the nation, if they wish to do so. It is right time. Now we cannot say to the people that they should wait. Price hike should be controlled. Price hike of essential commodities should be checked anyhow. If you may anyhow increase income tax; you may increase it up to 150% then; you should check it as well. I go among people and there is same reason for low polling. The people are fed up. It is the responsibility of Parliament to see that a question mark may not be put on our system. The people are fed up with so long wait. Therefore, it is our duty to ensure that the poor may be given their rights before any unexpected revolution, where every generation promises their children a good Government and hope a good country for them. I think it is a need of hour to ponder over it.

13.29 hrs.

(SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN *in the Chair*)

At last, I would like to state that keeping in view the long term planning not just for budget and figures but the Government should work in a time bound manner so that prosperity prevails and no one sleeps hungry, as well as the farmers may not be compelled to commit suicide and the workers may not be brought to a situation where they have to fight for their rights. Apart from this, you should find a way out to the present situation by reining in price-hike. If youth of the country do not get jobs, there will be resentment among them. Many a young MPs are sitting here before me. If the youth of the country do not get the job, what will be the situation like? Finance Minister Sir, the time has come and all of us have to bear this responsibility and their future is in your hands. As we know that Ministry of Finance is considered as heritage of economic policy of the Government. It is his responsibility to lead country in the direction of prosperity with a vision of India where all are equal and where there is no one hungry, unemployed and no one die on footpath due to poverty. Let us create a society wherein the Finance

Minister in his capacity spell out his objectives and does utmost to solve the problems of poor, no matter the Government lasts or not.

SHRI SANDEEP DIKSHIT (East Delhi): Madam Chairman, as Harinji stated earlier; whenever we talk about Finance Bill; it is a technical Bill and we generally do not discuss its technical aspects. Harinji has taken this opportunity and has presented before us a wide picture of economic condition of poor and status of development and put forth his views thereon. Minister of Finance is sitting here and it is an important Bill for him because he allocates funds for the departments which have executive responsibilities to do their annual works with these funds. Their works continue over the year and most of these related to Finance Bill.

Madam Chairman, Harinji has made a number of points. I will not repeat them but I would definitely say something regarding the Bill later. Our Finance Minister is present here and it needs to be noted that during last three years we people have had to bear tax burden somehow or other. We think that small workers, small industries have been affected by this taxation either directly or indirectly. At times this tax system is prepared in detail and these people are brought under tax net. However, it needs to be appreciated that the work of the finance department under leadership of hon'ble Finance Minister is going well and the Gross Tax revenue has gone upto 20% to 30% every year. It is 27% this year. He has provided sufficient funds to states and I think for this achievement he deserves appreciation and complement by the entire house as well as people at large. There are many a challenges before State Governments and I think there is dire need of funds in the fields about which Harinji has stated. It is really a complicated matter to balance the funds in such a manner so as the need of all may be met in a best possible manner. The Finance Minister is trying to impose tax on people and to avoid middle class since last three years. But one point I would like to raise is that the burden of taxes have been raised undoubtly.

Madam Chairman, I would like to say hon'ble Finance Minister, through you, that he has stated in his documents that effective tax rate is 19.2% and with the reference of these documents Harinji also stated that Government provide Rs. 2 lakh and 70 thousand crore as concession which is for these classes. It is not a new thing and this practice has been going on for last many years. Government documents have been quoted here. It is continued since last 50-60 years from one or the other way. The representative of industries approach Finance Minister and apprise him with their factual position and they ask for concession in desired areas.

Today we have been witnessing that the progressive category, big industries of the country are keeping themselves aloof from the prevailing condition of the country. There is a section of industrialist and rich people in the country who are progressing rapidly and keeping themselves aloof from what is happening in this country. It is really a good thing that an intelligentsia of the country progresses year-by-year and pay taxes. We wish the number of such people may go on. Today there is a section in the country, which is capable itself and remains aloof from the remaining country while being on the path of progress. It is time to withdraw the facilities extended to such people for the last 60 years. If they are healthy themselves then they do not need protection of Rs. 2,70,000 crores. If effective rate of income tax is being charged at 33% there is no need to reduce it upto 19-20%. A few years back Finance Minister had stated that probably the effective rate is 24-25% in developing or developed countries. There is no reason to raise it from 19.2% to 24-25%. If we regularly try in the same direction, there would be no need to Finance Minister to bring such taxes. Whenever we raise voice in the House, we directly or indirectly look forward to Finance Minister as we expect investment of funds from him in one or other field.

At the end of my statement I would like to make a point, which has also been raised by Harin Bhal. A public mandate is being evolved itself in our country. I come from urban region. I am also supposed to keep this point in my mind that the floor limit of income tax is raised upto Rs. 1,10,000 and the concept is that it is done only for namesake. I admit that the Finance Minister is helpless; your figures might have shown that if the limit is increased then there is probability that more tax would go beyond the reach of the Government. But I would like to request the Finance Minister to club floor limit of Rs. 1,00,000 with inflation rate. If the inflation rate during last three years was Rs. 100 and it is Rs. 130 as on date the limit itself goes automatically Rs. 1,30,000 instead of Rs. 1,00,000. You have not done anything special in that. You are bringing more and more people under the purview of income tax as per the existing provisions. It will send a message and signal to the people that the Government is trying its best to help us in the matter. You know it better that how much you can extend the limit. Every member of the House will support you if you take them in your confidence and keep telling them about the data.

Madam, we welcome many of the provisions related to the taxation as elaborated in the Budget speech of the hon'ble Minister of Finance. I have noticed that you have done good tuning in the matters of direct taxes or indirect taxes. I would like to give you some suggestions in few

areas. In one paragraph you have talked about irrigation facilities and processing of agricultural products and have reduced it from 7.5% to 5%. I would like to request you not to impose duty on drip irrigation and agricultural sprinklers. Drip irrigation has very positive impact on whole of the country. In many areas where the farmers are using it, have seen good progress in the field. The revolution that is taking place in floriculture in India especially in South India and Central India is directly related to the drip irrigation. I don't think it is a big deal if we give them full concession and if it saves even 5 percent, it would be a great help.

Madam, I would like to bring one more point into the kind notice of hon'ble Minister of Finance. Recently a month ago Prof. Tushar Shah and Prof. Fansalkar of Institute of water management, Anand have jointly conducted a study. Prof. Tushar is a well known scientist as well as a known figure in the area of water. He has done an intensive study in the semi-arid areas of Central India specially in Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Rajasthan. In his study he has reported that due to inflation in prices the farmers are giving up their profession. Moreover the production is also low at some places. He has clarified two-three facts in his studies stating that due to inflation in the prices of irrigation inputs, the farmers are giving up their profession. Diesel has also played an important role to such an extent that the farmers themselves are opting out of irrigation. The report of the study has presented a very terrible picture. As per the study the production of wheat, rice and pulses may be lesser than today and we would be bound to buy the pulses like Arhar and chana on much more higher rates in comparison of today's Rs 35-40 per kg and Rs. 40-45 per kg respectively. I know that one reason for this could be low production of these products but if we consider the opinion of the experts the production will be more less in the coming days. So, these small things are putting pressure on the farmers and if we reduce that we can help the farmer in some way and consequently there could be rise in their production.

Hon'ble Minister of Finance, you have taken a good step to promote the research and development. You have also mentioned that the tax implication on specified machinery will be at the rate of 5% instead of 7.5%. I would like to give a suggestion here but I don't know how effective it could be when we had been discussing Department of Science and Technology in this House four-five days back, the Minister of Science and Technology discouragously had stated that when people are not investing in R & D in this country, this would be condition of the R & D in the country, the Government have its own limits to invest in it. Hon'ble Minister of Finance, I want to

[Shri Sandeep Dikshit]

tell you that in this country it has become necessary to invest in R & D. Mr. Kapil Sibal, our hon'ble, Minister of Science and Technology had stated that the private sector is great defaulter in this regard. He told that the Government of India spend the same amount on R & D as being spent by the Government of America. Developed countries are spending the same amount as being spent by India. Government of India spend 0.6 percent of GDP on R&D. America also does the same. I will tell you where they score over us. There, the private sector spend much on R&D, whereas in our country private sector do not even spend a penny on it. Hon'ble Minister of Finance, I would like to say that your department has got much information. Many big industries are running in private sector and it is necessary to invest in R&D in our country whether it is as per the limit of their financial turnover or any subject like steel or anything else. You direct them to invest a fix amount of their turn over on R&D. When they will do this, only then the Government will provide them concessions otherwise Government of India won't provide any concession to these industries. Therefore, if you will force them they will invest somehow in R&D. If our companies will invest in R&D, it will directly affect our Science and Technology. Research technology will be as per our requirement. Perhaps in future it would not be a necessity to get the things imported. May be we could be able to export the things.

I have observed that you have provided benefit in taxation on very small things in a very positive manner. You have given benefit to small scale industries, biscuit making industries, plywood manufacturing industries and to bio-diesel. I don't agree with you on one thing. Although it is not very important but since I am speaking in the House, I don't think there is any harm in telling that the tax on the tobacco pan masala is still 66%, but the tax on non-tobacco Pan Masala has been reduced to 45%. I would like to request you not to give any concession in it. Whenever required I myself borrow Pan Masala from my known to people but these habits should be done away with. So impose as much tax on it as you want. In India you can get a pouch of tobacco for Rs. 1 and, if you want, increase it to Rs. 5 and willingly impose the tax to get rid of such bad habit. If pouch of Rs. 1 becomes of Rs. 5, no one will raise fingers towards you. I think that there are several small industries in it. You can collect as much money as you want but we should not give away the message that we are helping the Pan Masala industries in any way.

Madam, in regard to the facts mentioned about the

direct taxes in the Finance Bill, I have earlier requested that you keep on increasing the limit every year whether by linking it to the inflation or to GDP or to anything else. People would think somehow that the Minister of Finance is also considering them. I would like to mention a few more things. The Banking Cash Transaction Tax is negligible. Last year you also provided some data revealing the fact that very less amount is collected in it. You also said that the main objective is to unearth bungling or black money. You also told that the department has also busted such small occupations where there are irregularities regarding financial transactions. I would like to request you not to do away with it and continue it for always and if you don't require withdraw it back next year. Keep it with you; if there is anything traceable trace it and at least withdraw it next year. I only want to say that this tax should be retained as it would always have a control over the people and if not required, withdraw it. He has also mentioned that now the Government has got other effective measures which can help them to withdraw it completely. Hence, direct tax can be withdrawn completely from the next year itself and it can be added to other items. If it is done, I would really welcome it.

There are two-three more points. The senior citizens of our country have got a relief upto Rs.1.85 lac. But there are some senior citizens who have only daughters and are living in problems. I request the hon. Minister to kindly exempt such senior citizens upto an extent from income tax. People in our country tend to be worried for their old age. My submission is that there are so many senior citizens in my parliamentary constituency who have one son and two daughters. Paying Rs.5 or 10 thousand as income tax becomes a painful liability for such parents. Therefore, I request the hon. Finance Minister to please provide direct concession to them. They will bestow him with their blessings.

Further, there is no tax in our country pertaining to environment. Whether such a tax can be imposed-is a complicated issue but I would like to mention that there are some States in our country which are doing their best to maintain the environment whereas some States have almost destroyed their natural resources be it the forests or the rivers or greenery on hills. Despite being warned by the Government of India and experts, some States have indulged into excessive exploitation of ground water to such an extent that we are going to face water crisis in the coming years. We have failed to exercise any control on such states or such industries. There are industries in some states which are polluting the environment to a large scale but we have failed to keep check on them. I do not mean that efforts should be made to roll it back. Mr.

Finance Minister, I do not know whether it can be a part of your Finance Bill but while doing distribution of resources and collection of taxes, we should provide fiscal benefit to those states who did their best to the environment in comparison to the other States who failed to do so.

Only a few people are aware of it that Madhya Pradesh has forests and the water in seven major rivers of our country comes through these forests. Deforestation will create water crises for these rivers. A large part of this State is covered under forests and the State can earn money by cutting these forests and capturing the timber market. Agricultural production on the new land will also fetch them large amount of income. Since I have some knowledge about Madhya Pradesh, I am citing its example. Besides, Madhya Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh and some other States of North eastern region have also preserved these forests. However, there are some states which have not preserved their forests, which have done excessive exploitation of water in comparison to other States and where the industries are mushrooming and polluting the environment. It can be detrimental for us and for our future generation. Therefore, Government should give incentives through Finance Bill or make allocation of funds for the purpose of conserving environment. I would like to state that now the time has come when we need to do something off the beaten track. With these words, while concluding, I would like to associate with Shri Harinji also. Initially, Harinji commented upon the situation of our country. What can we do? He is senior to me and also knowledgeable. However, one thing is clear that the Governments of the countries like Japan or South East Asia which he has quoted, have taken reformative steps in the beginning of the last century. Those stringent steps are required to be taken in our country also. There are some sectors where both treasury and opposition benches are required to taken stringent steps collectively. I am a very junior Member. It all depend upon our leadership. They have to take decision collectively on the issues like conservation of water, funds required for education sector, efforts to be made for agriculture sector or electricity problem etc. If the House takes a collective decision on all these issues, we can definitely tread ahead on the path of progress.

Hon'ble Finance Minister, I do not have much to say on your proposals. The Finance Bill is a very good Bill. The present Government is perhaps the only Government who is fulfilling the financial requirement at all the fronts. The Finance Bill is so complex that the common man fails to understand it. I request the Finance Minister to make it simpler so that it could be understood easily. Mr. Finance Minister, through Madam Chairman and this House, I would like to pay my good wishes to you, your entire department

and to every person of the country who raises funds for accomplishing the welfare steps of the Government.

With these words, while supporting this Bill, I conclude.

[English]

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (Hooghly): Madam Chairman, the problem with the Government is that they commit to the people and at the time of honouring those commitments they sometimes forget miserably the things that they have committed to the people and they have to pay a heavy price for that also. We find that during the previous Government, you know how the people reacted to the 'India Shining' story and for that you are here. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI HARIN PATHAK: We are planning to come back.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: This Government's growth story is losing lustre and it is very fast losing its lustre. It is high time the Government should take the lessons. Even a Cabinet Minister, a veteran Congress leader is publicly saying that in the case of a 9 per cent plus growth rate, less than 0.2 per cent is reaching the common people. He is still a Cabinet Minister, speaking publicly like this. It is not proper to bring the name of the hon. President. But he had also, on some occasion, said that the Government should not indulge in this hype about the growth. They should better look at the Human Development Index. Out of 174 countries, our position is at 127th place. In certain aspects like health and other things, infant mortality, maternity deaths etc., some small countries, neighbouring countries are higher than us in that position.

So, the social sectors need to be addressed and we are lagging behind. Of course, in the so-called success story and the growth, there have been billionaires. The number of Indian billionaires is growing. In terms of percentage, it is more than the world average. In the Forbes' List every year new names are coming up. That is not a real wealth. That is a notional wealth. That is basically a result of the capital market manipulation.

A series of scams have come to light since the reforms process started, that is, from the days of Harshad Mehta; through Ketan Parekh; through the IPO scam; and even today some stories have come. A demand was also made to this Government. Why the stock market cannot be brought under the review of the RTI Act if that be so and if it is so interested in transparency in the length and breadth of the capital market?

[Shri Rupchand Pal]

There is confusion in the Government. The Government says certain things; the regulator says certain things; and there is confusion in the concept of public authority. This is not confusion, but it is a recurring contradiction in the Government in respect of the SEZ; in respect of the exemptions; and in respect of so many other economic policies. One Minister is saying certain things, and another Minister is saying certain other things the very next moment. I am giving you the latest example about the export exemptions, which are being given. Even though the Finance Ministry says that we have no knowledge about it, the Commerce Ministry publicly announces that we are doing it with the concurrence of the hon. Prime Minister. It is happening with regard to exemptions of revenue in the SEZ. I have no time to go into all the details because the Government knows about it; the people know about it; and different sections of this House also know about it.

I shall come to focus on a very important aspect. I am really concerned that there may be hurdles, political or otherwise, about the good intentions of the hon. Finance Minister for exemptions, which he has been continuously commenting upon. The hon. Finance Minister has tried to build a consensus, and he has brought the issue of exemptions to the Consultative Committee Meeting also.

The Raja Chelliah Committee, the Kelkar Committee, the Parthasarthy Shome Committee have recommended that half the revenue is lost through exemptions. Perhaps, some of the exemptions are necessary in a welfare State to look after the social sector; to look after the backward region; to look after very many other issues in a country with uneven development; to look after very many other issues in a country with so much of backwardness and problems relating to weaker sections, minority; and many more things. There may be a need for certain exemptions in such a scenario, but there should be a sense of equity and there should be some sort of transparency in the system.

One will find — from the recommendations of the Raja Chelliah Committee, Kelkar Committee, Parthasarthy Shome Committee — that the Government continues to politicize instead of taking concrete decisions. Although they are commenting that half of their revenue is lost through exemptions, yet when the corporate sector demanded that we are highly taxed, the Minister said that: "You are under-taxed because the effective rate of your tax is 19 per cent or so." If you take away the exemptions, it is not even 13 per cent or so. If you make comparison

with Belgium or some other developing countries, then it is more than 24 per cent or 25 per cent.

The Minister has all along been saying that these exemptions are creating havoc in our revenue. Even while he is saying this, the Commerce Ministry is announcing exemptions for export, and that too for those who do not require it. Although the Finance Minister is saying that we shall be losing no less than Rs. one lakh crore in revenue due to this indiscriminate sort of exemptions being given in the SEZ to the developers and to those who actually do not need it, particularly, those who will shift their existing units to the SEZ to enjoy the revenue, I support the Finance Minister at least on this issue.

14.00 hrs.

It is not a case of simple revenue loss. It is also a matter of equity. As early as possible, the Government should firmly take up the issue and instead of continuing the undesirable sort of exemptions for political considerations. I am giving one example of equity. I could give you any number of examples.

North Bengal is a part of Himalayan range having same sort of geographical features. North East is enjoying certain exemptions; Sikkim is enjoying; the whole Himalayan range, beginning from Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, is enjoying. Some of the sunset clauses are not in effect. The Government of West Bengal has been saying that these are the industries coming; these are the big names taking into account the new resurgent situation in industry in West Bengal, because of the Government policy, environment and all these things taken together, they want to invest in North Bengal. But these are the States which are alluring them by saying that if you come to our States, you shall enjoy all these Central exemptions, etc. Is it equity? Same people, sometimes same ethnic groups are there. A lot of demands are being made and we have met. We are not supporting any sort of undesirable exemptions being continued. But so long as you do not do away with it, at least you bring some parity, at least bring some equity so that people of that region having similar sort of geographical, historical, ethnic and other sort of features feel that this UPA Government is different from the previous Government, as they have committed in the NCMP.

The old outlook of the Government, as it had been continued by the NDA Government, we find reflected in the Finance Bill also. I am speaking about the mobilization of resources. The Government says moderate tax, stability in the tax regime and better compliance. I have repeatedly stated that Indian psyche is different. Even if you give them relaxations, they will try to find out loopholes, either

for the avoidance or for the rampant evasion. I am coming to the old question. I have been repeating and the hon. Finance Minister repeatedly agreed to that, yes, that is the reality. I have several times asked the question - how many people in this country are billionaires? The number is increasing in the Forbes list every year. How many people in their returns declare that their annual income is more than Rs.10 lakh? Earlier, at a point of time, it was stated as 90,000. Now, it has increased. The Minister is absolutely correct when he says that only in South Delhi and in adjoining areas, we can find that number having annual income of Rs.10 lakh plus. It is because of the extent of evasion and because of the loopholes.

I am giving one example. Suddenly in the newspapers, we might have come to know about one Hasan Ali, who is having business in horse trading. Even print media came out with stories that he might have been dealing with an amount not less than Rs.35,000 crore. Is the Government not aware of it? By indications, some involvement of big names came, but nothing happened. Even after the exemptions, even after the moderate rate, even after getting concessions they require, there is rampant evasion. If the same logic continues, where can we have six per cent of the GDP to be spent for education when about one-third of our population still in the darkness of illiteracy?

Where from we shall get three per cent of the resources of our GDP for the public health sector, while the Government's papers themselves admit that half of our children are suffering from mal-nutrition and that about 50 per cent of our women are suffering from maternity related deaths? Some of our small neighbouring countries are better placed. Even in such a situation, the Government says that there is lack of resources. But we had made a suggestion about this.

The capital market is crossing 13,000-14,000 mark; responding to even very small strange occasions, it is rising and falling. If some official of the banking sector says something, there is a rise; if there is some election somewhere and if someone has an edge over his rival, there is a fall. What is this? We know that when the UPA Government came to power, slogans were raised against Shrimati Sonia Gandhi in the capital market itself. There are manipulations and we have demanded that there should be some inquiry about these manipulations. They are not speculations.

Even yesterday there was news that about six traders had been indulging in manipulations with regard to IPOs. Today, they regulated and said that from the very first day,

they shall arrange filters, and that 2-3 days will be allowed. We have been insisting that it should be looked into. Capital markets have been playing havoc.

On participatory note, one section of the administration or the establishment says that it is bogus. The Government says that participatory notes have a role. The last JPC on the Ketan Parikh scandal had specifically recommended about double treaty avoidance agreement with Mauritius. Mauritius is a small country; all our investments - the FII's - are coming through Mauritius only. Till today, the reply of the Government is with me, they have not done anything. It says that it had taken up the issue with the Mauritius Government and the Mauritius Government says that they have no authority. There is someone like Chairman-Judge or Custodian-Judge and the Government has to approach him to find out whether any irregularity had been committed in the banking transaction by anyone.

The Government has been sitting over all the recommendations made by the JPC with regard to double taxation. We are helpless. The last sentence, in reply to a query of mine, is that since then the Mauritius Government has not reverted back; they are not saying anything. We are saying that if the Mauritius Government is not honouring the commitments, in letter and spirit, of the agreement - if the new measures are brought in after the agreement with regard to definition, who should interfere and who should not interfere, etc. - why should we not put an end to the agreement?

Income Tax Department has taken right steps at a point of time. But till today we find that the capital market is being used for the virtual loot of our precious national savings. The small investors are scared. When we suggest that the securities transaction tax should be raised to a higher level, the Government is shy. When we say that it should introduce long-term capital gains tax, the Government is shy, as if Heavens will fall. Even within the Government, we understand that there is a lot of difference with regard to participatory note, with regard to capital market operations and many other things. The Government is not behaving differently, different from the earlier Government.

They had promised that their measures would be more pro-people and that they would be more careful about their needs.

I now come to a very recent publication of National Council of Applied Economy. They have brought out a very good book on rural infrastructure. It has given a horrible picture. An agency like the National Council of

[Shri Rupchand Pal]

Applied Economy says that less than one tenth of the population in our country is having any access to communication. They have given figures about road connection, shelter, tele-communication and all. All these figures are not given by the Left, who they say are in the habit of criticizing the Government. We are not in the habit of criticizing the Government. We have always been trying to help you carrying the good of the people. If you do not take the lesson then you will have to pay the heavy price.

There are umpteen number of avenues through which you can mobilize the resources or plug in the loopholes. We have been making suggestions that those who can afford to pay must be taken into consideration. But strangely enough we do find the target for the corporate sector is much less than those who pay. Total tax revenue in 2007-08 is expected to increase by 17.1 per cent over 2006-07. Corporate tax revenue is budgeted to increase by 14.9 per cent only while revenue from income tax other than corporate tax is expected to grow at 19.7 per cent. Why? ...*(Interruptions)* I think it is iniquitous.

Very correctly stated by some of the previous speakers, I am not saying that there is a total failure or individually making anyone responsible, it is the Government's responsibility, that they have not been able to tackle inflation. They have listened to some of the suggestions made by us. For example with regard to the commodity future, next day the prices of Urad Dal came down. Similarly, with regard to petroleum, ad valorem excise duty brought down from 8 per cent to 6 per cent. This has helped. We had made a lot of other suggestions. So, in the backdrop of the inflation prevailing and the common people suffering or is under distress, the exemption being given to the senior citizens is far below the expectation. For the senior citizens it should be at least Rs.2 lakh and in the case of women it should be Rs.1,75,000.

We have approached the hon. Prime Minister with regard to township. In the townships like the steel and other townships the employers do provide accommodation to the employees. Now, what has happened? By making an amendment the Government is proposing that the value will have to be taken into consideration. It is a heavy burden. It is a welfare measure and is done in the interest of the industry. In the interest of the industry they provide accommodation. Such revenue duty or tax on the accommodation facility should be forthwith withdrawn. We have requested the hon. Finance Minister and the hon. Prime Minister also. I believe you will do something in this regard.

A lot of time has been spent on the pet food's issue. Really, some budgets have their own messages and this year's Budget also do so. The reduction in the customs duty on the import of pet food is a reflection of the mind of this Government. I think it is not the total mind of the total Government. But there is some mistake and it needs to be corrected. The pet food is for the elite people and they will afford the price even without this reduction. I think the Government should consider that it is not a question of how much revenue is foregone but it shows the attitude that they are considering even the pet food which is meant for elitist class but they are not considering the very simple demands of the poorer sections of the people, of the workers including steel workers and all these things.

About the IT sector, I think there is a controversy going on about the Sun set class and STPI and also about minimum tax that is being levied. But one thing about the rent is that the small IT sector people do not have their own establishments. They take it on hire or rent only. I think there should be a distinction between the small and the big in the IT sector. I think IT should not be given any opportunity in the SEZ. It will create a lot of discrimination and inequality. As such, we have made our own suggestions with regard to SEZs. I think the Government is considering at least one or two points about revenue loss and concessions being given to the sub-contractors and all these things. We are in agreement with the position taken by the hon. Finance Minister.

As regards tax arrears, there is a very interesting thing, although these figures are not correct. There are so many things going on in between earlier period and now.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: How much more time will you take?

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: I am concluding. Madam, I am not making any irrelevant points. I think I am trying to make very relevant points only. Out of 90255 cases, not under dispute arrears, as has been stated by the Government, are 19875. Out of this figure, the Government is targeting only 12000. What is the reason for that? Those who are not paying their dues to the Government, they are being spared while they should have been punished.

As regards reduction in the customs duty, I think the Government is going beyond the WTO stipulation. We have already reached a stage and we do not think that we need to bring it down any further. But the Government is doing it. It is hampering the interest of the small industry and the domestic industry. Two amazing things have appeared and one is that the industry has been performing well but how is it that the excise duty collection is not

proportionately matching with the success in the industrial sector? You owe an explanation to this House.

There are two more things and I would conclude. One is that in customs duty, income tax and central excise, one very interesting thing is happening. There is an exodus of the top officials from these Departments.

It is learnt that the services of the top officials of the Income Tax Department, before their retirement, are being used by the private sector companies. I would like to know as to how many such officials in the Income Tax Department have resigned from their services to join the private sector.

The targeted time frame for completion of computerization in the Department is 2007. I do not know if the Government would be able to reach that goal by this year end. I think, this computerization can bring about a lot of change and also improvement in the functioning of the Department. The tax administration is not as it should be.

Madam, I am really grateful to you for giving me time. I would make my last point. It has been mentioned that the actual expenditure for 2006-07 is half the RE of 2006-07. This is not correct. If this was to be correct, what will be the reason for this failure to actual expenditure? What is the actual position? I would like to know if the actual expenditure is far less than the target.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Which Ministry are you talking about? Are you talking about the total figure?

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: I am not mentioning anything.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Are you talking about the total expenditure? Or, are you talking about expenditure Ministry-wise?

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: I am talking about the total expenditure. We can discuss that later. What has that happened? That may be explained.

The Government also needs to look at the issue of wealth tax. It is because we have very many wealthy people in this country. Even rural wealth is also being amassed. But the total collection shown here is only Rs. 265 crore. This is just peanut. The target for the next year is only Rs. 315 crore. Why does the Government not think about strengthening this? It would help the Government to mobilize resources and give more relief to the common people. It would also help the Government in honouring their commitments. This is one way by which you can prove yourself more worthy than your predecessors. Unless you do this, you would continue to pay a heavy price and

in the process of such continual paying of heavy price, you might finally end up paying the heaviest price. That is the caution I am giving you.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN (Firozabad): Madam Chairman, just now, Shri Rupchand Palji has discussed in detail the technical aspect of the Finance Bill. While speaking on this Finance Bill, I would try to focus on the problems particularly faced by the common man. I don't want to go into the details of its technical aspect. Chidambaramji is an economist and it is not necessary that to become a Member of Parliament one should be a scientist or an economist. Being an economist, the hon'ble Finance Minister Shri Chidambaramji can give the reply in a proper manner also, this is what I feel. Through you, as I have said earlier, while speaking on this Finance Bill, I would try to focus on the problems of the common man and I would like to request the hon'ble Finance Minister to pay attention to those problems seriously.

As far as the question of the Government is concerned, I had said earlier also in this House that the common man must feel that the Government is working towards their welfare. Remaining in power for five months, five or ten years, is not an achievement in itself, rather what is more important is that for whatever period we remain in power, the common man must feel that the Government is working towards their welfare.

I would like to say that concern is being expressed in the House regarding price rise for the last one year. I have no hesitation in saying that the efforts made by the Government so far in this regard have mostly proved out to be futile. In Chennai the Finance Minister had said on 22nd April, 2007 that we will make effort to control the price rise which has increased by more than 6% in a year but not at the cost of development which means that the priority before the Government is development and not price rise. Through you, now I would like to know from the Government the exact meaning of development in this country. Development means a rise in the standard of living of the common man, an increase in his purchasing power as well as removal of his difficulties. Development does not mean development of a few sections rather development means the development of the entire country or the development of the common man. Therefore, I would certainly like to know from the Finance Minister that when we talk about the development of the country then in that condition where does the common man stand? I request him to clarify this while giving his reply.

[Shri Ramji Lal Suman]

What is the result of this development? The result is that today among the Asian countries, we have more trillionaire in our country - Pawanji, am I using the correct word? 36 people are such whose annual growth rate has reached upto 19% and their property is worth 191 billion dollars, which is 25% of the gross domestic product of India. Is this development that some people in this country become billionaire and trillionaire and some people become more poorer and their purchasing power become less? Is this development?

In Delhi University, 81st convocation was held recently in which the hon'ble President had delivered a speech. In his speech, he had said that though our growth rate has reached 9% but there is no improvement in the condition of the poor, whether he is from the urban area or the rural area. I would definitely like to say that there is need to pay attention towards what the hon'ble President had said. Shri Mani Shankar Aiyarji, who is a Minister in the present Government, has said that despite 9.92% growth rate, its benefit is limited to only 0.2% people. What is the benefit of such economic development? Your Minister is saying that its benefit is limited to a few people. The common people are not getting its benefit. I have got the figures of 2004-05, which indicate that growth rate and poverty increased simultaneously. The figures of 2004-05 which I have got indicates that during that period growth rate was 8.83% in Delhi and the rise in the poverty rate was 4.32%. Growth rate was 6.82% in Haryana, poverty increased by 2.44%. Similarly, in Rajasthan growth rate was 5.39% and poverty was 3% at that time. I do not know much about mathematics and economics, however, I utterly fail to understand as to why poverty is increasing more and more in the country when economic growth rate is accelerating. It is unfortunate for the country. According to the National Family Health Survey-II, which was conducted recently in the country and as per the U.N. Habitat report, there are 30% i.e. 90 million people in the country who are poor and by the year 2020, this figure will go upto 200 million.

Much has been discussed in our country about information and technology, however, the facts in this regard which have come to light reflect that only 5 companies have got 57% profit whereas the other small companies are on the verge of closure.

Madam Chairman, a discussion on price rise had been held in the House one year ago. Great uproar was created over this issue and the Government stated that supply was the reason behind the price rise. You must be aware that inspite of the import of 57 lakh tonnes of wheat

by the Government, rise in prices could not be contained. Today in the forenoon we have had discussion and it was reported on T.V. that in October 2006, we had 46 lakh tonnes of sugar in our stock. In our country, consumption of sugar is less than the production. Production of sugar is more in our country due to which we export sugar. Its consequence is that the people of our country do not get the subsidy on sugar which is being given to the consumers of other countries in international market. Despite having stock of sugar, prices of sugar went up in our country. As regards pulses, the Government decided to import 15 lakh tonnes of pulses in order to bring their prices down. Its responsibility was assigned to some agencies; however, the Chairman of the Pulses Import Association of India stated that this news of import of pulses by India spread in the international market as a consequence of which all the countries such as Myanmar, Australia, Canada and France increased the prices of pulses. I would like to submit that import of pulses is not going to bring down their prices in the country. Government relates the rate of economic growth to inflation; however, I feel that it is not so. When economic growth rate is 11.2 per cent in China, inflation has been contained at 2.7 per cent. I am unable to understand as to why it could not be possible in India and why cannot our Government control the price rise? I feel that the Government need to give reply over this issue. Here the situation is different, here inflation has reached to 6.46%.

Madam Chairman, now the rabi crop is ready. The Government have fixed the support price of wheat at Rs. 850 per quintal but what is happening in the country today? In Punjab, the price of wheat is Rs. 880; in Haryana it is Rs. 980, in Uttar Pradesh it is Rs. 1050 and in Delhi it is Rs. 1127 per quintal. The Government have fixed the support price at Rs. 850 per quintal but the farmers are selling their wheat to the private parties. The farmer would not sell their wheat to the FCI at the rate fixed by the Government and due to this procurement of wheat for the Central Pool could not be done and such a situation will create more shortage. Since wheat will not accumulate into the Central Pool, the Government will not be able to meet the target of procurement. I feel that it will create severe shortage in the time to come. The situation is very serious. Inflation has affected not only the common man but has also broken the back of the middle class people. The rate of minimum wages differ in different States, however, on an average it is Rs. 60 throughout the country. Presently the prices of wheat, milk, Dal and vegetables are out of reach of the common man. Today it is essential to hold a discussion on these things. Through you, I would like to humbly submit to the Government that it should

understand the factual position and without presenting the figures it should understand the difficulties of the people. The Government should understand that presently price rise is at its peak. The price rise is at its peak and it has become very difficult for the common man to survive. If we try to belie the factual position by data, I feel that it will not produce good results. So, through you, I would like to submit to the Government that I got an opportunity to express my views while participating in discussion on the Finance Bill. Today, price rise is the main problem of the people and it is the responsibility of the Government that it should remove the difficulties being faced by the people. I feel that the Government will certainly take meaningful initiatives in this direction.

SHRI VIJOY KRISHNA (Barh): Madam Chairman, I rise to speak in support of the Finance Bill. Several of our colleagues have expressed their views on it. The Indian economy is passing through a transitional phase. We have entered into the phase of capitalism from the mixed economy. Today when Soviet Union has disintegrated and the influence of International Monetary Fund and United States has increased, our position has weakened in leading the Third World countries. Our claim as the leader of SAARC countries has also weakened. Our relations with the neighbouring countries have soured and we are passing through a phase of economic pressure of the world.

Shri Rupchand Palji, Shri Sumanji and many of our learned colleagues have given minute critical appreciation regarding the Financial Management. I would like to raise a few questions in this regard. I would like to refer here about the Corporate tax. The Corporate Tax must not be reduced in any condition as it is the big houses that are benefited by this. The amount of dividend being given by the major companies increases and this dividend is paid to only those who hold shares of the companies. 80 percent shares of the companies are owned by the proprietors of financial institutions and only 15-20 per cent shares are owned by the common people. So, my suggestion is that tax should be imposed on dividends as well. I would like to submit to the Government, especially the Minister of Finance that from the documents that has been circulated, it appears that the attitude of the Government towards the Corporate House is very lenient. So, I would like to suggest that we should ponder over the extent of strictness with which we can deal with them.

Many hon'ble Members have expressed their views regarding the economic disparity and said that economic disparity among people is increasing and measures should be taken by the Government to tackle it. I feel that if

the issue of economic disparity is not addressed by the Government and any effective measure not taken the problem of naxalism and extremism will arise in the country. It is on account of the social imbalance, economic disparity, social disparity and the situation arising out of it that the problem of naxalism and extremism is increasing in the country especially from Andhra Pradesh to Orissa, from Orissa to Chhattisgarh, from Chhattisgarh to Jharkhand, from Jharkhand to Bihar from Bihar to Nepal along Nepal border upto Farakka. It is forming a 'Red Corridor' which cannot be dismantled only through administrative arrangements. Unless drinking water, power and road connectivity are provided to poor people and the Government funds allocated for the welfare of the common people are spent for them, such things will increase. Today, more than 14 States are affected by this menace. Yesterday only, the extremists have attacked in Sheohar. A major part of Bihar State is affected by this. Today there is a need to ponder over as to what financial measures can be taken to remove economic disparity among people and what steps can be taken for the upliftment of the lowest section of society whom Gandhi ji has called the last man.

Madam, discussion has been held regarding purchasing power. The purchasing power of 80 to 90 percent people has not increased. The purchasing power of only 10-15 percent people has increased. If there is no increase in the purchasing power of the people the condition of common man will keep on deteriorating. The discussion has also been held here as to what can be done by the Government to improve their condition. I am referring here only points. There is uproar over the Special Economic Zones (SEZ) in the country. The Ministry of Commerce is taking special interest in SEZ. What is going on between the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Commerce is also published in newspapers. I would like to request that the Act related to SEZ should be amended and a provision should be made to ensure that only barren land are acquired for the said purpose. Agricultural lands of farmers should be exempted from this. If the Government acquire fertile land of farmers for SEZ, it will have to face Nandigram like situation. Yesterday, two violent incidents took place in Nandigram. I am referring Nandigram only because today it has become difficult even for those who are regarded progressive to defend whatever happened there. So, I would like to submit that the Government must ponder over all such things before taking a decision regarding the acquisition of land for SEZ. Regarding the acquisition of land for SEZ for setting up of major industries, and malls, the Government are acting arbitrarily. I would like to know from the Government whether it propose to bring any changes in it or not especially as far the question

[Shri Vijoy Krishna]

of revenue collection in campus is concerned. I would like to request that the Government should take strict action for the compliance of law regarding the SEZ. If the Government do not work in this regard I feel that the economic disparity which is increasing will further increase. One may give argument in support of economic progress, however, the Government cannot escape from Nandigram like incidents occurring in various parts of the country.

Madam, first we put emphasis on income tax and also talk about taking strict measures in this regard, however, we do not pay attention towards the fact as to who is spending, where he is spending and how much spending. There should be a provision in the Income Tax Rule that tax payers should also give details about their expenditure in the return. If this is done then the Government will be able to check rise in the black money. Money is being accumulated in the hands of a few rich people, the poor are getting more poorer. The BPL list is increasing and BPL list should be reviewed and should be prepared without any bias. The dispute in this regard is going on in the country. If one wants to come out of it, he has to manage the expenses. Lot of expenditure is being incurred in the country. There are many hotels in the country where people are spending 20 thousand, 25 thousand, 30 thousand, 35 thousand and 40 thousand rupees on food only. But no receipt or list is maintained. These are the people who talk a lot of progress, ruling the country, these are the people who are regulating the country. Therefore, a system to set ceiling on expenses should be evolved? If the ceiling on expenses is not made, one will get the impression that somewhere the Government is also involved in wrong deeds. I am not leveling allegations against him, he is a learned man, and expert of financial matters. If an economist does so the matter becomes more serious. I would like to make an humble request to you to consider this. Being involved in social, political work, I go to marriages, funerals and visit areas hit by floods and droughts. Therefore, I am aware that the UPA Government is being praised for many good deeds also. But if one visits the village, one will find 90 per cent of educated people are unable to understand the principle of economic growth rate. The Minister may continue to convince them about 9 per cent growth rate, but they are asking about the rates of pulses, tomato, potato and wheat, the condition is alarming. The Government understand that it has done enough by increasing the Minimum Support Price of wheat by Rs.50-100. On the other hand, the foreign companies in the name of domestic companies are given full liberty to buy unlimited quantity of wheat. The Government is not going

to get any wheat, but it will go in their hands. The Government has made up its mind to import wheat, it has taken a decision in this regard.

Just now, while holding a discussion on pulses, Shri Suman said, we never become self-reliant in case of pulses, ever since independence, this crisis has continuously been looming over us. No action was taken regarding the areas which could be developed as pulse producing areas, the areas which had good potential for pulse cultivation. What action the Ministry of Agriculture and other Ministries have taken in this regard? There are many areas of Bihar like Mokama, Fatuha, Thoyal, Chhapra and dozens of such areas where production of pulses could have been increased, but where an integrated scheme has been formulated in this regard? Since independence, whichever Government was in power, did nothing in this regard, I am just citing an example. There is a crisis of pulses and CBI inquiry in this regard is going on. Today, the Government have admitted in the House that this allegation prima facie is right and when hon. Minister was giving reply, I understood that a CBI inquiry is going on and stringent action would be taken against the people found guilty. Who are these people, who exported the items despite a ban on export? It is not so, that the Government is not aware about the names of culprits, everybody is aware of it. The people of Maharashtra and Gujarat know them well. Therefore, through you, I would like to urge that the situation is frightening and alarming for the UPA Government. Last time also I said, now I repeat with heavy heart that meaningful efforts should be made to control the price rise, otherwise it would prove injurious to the Government.

[English]

SHRI B. MAHTAB (Cuttack): Madam, I thank you for giving me the opportunity to say a few words regarding the Finance Bill, 2007-2008.

Today, specifically we are discussing about the hole that the Government digs into our pocket. My impression is that the hole is becoming bigger day after day. We are more concerned as we, many a time, discuss about the income tax relief that is provided to the payer. But it is not only the income tax that makes a hole in our pocket, but we also have to pay for the value added tax, excise duty, service tax and a number of other taxes which make a deep hole in our pocket and it has become very difficult specially for the lower middle class people to survive in this society when inflation has reached sky high.

Madam, we have been told repeatedly that unproductive expenditure, tax distortions and high deficits are considered to have constrained the economy from realizing its full growth potential. These are the three reasons very amply given by different Governments who have been in power since 1991. We make comparison with China and we make comparison with a number of other countries also. But these are the three impediments before our nation which actually pulls us from realizing the full growth potential and these three are unproductive expenditure, tax distortions and high deficits.

Before explaining on this point, I should mention that to arrive at a conclusion to find a solution, one has to find as to what is the problem. Identifying the problem is not a big issue today in our country. But to identify the solution and to make progress in that respect is actually creating problem in our country.

At the beginning, in 1991, of the fiscal reforms, the fiscal imbalance was identified as the root cause of the twin problems of inflation and the difficult balance of payment position. A medium term management of the fiscal deficit and to provide the support of strong institutional mechanism, the Fiscal Reforms and Budget Management Act, FRBMA, was enacted on 26th August 2003. The Act and the rules were notified and it came into effect from July 5, 2004. The FRBMA is an important institutional expression to ensure fiscal prudence. It has to be incremental.

India's gross tax revenue has grown at a faster pace than the gross domestic product for the last eight years. Madam, the increasing buoyancy of revenues, particularly tax revenue of both the Centre and the States observed in the recent past is likely to continue with tax reforms and improved compliance. But such tax reforms must also involve accelerated improvement in tax administration, hassle free tax collection mechanism that punishes evaders but not causes inconvenience to the honest tax payers. What improvement has been made within the last three years, especially, in this Budget and in this Finance Bill?

There is a need to build up a comprehensive data base of tax payers, taxes paid, income and transactions in the asset markets and linking it up effectively with scrutiny and assessment process is also critical. Have any distinctive progress been made in this regard?

The hon. Finance Minister says that the cost of collection of taxes in our country was amongst the lowest in the world, yet the net is not wide enough. To sustain high growth in tax revenue, increasingly efficient, liberal and equitable tax system is required. How far this has

been attempted? Information has been provided often that there is buoyancy in revenue collection. When growth in Indian economy is explained by industrial sector growth and part of it is coming from the service sector, my question is, why is it that the excise duty collection has lagged behind in manufacturing sector? What are the reasons for lower excise duty collection, lower than the growth in the manufacturing sector? What does this suggest?

I come to another aspect. It is regarding the surcharge and cess that is being imposed. In 2007-08 Finance Bill, an increase of one per cent additional cess on all taxes would net an additional annual revenue of Rs.5,000 crore for the Government. There are other taxes like the coverage of IT companies located in Software Technology Parks of India, STPI under the minimum alternative tax or increase in dividend distribution tax rate. But, none of these proposals will have an impact as high as that of cess. My point of concern, Madam, is that the Union Government does not share with the States the revenue collected from surcharges and cesses. If the bulk of additional revenue mobilisation happens through an increase in education cess, the Centre takes full credit for that revenue, while the States share the revenue losses on account of tax cuts. This has serious implications. Surcharges and cesses are accounting for a larger share in the Centre's gross revenue collections. Between 1991-92 and 1998-99, surcharges and cesses accounted for about 3 to 6 per cent of the total collections, but in the last five years that share has gone up to 9 to 12 per cent. Collection of surcharges and cesses are growing year after year. For instance, surcharges and cesses will mobilize Rs. 57,840 crore for the Centre in 2006-07 which is up to 21 per cent over the previous year. In 2007-08, we are told that this amount will go up to Rs. 64,530 crore. My point of concern here is that the Union Government is gaining because of surcharge and cess. The States who collectively share amongst themselves 30.5 per cent of the total tax collections by the Centre minus surcharge and cesses are obviously the losers. I would like the Finance Minister to disclose how much additional resource is mobilized by the Centre through changes in the rates of surcharge and cesses.

I would also like to mention that an attempt has been made to discuss about the tax concessions and revenue losses. I need not go into that aspect in detail. A number of reports have been submitted to the Government of India. High level Committees have been formed and reports have been submitted. Every expert body has recommended for elimination of tax exemptions from the statute. Yet the Government continues with a view that it should continue with tax exemption. There are two divergent views

[Shri B. Mahtab]

specifically on this issue. But my concern here is this. While going through the records I find that year after year, especially during the last three or four years, the exemption or the tax forgone is mounting year after year. My pointed question here is this. Is this the philosophy of the Government that every year the tax forgone will increase to sustain the growth that we are so much discussing about?

Regarding price rise, of course many hon. Members have mentioned. I would only like to add here that hardening interest rates are hurting the salaried class who have borrowed heavily because of the lower interest rates and tax incentive especially which was given to home loans. They have now to pay higher EMIs or repay home loans over extended tenures. A whole lot of new loan seekers wanting to buy a house or a car or durables have to pay much higher rates of interest.

15.00 hrs.

Now, the inflation rate is showing a declining trend. If the latest trend is an indication, do you believe that the inflation will come down to the RBI's mandated tolerance level of five per cent within a couple of months? Will the interest rates come down equally sooner? I believe, the Government is duty bound to manage both inflation levels and interest rates. I would like to know your views, Mr. Minister Finance Minister, on this.

Regarding Special Economic Zone, divergent views are there outside the House and also in the Government. A figure was given, I read it somewhere, that the estimated loss of revenue during 2005-2010, because of this Special Economic Zone would be Rs. 48,881 crore on account of Indirect Taxes, and Rs. 57,531 crore on account of Direct Taxes, which totals up to Rs. 1,06,412 crore. Mind you, this estimate is based on only 70 Special Economic Zones approved by the Board of Approval initially. The loss calculated in this manner will be manifold if the numbers and the sizes of the SEZs increase. So, what is the thinking of the Government specially on this?

Regarding iron ore export, I appreciate the decision, which the Government has taken, of imposing a duty on the export of iron ore that is taking place. But I would like to understand how. Mr. Finance Minister, you are going to share that duty with the concerned State from which this ore is being mined. What is that percentage, because ultimately the States also should get some benefit from them?

Madam, my last point is regarding the insurance specially the farm insurance or the crop insurance sector.

There is confusion in the minds of the farmers. We all know that the credit that is being provided through the institutions, may be banks or cooperatives or RRBs, covers hardly 46 per cent of the total loanees, who are taking the loan; and the rest, that is, more than 54 per cent people are taking the credit from outside the institutions. So, about 46 per cent people take institutional finance, and of them, more than 70 per cent people take credit from the cooperatives. I read it in the newspaper today, and perhaps the hon. Prime Minister and the hon. Finance Minister might have taken up that issue.

So, I would like to understand from you, Mr. Finance Minister, whether there is any thinking of enhancing the loan component without any collateral security from Rs. 50,000 to Rs. 1 lakh. If it is done, it would be of great help to the farmers. Secondly, you are giving the benefit of interest rate of two per cent that is being charged, through the RBI to different banks. Should not the cooperatives also get that benefit because ultimately the farmers who take more credits from the cooperatives for short-term farm loan, do not get that credit at all?

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: They are given.

SHRI B. MAHTAB: But ultimately, it does not reach the farmers.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Subvention of two per cent to cooperative loans is there. Now, what the cooperative society does, I do not know. But I have not received any complaint to that effect. But we have extended the two per cent subvention to cooperative loans also last year.

SHRI B. MAHTAB: That is why I am raising this issue.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: We are giving.

SHRI B. MAHTAB: That subvention, which is being provided to the co-operative banks, is not actually reaching the co-operative societies.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: The State Government controls the co-operatives. We are giving two per cent.

SHRI B. MAHTAB: I would request the Government to please find out. The Orissa Government gave this subvention of two per cent before the Centre gave last year. But, there are certain States where it is not actually reaching the farmers. I think it is necessary that the Centre should monitor, should find out what is the actual position whether the farmers are getting it or not.

Regarding crop insurance, this is an issue which also needs the Centre's intervention.

15.06 hrs.

(SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN *in the Chair*)

The scheme is based on area approach basis. An idea has been floated that the yield data should be received from the State Government. The Government has also launched the National Agricultural Insurance Scheme since last eight years to mitigate the losses which have been suffered by the farmers on account of shortfall of yield due to non-preventable natural calamities. The problem lies in the co-operative sector. In the co-operative sector, the money that is being given as a loan, actually, is being deducted which does not happen in the banking sector. In the co-operative sector, for this insurance, the money is being deducted directly from the farmers when the money is advanced as a loan, though there are two ways. In banks, the farmers do not have to pay for the insurance but in the co-operative sector, a farmer has to pay for the insurance, regarding crop insurance sector. I think that needs clarification from the Government side and they should be told clearly that in the co-operative sector, this insurance amount should not be given by farmers.

At the end, I would only say that in the Bill some progress has been made in relation to last few years but more could have been done. The pinch that is actually hurting the people today is the price rise. The attempt that has been made, specially relating to cement is a glaring example. That has demonstrated how the Government has failed to monitor the price of cement. I need not elaborate on this more.

With these words, I conclude.

SHRI VIJAYENDRA PAL SINGH (Bhilwara): Sir, I stand to speak on the Finance Bill, 2007-2008. It is a common knowledge that the Union Budget is discussed in Parliament in three stages. It is usually presented in the month of February. Thereafter, there is a discussion on the General Budget. In the second stage, what comes about is the Demands for Grants which are discussed also in the Parliamentary Standing Committees. Then, we have the Guillotine and Appropriation Bill.

In the third stage, we have the Finance Bill which is what we are discussing this evening.

I personally feel that the hon. Minister of Finance – for whom I have great regards, who has been famous for having presented a 'Dream Budget' a decade ago – in this Budget, he himself has not said that it is a 'Dream Budget'. I can say and a lot of people say that it is a disappointment.

With a robust economy, growing at 9.2 per cent, the

hon. Minister of Finance was in an unenviable position, to quote his words, 'to unfurl the sails and catch the wind'. But this Budget does not give those opportunities, has not given any indication to it and if new avenues had been opened by this Budget, I am sure, this country would have not just joined the trillion-dollar club, but we would have been ahead of Brazil.

If I may say so, and without hesitation, by far the most profound reforms initiated by the then hon. Minister of Finance, Dr. Manmohan Singh was in the realm of direct taxes. The idea was to broaden the tax base to the extent possible and to choose moderate rates. It was in those days that the Nobel Laureate James Meerlees, Professor in Cambridge, had floated this concept and had been taken over and that was time that, I think, India had the highest tax rate, going nearly to 97 point and some percentage. That was when there was a lot of black-marketing, black money, evasions and it defied all reasonableness on the part of tax formulators of those days.

Let me come to the Budget. Yesterday, most of the newspapers carried the story that the IT return forms are being simplified. We were waiting for this. But I am surprised. Last year also, the hon. Minister of Finance had said the same thing. He was averse to the idea of 'Saraal' and I think it was only because 'Saraal' concept was floated by Shri Yashwant Sinha, by the NDA Government and he was against it and he wanted to simplify the 'Saraal', to more 'Saraal' but it turned out to be that in this 'Saraal' what forms were there, became very very complicated. There was so much information being asked – the AIR and all the details and all that and the hon. Minister of Finance is well aware of that. I hope that the Saraal forms being brought out now are really becoming Saraal by him and not complicated.

Let us try and assess some of the tax proposals in the Budget 2007-2008. Firstly, you floated the NHA and the REC bonds for infrastructure development. But, I do not know what pressure was there on you, I do not know from the friends sitting next to you, that the capital gains must be taxed and you put a limit to it to Rs. 50 lakh. Why? If this money is coming, if it is used for the infrastructure, what is the harm? Why do you want to limit it? We need lots and lots of money for infrastructure development.

The other thing that I wanted to raise is the Finance Minister's preveene to raise the distribution tax by companies from 12.5 per cent to 15 per cent. I have no quarrel on this. But he also knows that this is the time for an individual investor – who does not understand stock market, and

[Shri Vijayendra Pal Singh]

does not want to speculate — to put in his money into the mutual funds, UTI and other mutual funds. Why do you want to tax him more than what has been taxed to the other companies? What is the need to do it? He is the person who does not understand the stock market. He wants to get something out of it. But, by doing this, you are really dissuading him from investing in the stock market. I think that this is not the right way of going about it.

Further, more harsh amendment to section 48 (3) is the cash payment for expenses exceeding Rs. 20,000, and disallowing the said expenditure at 100 per cent instead of 20 per cent. On the one side we are going to become members of the trillion dollar club. What is a lakh of rupees, and what is Rs. 20,000? Here you want to bring it down to Rs. 20,000. I feel that this also needs to be looked into. It is required that you have a capping of a lakh of rupees, and not Rs. 20,000.

Let me also say something nice to the Finance Minister. You have very rightly made it mandatory for e-filing of returns in case of companies. But at the same time let me say that you should also consider the set off of such refunds to future advance tax liability to cut short the cost. Now, even the Government will be gaining out of it. They will be keeping this money with them. There will be less of corruption because this is the time when the IT Department goes about saying that: "I am giving a refund of so much", and there is passing on under the table. Why do not you stop it? If this set off is done to the advance tax of the next year, then I think that it will be a welcome idea.

Let me next take up the charging of interest per month. How much are you going to gain from it? It was being done, but if this is done, then you might get ½ per cent more. I do not know as to how much work you have done, but there will be more complications and litigations. There will be corruption in it, and there will also be calculation mistakes, which will also go into litigations. Why is this being done? What is the need to do it?

Let me next take up the point of fringe benefit tax on stock option plan of the employees. I must say that I have read somewhere that the acronym e-soaps is being used wrongly to mean. *...(Interruptions)* Sir, can you ask them to please keep quiet? The Minister sitting there is also talking.

[Translation]

You may go outside and talk, or go to back benches. Though he is Minister, but it is really sad to see him behaving like this during a discussion on Finance Bill. *...(Interruptions)*

SHRI VIJOY KRISHNA: He should stick to the topic.

SHRI VIJAYENDRA PAL SINGH: What am I saying?

SHRI VIJOY KRISHNA: He is making an issue of it.

SHRI VIJAYENDRA PAL SINGH: It is already an issue.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please address the Chair. I will maintain order in the House. Please continue your speech.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI VIJAYENDRA PAL SINGH: There is no question of getting irritated. You are committing a mistake. I have not done anything wrong.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMED): You should also remember your mistake.

SHRI VIJOY KRISHNA: You must also remember your mistake.

[English]

SHRI VIJAYENDRA PAL SINGH: Is this the way to behave? *...(Interruptions)*

E-SOP is being used wrongly to mean stop option the world over. This stands for Employees Shared Ownership Plans. What I want to really say is that even if the Finance Minister has said on record that he has not really studied it, he wants to do it. Who is going to really pay? Is it really beneficial for small companies which are coming up? We all know that this is being targeted to the IT industry. IT industry is the leader, the driver of the whole economy and we have got on to the club of trillion dollar. Instead of encouraging them, why are we targeting them? I may also put that one of the biggest problems in the IT industries is retaining good men. There will be a brain-drain. A lot of good people are coming from abroad, getting jobs in Bangalore. If you lose this. I think, there will be a brain-drain. The Finance Minister must consider this also.

May I also say that you have done a great thing - giving a tax holiday to hotels in Delhi and around. Why have you restricted only to Delhi? Is it just because we are going to have the Commonwealth Games in Delhi? As you know, Rajasthan is very close by, where we are also going to go. Why do you not extend this to Rajasthan? We have a lot of problems in Rajasthan. It is a land locked State. We do not have port facilities. We have other

difficulties. I will be happy if the Finance Minister considers this as well.

A lot of the Budget proposals are clarificatory in nature. It is being declared from time to time and from year to year that new Finance and Income-Tax Acts would be introduced to simplify the existing one and all that in no revenue Budget. The Minister has introduced 84 new clauses. Is that simplification? Is that not going to really complicate the matter? I would suggest that he should look into that as well.

Sir, looking to the international standards and competitiveness, the time has come to cut short the tariff, simplify the rules, make law transparent to mix business and commerce to meet the world standards and competitiveness. If you look at the small countries in ASEAN, we can find that they lowered the tax burdens, simplified rules and made better tax collection and the administration has resulted in high growth and the GDP.

Finally, there is something which people have been talking about and I feel that I must put it across to the Finance Minister. What is the reason for your bringing down the customs duty on digital camera with the capability of reading moving images from 12.5 per cent to zero per cent? It is okay that you have brought down the duty on multi-functional device to fax, scan and print to zero per cent, but what is the requirement for bringing down to zero, the duty on digital camera with capability of reading moving images? Why did you do that? Is it because you wanted to help one company which was in that business? This is what is going around; I thought I must put it across to you so that the air is clean. Thank you very much.

SHRI MADHU GOUD YASKHI (Nizamabad): Thank you. I rise to speak in support of the Finance Bill, 2007-08.

Let me begin by first congratulating our hon. Finance Minister for having introduced the Finance Bill, 2007-08 which focuses effectively in the sectors of agriculture, education and health and more so, stresses on inclusive growth.

Our hon. leader, the Chairperson of the UPA, Shrimati Sonia Gandhi stressed on inclusive growth in her Inaugural Address on the theme of 'Peace, Non-Violence and Empowerment – Gandhian Philosophy in the 21st Century', on 29th January 2007.

Our hon. Finance Minister has allotted over Rs.100 thousand crore on primary and secondary education, health, Bharat Nirman, NREGS, etc. But the important thing is that the Government has to find ways to make sure

that it is spent in an effective and efficient way so that inclusive growth is achieved. It is heartening to see the C&AG's report on this – in the case of Sarva Siksha Abhiyan, still over 1.3 crore children, about 40 per cent of the targeted group, are out of school; 31,468 habitations do not have schools; over 75,884 schools have just one teacher and over 6,647 schools have none. It is good to see that budgetary allocation has been increased from Rs.17,733 crore to Rs.23,142 crore for Sarva Siksha Abhiyan, Mid-Day Meal Scheme and other schemes. But what we need to see is that there is no diversion of funds. After allocating huge sums of money for Sarva Siksha Abhiyan, the States consistently are diverting funds, leading to corruption. This year, he has allocated money for five lakh new classrooms; my question to the Finance Minister is, do we have the data of required classrooms? We have a target that by 2010, no child will be left behind, without attending a school; but how many rooms do we require still? It is good that we have five lakh rooms allotted for this, but unless we have some target, as we have the target that by 2010, no child will be left out of school, it will be difficult to achieve. We have the statistics on population; we have statistics on growth; so, we should have the statistics on requirement also. Unless you have this, fund allocation may not be practical.

Even after 60 years, my own district, Nizamabad is one of the backward districts of the country; still 2157 class rooms are required. When I travel to various places in my constituency, even in a small hamlet which is 20 minutes away from the State Highway, we do not have schools. People beg me to provide schools or drinking water facility. Though we have schools, they are not effective. In a case related to the previous Andhra Pradesh Government, investigation is going on with regard to diversion of Rs.235 crore from Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. Yesterday again there was a fraud relating to the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. My urge to the hon. Minister is that we should evolve an effective mechanism to utilize these funds. They should reach these needy persons.

It is a very good decision of the Government to expand the National Rural Employment Guarantee scheme from 200 districts to 330 districts and also increasing funds to over Rs. 12000 crore. Though we do not have any correct audit Report but when we are spending public tax-payers' money – such a huge amount is given to rural employment scheme which is needed - unless we have an effective mechanism, there will be the same amount of corruption and the States will indulge in diversion of funds. They will not give benefits to the unemployed rural youth or people. My humble request to the Finance Minister is to please consider the following. This is very-very important.

[Shri Madhu Goud Yaskhi]

In this Budget over Rs.3,240 crore has been allotted to the new OBC quota. We all know where do we stand with regard to the OBC quota. Our hon. Law Minister is also present here and he says that this year there is no possibility of extending the OBC quota in higher education. My request is, we can use the allocated fund for the targeted OBC students. The hon. Finance Minister has said many times in the Parliament about higher education loan. Even though a student belonging to OBC gets into merit, they do not have the means to study in a private institution. To go to a private engineering college in Andhra Pradesh costs about over Rs. 70,000 and for medical college it costs Rs. 1,30,000 plus, per year. Many of these students cannot afford to pay that kind of money. Many of the students' parents come to me, as they are not able to raise that much money they have no choice but to drop the seat in spite of getting merit. I would like to know whether these funds could be allotted in another way to some meritorious students who belong to the below poverty line families or whatever income you may fix. In this way, weaker section students will get benefited. Even if you implement quota system, you need funds to do that. So, the ultimate goal is to benefit those students who deserve it from the OBC category. For thousand years they have been suffering.

I would like to give you another comparison of the people who oppose the OBC quota. We have great respect for the people like Narayanmurthy. Infosys company, which has declared an income of over Rs.3000 crore this year, needs benefit. They need reservation in a sense they want land in Andhra Pradesh. They have requested the Andhra Pradesh Government to give 500 acres of land which is to be developed as Infosys campus. The current market rate of the land is worth Rs. 10,000 crores. They want it at a cheaper price of simply Rs.80 crore. They need more concession for that. We oppose it. I belong to the OBC category. We do not want reservation but we need equal and affordable education so that we can compete with others. If the same Rs. 10,000 crore are spent on providing infrastructure in the Andhra Pradesh State, the entire State will not have any problem of class room or teachers. We should give an effective education to everyone like any other developed country. I had spent 15 years in US where any person, immaterial of the income level, can go to a Government school which is equally competitive to a private school. We do not want reservation but you should provide equal educational opportunities. You should help those people who cannot afford to go to the private school. People oppose the quota system but the business community wants all kinds of benefits.

Take the example of SEZ. The Fab City is going to be set up in Hyderabad for which the Government has allotted 100 acres of land. Those people can mortgage that 100 acres of land and raise funds. That land has been given for lease at the cost of Re.1 per acre. Where are we? What kind of justice is this? These people are taking all kinds of benefits from taxpayers money but they do not want to extend these benefits to the poorer sections. What is the corporate social consciousness? Our hon. Prime Minister did mention that while addressing recently held CII Conference. We are seeing 9.2 per cent GDP growth and only fewer sections of these industrial houses are getting benefited and going all over the globe and purchasing companies. But what is their responsibility in terms of India? What are they doing in education and health sectors? In US, on an average every household spends about 150 dollars for contributing to the poorer people all over the world. I recently read in one of the newspapers that one of the richest persons - Bharati Communications - bought a telecom company. When they asked about Mr. Bill Gates' contribution of 300 million dollars to India for AIDS eradication in India, he said that he is too young to retire. But that is the response of the corporate sector. But they would claim all kinds of benefits.

Coming back to Infosys, the Government is allocating over Rs. 10,000 crore worth of property for merely raising 500 jobs and over a period of time 4000 jobs. As far as IT sector is concerned, there is growth in it but in this sector 95 per cent of the job growth is restricted only to the few major cities. If you compare it with other sectors, the job growth of the IT sector is only five per cent of the total. In my first speech in Parliament in 2004, I did request the hon. Finance Minister that we need to increase allocation, to the manufacturing sector. We have to increase allocation to the manufacturing sector. We do compare ourselves with China but we cannot compete with it. We also boast many times that we may over take China in the next 30 years in terms of GDP growth but to do that we need to effectively have the schemes where it could be inclusive growth and also job oriented growth and more so in the rural areas.

Sir, it is worth mentioning as our visionary Prime Minister, late Rajiv Gandhi said 22 years ago that barely 15 paise out of one rupee is reaching the actual beneficiary. Even then often allocated money is not spent. Much of the money is spent for the maintenance and infrastructure works. Even if we see the report of December 2006. 13 Departments have spent just 40 per cent of the allocated money. We did see our hon. Finance Minister expressing his concern about it. An amount of Rs.2,52,594 crore was allotted but only Rs. 1,36,405 crore has been spent in

nine months. For my own district, the Central Government has allocated funds for science equipment for the schools. Until December 2006, Rs.36 lakh which has been given by the Central Government, the District Education Officer has not spent it yet. He is still in the process of finding out which schools require it. One does not need a great knowledge to find out. Every school in the rural areas does require science equipment like test tubes and other things. So, this is a lethargic way of bureaucratic spending and wasting the taxpayers money.

As I move on, I would like to stress upon education which we did discuss a bit. The other important issue is the health care system. Over a period of time, successive Governments have failed in providing effective primary health care system in the country. If you see, over a period, it is disheartening. I would like to give one example of Andhra Pradesh. A few weeks ago, in a Government hospital, an infant child was killed by a pig in the hospital area itself. Again, just two days back, a dog had killed another baby in some Government hospital. In my own district where the Government has built a hospital spending a sum of around Rs. 4 crore, there are shortage of doctors. In spite of the fact that around 4,000 doctors are graduating every year, not enough doctors are willing to join Government hospitals. The Government has been spending a huge amount for the IITs every year. So, my request to the Government would be, that it should be made compulsory for every doctor to serve in an under-served area at least for some time. In the United States if any doctor wants to settle down there, then they would be required to serve in an under-developed and an under-served area for an effective two years. Only under that condition they would be able to get a resident licence. India is a country where 70 per cent of its population lives in the rural area; 26 per cent of Indian population does not have medical coverage and every analysis shows that the biggest reason as to why people get into debt trap is because of medical expenses. Only in the State of Andhra Pradesh, during the last season to combat dengue fever, the people have spent over Rs. 500 crore. It is a good beginning that the Finance Minister has started the Aam Admi Bima Yojana which would help people in the unorganized sector, particularly in the rural areas, to get medical care. It will help them to an extent. But the Government need to think very seriously about providing AIIMS like hospitals, not just in the major cities, but in the rural areas as well, at least in the district headquarters. This would help in strengthening the health care system in the rural areas. The National Rural Health Care Mission does mention about mobile health care vans. But we need to see how effectively those can be equipped and provided health care in the rural areas.

The Central Government, under the plan, reimburses around Rs. 150 crore as part of services offered by the private hospitals that are not available in the CGHS hospitals. I hate to use the words 'corporate hospitals'. The basic principle of a corporation is to earn profits. If the basic motive and intention of a corporate hospital is to make money, then what kind of a service would they provide? They get certification from the CGHS and embezzle huge amounts of money. What I would like to suggest is that instead of giving crores and crores of rupees towards reimbursement, the same amount could be used more effectively to strengthen the CGHS hospitals and health care system provided by the Government in the country.

Sir, coming to the issue of the minority students, the Government has allocated a sum of Rs. 72 crore for pre-matric scholarships and Rs. 90 crore for post-matric scholarships. It is a well-known fact that over 10 per cent population in the country belongs to the minority community. In my own district there are more than 3, 00,000 people belonging to the Minority community. In order to keep the youth from this community away from engaging themselves in illegal activities, it is important to provide them the means of getting employment and education. It is a good beginning, but the amount allocated is meagre. There has been a condition mentioned about the funds to be used for this purpose. A restriction of 20 per cent of total population has to be minority to get these benefits. This restriction may be reduced so that more and more districts having minority population can come under this fold and can benefit out of this. The hon. Finance Minister may consider allocating more funds to these districts for providing education and employment to them.

The extent of farm credit has been increased to over Rs. 2,20,000 crore. But what we see in reality is that only the rich farmers are able to get this credit. Farmers who have a little more of land are only getting these benefit. The banks are putting more restrictions in extending credit. They should be a little liberal. In regard to the PMRY, there is a huge problem with the banks, particularly in respect of the self-employment schemes. To have a loan of Rs. 1,00,000, the banks are demanding a minimum deposit of Rs. 50,000. When a person has a fixed deposit of Rs. 50,000 why should he approach a bank for a loan of Rs. 1 lakh? Indirectly, they are imposing the restriction on the banks. Also in spite of the District Administration electing these self-employed youths for these benefits. In a particular bank of a pitlam mandal area, if ten beneficiaries are selected, they are allocating only Rs. 3 lakh and, even if you have Rs. 1 lakh sanction from the District Administration, they say that they can give only Rs. 50,000.

[Shri Madhu Goud Yaskhi]

In terms of Backward Classes, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, only 52 per cent of the total schemes have been grounded and among them is 26 per cent for the BCs and 12 per cent for the minority communities. The funds that have been allocated itself show how money has not been spent. Though the Government is not prescribing any restrictive conditions, the banks are doing it. When commercial banks are extending thousands of crores of rupees at the rate of two or three per cent, the agricultural farmers are getting loans at 12 per cent to 18 per cent. The Government did mention and the hon'ble Finance Minister did say that farmers may get a loan up to seven per cent rate. That should be effectively implemented.

My district is one of the naxal prone districts.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have covered all your points. You yourself may be feeling it.

SHRI MADHU GOUD YASKHI: The most important point is about the beedi workers. In Andhra Pradesh, there are over ten lakhs people working in beedi industry. In my own district of Nizamabad, about three and a half lakh people are working as beedi workers. Women from the age of 12 to 60 years work in the beedi industry. Their maximum earning per day is Rs. 65. There is a new logo for smoking ban. It is good and I am not denying it. I am for ban on smoking. But there is no other means of employment for these rural women. If you see their physical health condition, you may find that they are suffering from respiratory problems like TB and other diseases. My request to the hon Finance Minister is to allocate more funds for providing effective alternate employment for those poor rural women and then you can start using this logo on beedies and other restrictive measures as we know that many people are suffering from cancer as well. But we need to see that these people also are provided with effective employment.

The other important point is fluorosis. About 19 States in the country are suffering due to fluorosis. In Andhra Pradesh, people particularly the districts of Nalgonda, Prakasam and Ongole are suffering from fluorosis. I would request the Finance Minister may allocate more funds for it and to take it up on a war footing like we have programmes for polio eradication. Likewise, fluorosis eradication programme also has to be started. National Programme for Prevention of Fluorosis should be started since it is a national problem. The Health Minister himself has agreed that 25 million people in the country are affected by fluorosis. This is an agreed figure but the

actual figure is much more than this. So, more funds may be allocated in this financial year itself for fluorosis eradication.

Unfortunately, we give less importance to the sports sector. Sports is another sector which could generate huge employment for the youth of the country and more funds can be allotted to it. Backward Area Development fund should cover naxal affected districts as well. Naxalism has to be dealt as a socio-economic problem more than a law and order problem. We are spending about Rs. 10,000 crore for law and order, on weapons, etc. to contain naxalism, but we are not looking for providing effective employment in those areas. Only Rs. 500 crore is provided for backward areas district development. So, the Government should consider increasing this amount of Rs. 500 crore, which is provided for the whole of the country. If you see the statistics, a decade back the naxal-affected districts were 33, but now it has increased to 165. Unless the problem is tackled as a socio-economic problem, it won't be possible to solve it.

Globalisation has resulted in real estate boom. We hear that people in Hyderabad and surrounding areas travel in trunk load of money. For example, a property whose market value is Rs. 1 crore, registration is done for Rs. 1 lakh. This kind of disparity exists. What is the Income Tax Department doing about it? I would request the Finance Minister to look into it.

With these words I support the Finance Bill. I hope the hon. Finance Minister will look into some of the important points which I have raised and consider them favourably.

[Translation]

DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA (Ujjain): Mr. Chairman, Sir, every year the budget of financial provisions for reflecting economic policy of the Government is presented. It tries to express as to where the country is heading. It is a continuous process. It should have something new. Sufficient importance should be given to the primary requirement of the country. It is not important how much has been collected and how much the GDP is growing, the important thing is as to what steps are being taken to provide relief to the poorest of the poor. Out of 110 crore population of the country, most of the people are deprived. What measures have been taken to give relief to such deprived people? When we go through budget speech and finance bill for finding measures in this regard, it appears that the desired effort to break the convention has not been made. Slogans and promises have been

made in past. It would be injustice, if I do not remind the House of slogans. It is said "Congress Ka Hath, Gareeb Ke Sath". We have been listening about poverty since 1972. It was said at that time 'Garib Hatao'. Who has stopped them from eradicating poverty. Poverty should be removed. However, the situation remains same. It should be eradicated somehow. The Government should make measures in this regard. The Government do not have strong will to give shape to its promises, it just give slogans. What will one do with hollow promises, we just want our basic needs to be fulfilled, what will we do with hollow promises. The basic needs of commonman are food, clothing and house. We say 'sare jahan se achacha Hindustan hamara', it should be so, but we do not have houses to live in and how can we say 'sare jahan se achcha'. How the ends would be met? Have we seriously pondered over regarding house and job opportunities for the people. If not, howsoever good budget may be presented, howsoever good reviews are done, good speeches are made, those speeches are not going to serve any purpose? Many amendments in the Finance Bill have been made. After all, what is the use of these amendments. Under direct tax, 7 amendments in income tax, 11 in property tax, 20 in custom duty, 17 in custom tariff and excise duty, 1 is excise tariff and 1 in service tax have been made. Cess is also leveled. But where is cess utilised. As I am aware of working of Ministry of Labour, I would like to say that the effective steps initiated for utilisation of cess have not been implemented. The cess on iron ore, lime stone and dolomite and beedi has been increased. There is one fund of Rs. 19 crore, other of Rs. 20 crore, and there is yet another of Rs. 230 crore. The welfare activities which should have been started with the cess have not begun. There is no mechanism. We are collecting funds; the corpus is fattening and is lying unused. Our efforts are going in vain. There are no relief measures, no dispensaries for the lime-stone workers and iron ore workers. We have not evolved any mechanism to put in place the welfare measures like providing for accommodation and hospitals for bidi workers. All these welfare measures for poor people should be taken by the Government.

The price rise issue has been raised by everyone. The GDP has registered substantial growth but what about the resultant inflation. G.D.P. has registered 18.5 per cent growth. 70 per cent of the people of the country are dependant on agriculture. GDP should be linked with the prosperity and employment of common man. GDP is showing 18.5 per cent growth for 70 per cent people. We should have carved out either 60 per cent or the like from the share of GDP for 70 per cent people so as to create

employment opportunities. But this is not being done. GDP has registered substantial growth in the services sector. Excise is not very important for people. Many people do not even understand budget. Who gets a chance to study or understand the clauses of budget? Mostly, people understand it in terms of relief provided to them by the Government. Cement required to construct a house has become costly. Do the Government have any reply to it? Raw material has become costly. Have States been given more cess for this purpose? What happened to iron ore which resulted in the escalated cost of steel. There has been no change. Why the Government are not contemplating all these issues. The budget was presented and the people are not getting relief they ought to get. I would like to demand that the prices of cement should be rolled back and for this only the Government will have to make some efforts. 8-10 years back, cement used to cost Rs. 100. Companies like Larsen and Toubro were engaged in manufacturing cement. All the public sector companies have been divested. As a result we also lost control. There used to be cement manufacturing associate companies. We could exercise control through these companies. We lost all that control. Now they got an opportunity to increase the prices since everything has been privatized. First they offer cheaper prices to enter the market, then after capturing the market they enjoy monopoly and keep on increasing the prices. There are all these apprehensions. At that time, there used to be employment opportunities when the factories were run under public sector, we could control production and regulate market. Now we have lost all these mechanisms.

Globalisation is also more capital oriented; it does not give any importance to human being, labour, skills. We are losing importance of all these resources. That is why we are not able to provide any relief to common man.

16.00 hrs.

So all the items like wheat, rice, sugar, oil, pulses, tea etc. have become costly. Now what to eat and what to leave, one cannot understand. Budget should be public oriented which should offer some relief to common man. The prices of wheat are not declining because there is no procurement by the Government. How can be wheat made available through the Public Distribution System when there is no procurement? I learnt it in the morning during the Question Hour that we are looking forward to import wheat. Why do not we pay our farmers the price at which we are importing wheat. Have the Government any will or not? The Government should accumulate all the resources to encourage indigenous production by farmers, thereby helping them. It was also stated that they distributed rice

[Dr. Satyanarayan Jatiya]

where wheat consumption was more. The person who eats wheat, how would he eat rice? What would he do? He will try to procure it from black market from here and there. Are we giving any opportunity? Do they have such intention? I do not think so. But since we lack a system to put in place everything.

In regard to sugar, I would like to ask why the sugar mills are being closed one after the other? What the Government have done to revive the mills which are closing down? What the Government has done to arrest the delay being caused in the payment to sugarcane farmers? All these issues relate to control by the Centre since the Government is in the Centre. The mechanism evolved by the Government will have great impact on the lives of people.

The tea labourers working in the tea gardens in Darjeeling or elsewhere should get full remuneration. Have we taken any measure to get patent for our brand? We should do it if we have not. The Government should contemplate all these issues. Similarly there is National Rural Employment Scheme which assures 100 days employment. What about rest of the days? What are the objectives of this scheme? All these schemes do not have any fruition since there is no mechanism to supervise or monitor these schemes. What happens to the fund? What is done with the muster roll, everyone is aware of it? Due to all these reasons the benefits of 100 days do not accrue to the actual beneficiaries, the poor. There is no criterion to fill up the muster roll. No one is informed. So, why the Government is wasting its funds. The funds should be given directly to the Panchayats. The Government should allow the Panchayats to grow. The funds should be given directly to the Panchayats since it is a system. All the schemes can be made more effective through that system. It will also ensure proper monitoring. If schemes for the rural areas are to be implemented across the country, it should be made more systematic. Certain districts have been covered while others have been left. It was said that this would be a gradual process but how long is it going to take place? If employment is found to be the biggest problem then it should be more focused. The employment opportunities should be allowed to grow and percolated down to the common man. There are no employment opportunities in the rural areas. It means that they are not given any training. They are continuing with their traditional work but there is no market for them since multinationals have made inroads to these. The goods manufactured by the artisans lose their importance because they are replaced by the glamorous, more refined and convenient

products at cheaper price that is why one who has talent does not have work. Today carpenters, tanners and blacksmiths, craftsmen etc. are all out of work. They have been rendered jobless because they are landless. What will they do in absence of land? The labour has also been replaced by machines. If we will bring the nation on the verge of starvation and even then claim that we are moving towards prosperity and our GDP is increasing then it would certainly be meaningless. If I come to say all the things then I can say but I feel that "Bahut Shor Sunte thay, pehlu mai dil ka, cheer kar dekha, to nikla na katra khoon ka". Making tall claims cannot help and hence one should stick to small things. One should talk about the weaker section of the society. Democracy of the nation should be realized. We must definitely work as per the instruction received for doing those things. He is Finance Minister.

Mukhia mukhso chahiye, khan-paan ko ek,
pale pose sakal aang, tulsī sahī vivek.

Here is a public saying"

Aisa chahu raj mei, mile saban ko ann,
Chote bado sam base, Ravidas rahe prasanna

Further it is also said that:

Kabira soya peer hai, jo jane par peer,
Jo par peer na jaaniye, vo beeper kafir.

The crux of the entire matter is that we must go by our own benefit. We are Hindustani, we are Indian. India has its own benefits. We have our own approach for all things. We would meet the entire need of planning required for those approaches. We have no control over the special component plan. Special component plan means that whatever budget is being made by either the Union Government or the State Governments as per the population of Scheduled Castes in the respective State. Out of this that particular portion should directly be made available for the employment and development of that caste but this does not happen. It does not happen because there is no monitoring on that. Many of the States are not even aware of the special component plan. I was the Chairman of SC/ST Committee. I visited a few States and asked about it over there. At some places they are making efforts for the first time but it is not being done in an effective manner. Therefore, the funds of Special Component Plan should be fixed by the Union Government keeping in view that 15 percent of the country's population is of SCs and 7.5 percent is of STs. That portion of budget should be given separately to the Ministry which has been assigned this job. That money would be utilized for their scholarship, for making their lives better, for their education, training and employment and to take up developmental works. The Government should decide

whether they really want to help the SCs/STs. Today nobody is ready to give time for helping these people in their helplessness and problems. In such a situation the Government should properly formulate schemes in regard to the Special Component Plan.

The situation of electricity is very poor. We are not able to generate as much power as we should do. There is a wide gap between demand and supply. The question relates to development and industries. A lot is required to be done about the alternative sources of power also. We should be able to properly utilize the sources of power, fix targets and achieve them in a specified time frame then it would definitely help the entire country become illuminated, people would get employment and the door towards prosperity would open for them.

What we think about roads. We introduced the Pradhan Mantri Sadak Yojana. We want to spend up 15 to 25 lakhs on a one kilometer stretch and for that we have made phases. It may also happen that we may lay all the roads, upto five lakh kilometers so that it would help complete maximum road laying. That would include works of WBM also. As the money will keep flowing in, we will strengthen the roads by laying tar on them. In this manner we can also work for inter connecting all the roads.

The situation of water resources is very poor. We have many water resources. We have been listening for years now that interlinking of rivers is going to be done which is a big project with high investments. But it is going to hugely benefit us. Therefore, if we have to spend huge amount for reaping huge benefits then also it is not an issue. The Government should decide as to how much priority is to be given to which project so that it will provide water for drinking and irrigation purposes. From my MPLADS, I have constructed 25 dams and these did not cost much to me. Recently we built a dam in which diesel expenditure came to Rs. 78 thousand. We have constructed a dam over the Shipra river and provided this facility to the people to commute through that. On the basis of labour assistance from the public, we have laid five kilometers of road with Rs. 1.5 lakh only. The Government should provide some incentives in order to encourage the people so that people take to the measure of shaam-daan to meet their requirements.

Similarly a poor person does not get a house, electricity, education, treatment and grocery from the fair price Ration Shops. The Government should take measures for providing all these things. I believe that the Government would give full importance to employment.

There is a state of huge unemployment in the country.

About 3 crore 36 lakh youths are unemployed. As it is said that an idle mind is a devil's workshop. The unemployed is forced to do what he is not supposed to do.

Rising crime is worsening the law and order situation. Youth is the source of energy of our country and the Government can work towards providing work and management to this youth power and the Government can also sketch their role in nation building through NGOs and Yuva Vahini. If we keep 3 to 4 percent share of our GDP for their employment and training purposes then their contribution would definitely help us in building the nation.

We have been talking about VRS. Wherever there is an industry, we opt for retrenchment policy by way of VRS and whatever money is received from it, the same is used for small purposes and ultimately nothing is left over. They do not get the entire money and out of whatever they get, they are unable to utilize that wisely. It would have made their rehabilitation work easy. They work in textile industry and got so used to it that they are unable to do any other job. In that case what is the other option that we have chosen for them? Those people who have been rendered jobless, be it textile or any other factory which has been closed down on account of losses. At such places employment opportunities should be provided and instead of retrenchment, efforts should be made for generating employment.

Regarding income tax also he has increased the rebate from Rs. One lakh to Rs. one lakh 10 thousand. There is a standard deduction of Rupees 30 thousand. For those people who are paying their income tax honestly standard deduction should be reintroduced. This will definitely provide relief to employees and other people. Earlier interim relief was provided to the employees as soon as the Pay Commission was constituted. I fail to understand the reason behind delay in providing interim relief when there has been a rise in inflation. If not today then tomorrow they will have to pay the employees. Rebate should be increased in the case of females. Regarding old aged people also, I would like to say that "Abhivadan Sheelasya; Nitya Vradhopasevan; Chatvari tasya Vradhantye, Aayu Vidhya Yasho balam".

If they do something for the old people then their good wishes would certainly bless them, may be either in the form of votes or in any other form of support. If we provide more relief to those people who have dedicated their lives to the nation, then their love for democracy would certainly increase. I have no intentions to criticize to pass the Financial Bill. The most important thing is that people should get relief from rising prices.

[Dr. Satyanarayan Jatiya]

He should also think of handicapped people. Three percent of country's population is handicap. They have no help and are not given any respect even at their home. The quota reserved for them in jobs on the basis of education and training abilities is not filled up completely. This responsibility falls on the nation and we cannot leave such people behind. I believe that the provisions made by you in the budget and the amendments brought in the Finance Bill will certainly be in the interest of the public. Difficulties would be there but the nation is all geared up to face this challenge.

"Yeh kadam badhe, wah kadam badhe,
Hum kadam badhaye manzil tak,
Yeh paudha lage, wah paudha lage,
badh Jaaye chhaye manzil tak,
chattane aaye ya durbhagye bhale he raah roke,
takat kadmo mein chalne ki, fir kya mauke ya bemaunke,
ummeed uthe, umeed badhe, umeed jaaye manzil tak,
Yeh kadam badhe, wah kadam badhe
hum kadam badaye manzil tak, chareveti chareveti.

We must make the right move towards our goal.

Khsitij tak pratyek dishi hum uthe nav pran bhame
nav srajan kee saadh le, hum uthe nirman karne,
. sadhna ke deep shubh ho, Gyan ka alok chaye
Nashtrashtra ke timir hon, dham apna jagmagaye

He also said that if a farmer keeps sitting ideal, then even god cannot help him but now the Government will not remain like that. The Government would definitely do good deeds and provide relief to the people. With these words, I conclude my speech. I would like to thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak.

[English]

SHRI N.S.V. CHITTHAN (Dindigul): Mr. Chairman Sir, I rise to support the Government and the Finance Bill for the year 2007-08 introduced by the hon. Finance Minister.

Our UPA Government, as we know, is a coalition Government.

I place on record the tremendous efforts made by our respected Madam Soniaji, the Chairperson of the UPA Government, on issue based coalition with the regional and Left parties. The previous NDA Government was voted out since it did not care for the common man. The previous Government said that they would make India shining as their principal political plank. We know, it was rejected by the people. Madam Soniaji had made Aam Aadmi as UPA Government's political plank. The Government has

proceeded on implementing this political plank which attempts to take care of the interest of the common man.

Sir, we have made a three years' journey on this path. We have made some progress but we have along way to go to implement our political will. Our UPA Government, since its inception, has implemented several welfare measures. Some of them are:

1. Bharat Nirman to tone up the infrastructure in rural areas.
2. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan to promote the literacy in rural areas.
3. National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme to boost employment in villages.

Last year this scheme was introduced in 200 backward districts, but I am sorry to say that this year it has been implemented only in 130 districts. I would like to urge upon the hon. Finance Minister to add 70 more districts this year itself as informed earlier so that further 200 districts may be benefited by this scheme.

4. Mid-Day Meals Scheme is another ambitious plan to feed the implemented to feed empty stomach children in schools.

If these schemes are implemented in a proper way and with considerable political will, the country will become prosper at least in the next ten years.

The Government has also ushered in the growth rate of 9 per cent to garner funds for funding the welfare projects. I will come to the negative side of our Government's performance.

Agricultural production has come down drastically in the last couple of years. The downfall started during the NDA Government and still it is continuing. This is a very dangerous trend and needs to be arrested on war footing. Irrigation facilities in Tamil Nadu need to be accelerated. The Government must gather sufficient political will to solve the inter-State water problem. For example, Cauvery water dispute has been lingering on for the past 30 years. The Water Resources Ministry should ensure the implementation of the Tribunal Award without any more further delay. The Kerala Government is putting lot of obstacles to increasing the water level in Mullai-Periyar Dam. If Kerala wants power, it will certainly get from our ambitious Koodankulam Power Project. About 10,000 MW of power will be generated from this prestigious Project which can definitely cater to the entire power requirements of Kerala. Instead, Kerala is keen on getting Mullai-Periyar water to fill up Idukki Dam. All their cry about the danger to the dam is only to mislead the people so that water can go

to Idukki. Kerala Government and political parties should give up their negative attitude as Shri Kapil Sibal, Central Minister of Earth Sciences has made clear on the floor of the House that the dam is not in the seismic zone. The Central Water Commission and the hon. Supreme Court have already clearly ruled that there is no danger to Mullai-Periyar Dam. So the political establishment of Kerala, instead of whipping up bogey, should permit Tamil Nadu to increase the height of the dam. More water means more crops. We assure Kerala that all their power requirement will be met from Koodangulam.

I am deeply concerned about the steep rise in the prices of essential commodities like atta, rice, urad dal, thoor dal and vegetable oils. Idli and chapatti have slowly gone beyond the reach of the common man. This one issue is enough to cause serious challenge to our Government. I earnestly appeal the Finance Minister to take more stringent and immediate steps to control the price rise. I do admit that he has already taken several measures to control the prices but those measures are not adequate.

For example, no vegetable in Delhi is being sold at less than Rs. 35 per kilogram. How can a common man survive under this precarious situation? I would also appeal to the Government to take adequate steps to bring down the prices as early as possible.

Sir, I would like to bring it to the notice of this august House the way the Government of India is discriminating the senior citizens. In all the Scheduled Banks, Post Offices, Railways, Airlines and in the House Tax Department, a senior citizen is defined as someone who is of 60 years of age or above. The senior citizens are given higher rates of interest on their fixed deposits, that is, one per cent more than the normal rate of interest. There is another saving scheme in the Post Offices called the Senior Citizens Savings Scheme, which is specially meant for senior citizens, and their age kept is 60 years and above. However, for the purpose of filing of Income Tax Returns, the hon. Finance Minister has kept the age of 63 years, which is unfair. There should be a uniform age for determining the senior citizens. Therefore, I would urge upon the hon. Finance Minister to look into the matter to bring down the age from 63 years to 60 years even for filing the Income Tax Returns. I had also raised this issue during my previous speech.

Then, Sir, the brush being used for painting has been brought into the Excise net from this financial year. Brush making can be classified under the Animal Husbandry, as the bristle is animal hair predominantly,

though synthetic fibers are in vogue. The largest selling brushes are made of pig hair and its availability is restricted. The manufacturing of brush from collecting pig hair, washing and segregating, processing and packing of hair to constructing the brush is done manually, of course, the handle and the ferrules are brought out parts. These are also handmade. It is similar to the handloom cottage industry of Tamil Nadu.

Further it is labour-intensive like agriculture, and no automated machines are used in India though there are some in the western countries. Moreover, the manufacturers use no power-driven machines. It also looks after the socio-economic needs of the rural and urban unskilled and downtrodden workforce, mostly women and the Scheduled Caste and the Scheduled Tribes people. Since, the brushes are made by hand, sitting at one place, a large number of disabled persons are also employed. Being an unorganized and highly competitive segment, any price variation will have a detrimental bearing in our contribution to nation's Economic Policy. Hence, I would urge upon our hon. Finance Minister to waive the Excise Duty on paintbrushes.

[Translation]

"With a fervent appeal I would like to draw the attention of our Union Finance Minister towards the Excise Tax proposal on the paint brushes that are being made by several small industrial units in the pattern of cottage industries. These hand-made paint brushes are manufactured in such small industrial units spread widely in and around Thirumangalam in my constituency. These units provide job opportunities to women from poor background. Considering this factor there is a need to rescind and reconsider the proposal to levy tax on those hand-made brushes which is labour intensive providing livelihood to many women hailing from poor families. I request the Minister to withdraw this tax proposal."

[English]

Sir, the existing Service Tax rate of 12 per cent plus Education Cess and Additional Cess require revision to a lower rate. More services especially, consulting doctors, clinics and lawyers with roaring practices may be brought into this net with a threshold limit of about Rs. 8 lakh. I would request the hon. Finance Minister to think about this suggestion.

Sir, Service Tax is being added on all telephone bills including even small amount of bills. It may be reasonable if the Service Tax is levied on higher value bills, may be

"..." English translation of this part of the speech originally delivered in Tamil.

[Shri N.S.V. Chitthan]

from Rs. 1,000 or more. Otherwise, Service Tax on low value bills will be an additional burden on the medium-class people. Hence, I would request our hon. Finance Minister to kindly consider this reasonable request.

Then, Sir, Education Loans are being provided to the meritorious students for higher studies and also to join professional courses. Lakhs and lakhs of students are benefited by this ambitious scheme. But certain officers in the nationalized banks are still reluctant and adamant in offering loans to the eligible applicants. I am happy that our hon. Finance Minister has once declared that if any student is refused the loan from any nationalized bank, he may write directly to the Finance Minister.

I appreciate the eagerness of our Finance Minister. I wish to add that if any officer of a particular branch is not willing to offer educational loan, he must write it to the applicant for what reason and why the loan is not accorded. Also, for educational loan, the rate of interest is nearly 12 per cent. The rate of interest should be reduced to less than six per cent for those meritorious students who complete their studies.

There are so many educational institutions all over the country doing commendable jobs. If any management wants to avail loan from the nationalized banks for constructing new blocks and buildings, the management is asked by the bankers to get a No Objection Certificate from the State Government. Only after getting clearance from the concerned State Governments, the schools have started in so many places. So, there is no need to get clearance again from the State Government for availing loan to construct additional buildings. Necessary instructions must be given to the banks to this effect.

[Translation]

"Our Union Finance Minister is to proceed on a foreign tour as part of his responsibility towards the Finance portfolio he is holding. Many of our esteemed colleagues have given their views and offered some suggestions to our Finance Minister. As regards to withdrawal or modification of tax proposals his announcements in his reply are eagerly awaited. That would make both the Members and the people of the Nation feel happy. I extend my support to the Finance Bill and wish the Minister's foreign tour a success. With this I conclude, Thank you. With these few words, I support the Finance Bill."

"... English translation of this part of the speech originally delivered in Tamil.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is it enough?

SHRI N.S.V. CHITTHAN (Dindigul): Yes, Sir. Thank you.

SHRI K. FRANCIS GEORGE (Idukki): Sir, I rise to support the Finance Bill, 2007. The objective of which is to give effect to the financial proposals of the Government of India for the year 2007-2008.

Sir, people have been looking up to this Budget with a lot of expectations that this Budget will fulfil, at least, three-fourths of the commitment that has been made in the National Common Minimum Programme. Why? It is because the Government has just entered the fourth year of its existence. So, naturally the people were expecting that the NCMP's commitments will be fulfilled through this Budget.

Of course, the Budget has paid explicit attention to secondary education, education for minorities, increased outlays for National Rural Health Mission, Mid-Day Meals Scheme and sectors relating to infrastructure. But I have to say that it did not come up to the levels promised in the National Common Minimum Programme. The promise of raising public spending to the tune of six per cent of the GDP in the education sector has been belied. If there is one sector, which can contribute in the long-term future of the country, the long-term development of the country, that is education. I do not know what is the hindrance in spending the promised level of public funding in this very vital sector of our country.

Now, education is being financed through the cess which is being levied on all the taxes. In fact, it should have complemented the budgetary allocation for education. Now, it is the other way round. The Budget allocation is complementing to this cess pool that is being collected for spending on this very vital sector. People have been expecting more resource support for crucial economic sectors like agriculture, rural development and social sectors. I do not know what is the reason why there has been less and less of allotment for these very vital areas.

There are no strong measures to expand the tax revenue in the coming years. Also, there are no measures to recover the tax arrears which are not under dispute. The tax arrears amount to Rs. 19,875 crore.

Also, the total projection of wealth tax to be collected comes to only Rs. 315 crore. I think when the hon. Member Shri Rupchand Pal spoke, he specifically mentioned about the wealth tax collection in this country. Is it that it will come to only Rs. 315 crore with so much of progress and

with so many of wealthy people in the country? We have people topping even the list of the Forbes' list of world's wealthiest people.

Another area of concern is the transfer of resources to the States. There is an increase in the gross transfer from Centre to States. But, at the same time, the expenditures of States are increasing much more rapidly than the transfer of funds from the Centre to the States.

16.31 hrs.

(SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV *in the Chair*)

There are four major fiscal transfers from the Centre. One is the share of Central taxes. Second is the Central assistance for State Plans. Third is the non-Plan grants and loans. Fourth is the assistance to Central Plans and Centrally sponsored schemes. The share of Central taxes are predetermined by the Finance Commission. In the case of the second and third, Central assistance for State Plans and non-Plan grants, it goes directly to the Budget of the States. So, the States have some kind of a leverage as far as spending of this money is concerned.

But, in the case of Centrally sponsored schemes, it is partly funded by the Centre with assistance from the States. Now the trend is that there are more allocations for Centrally sponsored schemes than to the other fiscal transfers to the States. That means the States have very less control, very less leverage over Central allotment in spending those money. That is exactly why, in the morning, during the 'Zero hour' we raised this issue of the appointment of the new Commission for looking into the Centre-State relations where we had specifically mentioned that in the terms of reference issues of vital concern to the States should be included.

In fact, we felt very sorry when we read the report that none of these issues are going to be addressed by the Commission on Centre-State relations. So, increase in the States' share of Central taxes, transfer of Centrally sponsored schemes in the State subjects to the States, alleviation of debt burden of the States, autonomy for States in fixing share of Central taxes, framing financial policies, taking loans and utilizing Central schemes — all these have to be part of the terms of reference of the new Commission which is going to look into the Centre-State relations.

The Budget exempted crude and refined edible oils from additional CVD of four per cent. There is a specific mention about sunflower. On crude and refined version of sunflower there is an exemption of 15 per cent. I remember

the hon. Minister of Finance, reading somewhere, said that there is a demand-supply mismatch or if it is to control inflation etc. But the direct effect is on coconut oil and then ultimately on the price of coconut. Again, there has been a cut of 10 per cent in import duty on crude and refined palm oil. The hon. Minister comes from a State where coconut is grown in plenty. The millions of coconut farmers are already harassed for the last several years. They were not getting a fair price realisation. Every year there is a reduction of import duty on these various kinds of edible oils which directly affect the coconut oil and ultimately the price of coconut and certainly will affect the coconut farmers. I would request the hon. Minister of Finance that as soon as possible correction has to be done. Otherwise, there is absolutely no meaning in saying that we are trying to help the farmers.

There is one item which was mentioned very prominently in the first Budget of the hon. Minister of Finance but subsequently forgotten. That is PURA — Providing Urban Amenities in Rural Areas. This is a pet project of our hon. President, respected Rashtrapati. He has been advocating this theme to provide urban amenities in rural areas which is long overdue. We have crossed 60 years of our Independence and still the conditions in our rural areas, as far as infrastructure development is concerned, is very poor. So, the hon. President, in fact, had mooted this particular programme. I think there is absolutely no mention about this in the Budget.

I would like to mention a couple of Kerala specific issues, and I would conclude my speech. In the case of service tax, 60 per cent of the State's GDP is derived from services, but the State gets only Rs. 100 crore from tax on services through the Central Devolution Scheme. I would request the hon. Finance Minister to consider giving its due share of service tax not only to Kerala, but all the States, so that the States can at least stand on their legs. The State also intends to charge additional excise duty on textiles, tobacco and sugar, but the Government of India should not cut 1 per cent additional tax given to the State as it will lose about Rs. 100 crore.

There is also a proposal mooted by the State of Kerala that Central Sales Tax is to be abolished in a phased manner so that there is free movement of goods throughout the country, and it will lead to reduction in prices of goods and also increase in the revenue of States.

Before concluding, I would like to mention the issue raised here by my very good friend Shri Chitthan. He referred to the Kerala State, and also specifically about the Mullaperiyar issue. What exactly is this issue? I do not

[Shri K. Francis George]

think that there is any need for a clarification on this issue because we have raised this issue time and again in this House, and explained the position of Kerala State regarding this matter. Mullaperiyar is a 110-year old dam, which was made using pre-independent technology during the British time. Now, it is in a very bad condition. Kerala has been raising this issue because if the dam collapses due to some kind of an accident, then the entire bulk of water will rush into one of the Asia's biggest arch dam, namely, the Idukki dam. If that dam also collapses, then one cannot predict as to what all will happen. If something like this happens, then the heartland of Kerala will be washed away, and about five districts with nearly 40 lakh people will die. The loss of life and property will also be unimaginable.

I think that we should not take chance on an issue that has this kind of catastrophe in store. This is the exact reason that Kerala State should have a new dam in place of this 110-year old dam. What is wrong with this demand? We never said or we will never say that we will not give water, which is very much needed for Tamil Nadu. In fact, if we can get this water during the summer season, then we can generate electricity from Idukki through the Idukki Hydel Project. Thereafter, we would not have to pay money for Central allocation. Presently, we are paying through our nose to get Central allocation during the lean periods. The entire water is being drawn by Tamil Nadu. Tamil Nadu is also generating electricity to the tune of about Rs. 300 crore, and Kerala is being paid only Rs. 8.5 lakh annually as compensation for drawing so much of water.

This is not the only project from which Kerala gives water to Tamil Nadu. We have the Parambikulam-Aliyar agreement, the Siruvani agreement, etc. The entire Coimbatore town is being fed from the Siruvani project, and we are also giving water from Neyyar. We have been very generous over the years. It is not that Kerala is self-sufficient in the requirement for water. We also do have extreme problems during summer season as far as drinking water is concerned, leave alone water for irrigation purpose, etc.

Kerala is primarily dependent on hydro power. Therefore, even a drop of water is precious for us. We do understand the importance of sharing this precious wealth with our Tamil Nadu brethren, and we have no objection to it. Unfortunately, I do not understand the leadership of Tamil Nadu. Why do they not understand our very vital concern regarding the life and property of the people? I do not know. In fact, it is not a problem of Kerala alone, but it is a problem of the whole country. If something happens,

then it is not that only the Kerala Government would be answerable for it, but we would all be answerable for it. Who is ruling in Kerala would not be the issue because the Government of India will be answerable for it. Therefore, I would humbly submit that we should sit and discuss to find a very reasonable solution for it. What is so unreasonable in all that Kerala says in this matter? We are only asking for a new dam instead of a very old dam, which is in a very precarious condition.

Recently, when the water level came down, we could see huge gaps in the dam. We are just shutting our eyes, which is very unfortunate. So, I would request the hon. leader from Tamil Nadu, who is a very respected and senior leader not only of the country but also of the State, to take a lead in this issue, arrange a meeting of both the leaders of the States, come to a settlement. We have no problem. I can very well say on the floor of this House on behalf of the State Government that the State will never refuse to share water with Tamil Nadu. We only seek the protection of our people for which I think, Tamil Nadu is duty bound to morally because of the last 110 years, we have been very generous, even sacrificing our needs. I hope, this message will go. I hope the hon. Shri Chidambaram will take the lead in settling the matter instead of quarreling between ourselves.

I once again commend all the efforts that are being made by the hon. Minister to steer the financial sector of our country on the right path. Of course, we do disagree with certain policies and programmes but of course, we can sit, discuss and come to a consensus on all these matters.

SHRI P.S. GADHAVI (Kutch): Sir, at the outset, I would like to express my views on the Finance Bill. I would like to bring to the notice of the hon. Finance Minister two or three points.

The first point is about the rise in basic exemption limit by Rs.1 lakh to Rs.1.95 lakh which would result in a tax savings of Rs.2,000, excluding cess. But a point to note is that the first rate of tax applicable to senior citizen is 20 per cent. They cannot make use of the 10 per cent slab on taxable income. Further, additional education cess of one per cent will certainly eat into the tax benefit provided by the higher exemption limit. I would like to request the hon. Finance Minister to raise the limit for senior citizens up to Rs.2.50 lakh.

Secondly, the small savings in terms of tax will have to be countered with a fall in cash flow for several individuals. In terms of investment, senior citizens will face a serious problem because they will find it tough to escape

from Tax Deduction at Source (TDS). There are three main debt instruments that senior citizens invest in, and TDS is now applicable on all of them. The first is the Senior Citizen Savings Scheme (SCSS), where tax is deducted at source, each quarter, when the payment is made. The nine per cent rate, payable quarterly on these deposits, is still a huge draw. Many individuals have already invested in SCSS. Hence, they may be unable to escape from TDS.

The second impact will be felt on the eight per cent taxable Government of India (GOI) Bonds. There was no TDS on these instruments earlier. But, this has changed now. So, they have to pay TDS on these GOI Bonds. The new requirements state that tax will be deducted at source when the amount invested in GOI Bonds crosses Rs.1.25 lakh.

Thirdly, in the case of bank fixed deposits too, the amount of interest over which TDS will be applicable is Rs.10,000. This means that if the interest rate is nine per cent per annum, TDS will be applicable after investment of Rs.1.11 lakh. But if the interest rate is 10 per cent per annum, the threshold investment amount above which TDS will be applicable is Rs.1 lakh. Hence, individuals will not be able to escape from TDS net if they have some taxable income in their books. So, I would request the Minister to consider for raising of the limit for senior citizens.

Regarding Service Tax, I would say that from three services in 1994, it has been increased to 96 in 2006, and amendments to it are carried out almost every year.

The definition of taxable service is also inviting more problems. The definition includes certain phrases such as 'in any manner, directly or indirectly, in relation to or in connection with', which enlarges the scope of taxable services. In the absence of any meaning assigned to the terms in the Finance Act, 1994, one needs to dredge into literal meanings and judicial interpretations which bring in a lot of interpretational plays and literacy art in drafting agreements, etc., leading to disputes at a later stage. This may be given a definition, otherwise, it will lead to a lot of litigations later.

Similarly for service receiver, various terms have been used such as 'any person, policyholder, subscriber, customer, client, exhibitor, franchisee or shipping line, etc. These specific terms have implications in deciding the tax liabilities. This type of clumsiness in interpretation will certainly give rise to corruption. I request the hon. Finance Minister to see that these specific definitions or specific guidelines are provided.

The most controversial service brought under the

ambit of service tax is 'renting of immovable property' for furtherance of business or commerce, about which our colleagues have said already. How can renting of property be considered as a service in the manner which is generally understood?

Another point I would like to bring to the notice of the hon. Finance Minister is regarding Income Tax exemptions. There was a provision of standard deduction under section 16 of Income Tax Act for working class up to March 2005. The reason for this deduction was to meet the expenses incurred in the performances of their duties. Similarly, the business or professional class also makes deductions out of their total proceeds or income, or we can say that they reduce their income by deducting the expenses incurred in the performance of their duties. To place the working class with business class at equal level is unjust and unreasonable because the working class was being given this benefit of standard deduction, but the Budget of 2005-06 abolished this provision. On the face of it, it appears equal for all but the fact is otherwise. It looks that there is equality between the working class and business or professional class, but it is not for the reason given below.

The business or professional class, as we know, shows its income, leaving apart the issue of undisclosed income after making deductions of all sorts of expenses, whether it is traveling expenses, to and fro fare from residence to office or out of office, the expenses incurred on light refreshment, but the working class has no such means. The working class was being compensated by the provision of standard deduction. This provision was available in the Income Tax Act since 1970. It is therefore my humble request to the hon. Finance Minister that he should consider the old section for provision of standard deduction to be restored so that working class and the business class are placed at an equal footing.

The next thing that I would like to bring to the notice of the hon. Finance Minister is regarding exemption under section 35 (a)(c) of the Income Tax Act. This exemption is given to institutions which are rendering service in the social or educational fields. In my district, which is on the border area, which is the remotest part of the country, we have an institute which is rendering such a service; they have submitted an application for exemption under section 35 (a) (c), but the Committee declined to give exemption saying that it does not fulfill the criteria or the guidelines. What are the criteria? No other reasons were given. Without any reason, they have simply rejected this. I can give you the name of that institution also; I know it personally; it is in the remote area where even the Government schools are not there, hospitals are not there, but this institute is

[Shri P.S. Gadhavi]

rendering service. But when it applied for exemption, its application was rejected saying that it did not fulfill any criteria. No other reasons were given. I humbly request the hon. Minister to see that when such institutions apply for exemptions, they should be considered very genuinely. Thank you very much.

SHRIMATI TEJASWINI SEERAMESH (Kanakapura): Sir, I seek your permission to speak from here. I rise to support the Finance Bill 2007-08. The Budget and the financial proposals are contributing for extraordinary GDP growth which is close to double digit. The tax collections were done so efficiently – by expanding and bringing more sectors and individual into the tax net - that the public did not feel a pinch of it. As a result, the UPA Government is able to increase the tax collection in the first year, that is 2004-05 by Rs.50,000 crore; in 2005-06 by Rs.60,000 crore and in 2006-07 by Rs.1 lakh crore. The very important factor is that all these collections were made without causing any pain to the public at large.

Even though our overall GDP growth is 9 per cent, our agricultural GDP is not growing more than 2 per cent. There is a great need to invest in more irrigation projects and convert dry land into wet lands. It is essential to achieve the second Green Revolution which is dreamt by none other than the UPA Government led by our Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, guided by Shrimati Sonia Gandhi and of course, efficiently managed by our beloved Finance Minister Shri P. Chidambaram.

In 2004, when the UPA Government came to power, the collection of tax was Rs.3,40,000 cores. By 2006-07, the UPA Government collected nearly Rs.5,60,000 crore as tax. This was achieved without increasing the income tax and also by increasing the exemption limit for women to Rs.1,45,000; for elderly citizens to Rs.1,95,000 and for others to Rs.1,10,000. I particularly compliment the Government and the Minister for this great help to the common people. I would appeal to the Minister to increase the threshold limit of income tax exemption to the women by Rs.2,50,000, senior citizens by Rs.3 lakh and to others by Rs.2 lakh. This will be helpful to them in the backdrop of prevailing inflation. Since women and senior citizens are less in number, it will not be a major burden on the Government to do that. If the Minister minds it, definitely he will do it. We have that much of faith in our Minister.

As far as Service Tax is concerned, before the UPA Government the total Service Tax collection was Rs.7,000 crore. It is now Rs.50,000 crore. One must compliment this great achievement. In spite of the Opposition colleagues

raising doubts and apprehensions, this is the reality. We can convince them that the Ministry is doing all the best to maintain the finances in proper manner. It is also good that you have increased the tax exemption limit for small service providers from Rs.4 lakh to Rs.8 lakh. It is really a very important factor as far as I am concerned.

So far as cement and iron are concerned, they are related to the day-to-day life of the common people. It is a matter of concern that the rates of essential building materials, especially cement and iron, have gone up. The excise duty on cement was Rs.400 per MT earlier, which is now reduced to Rs.350 per MT for the cement sold at Rs.190 per bag. Also, for the cement which is being sold at more than Rs.190 per bag, the excise duty has been increased to Rs.300 per MT. Still, Sir, the price has not come down. I think there is a need to increase Rs.600 further more because our main aim is to bring down the prices of essential goods like the cement. When we tax more, the extra amount should be given to the respective States which can be used for buying cement for building houses for the weaker sections. Since housing is the core area, it will be a more humane approach if we adopt it.

Today, SEZ is the hot topic everywhere and we are facing a lot of problems. Of course, when we aim at development, we are bound to face some challenges and problems. But my Government is in a position to deal with the situation very effectively. So, while addressing the SEZ problem, the purpose of the tax concessions in SEZ is to promote export oriented units and its ancillary units. It would be better if all these concessions are given in non-metro and other State capitals by fixing a radius of at least 50 to 100 kilometres from the urban centres. I have a point here. Today, we are facing employment problem and everything is urban oriented and urban centered. We have to decentralize this developmental process. We can generate more jobs and also we can bring down the gap between rural India and urban India with much effect. It will stop misuse of tax concessions for the real estate purposes. Many a times, they are misusing it in the urban areas though the intention of the Government is good. So, it will stop misuse of the funds for the real estate purposes. We need to ensure that the existing units are not allocated the second SEZ. In my view, only the new units should be given concessions.

In urban areas, the prices of land have skyrocketed because large real estate companies, multinationals with foreign funds are buying land banks of thousands of acres thereby creating artificial scarcity. In reality, there is no scarcity but these people are preserving land to make profit. That is why, we are facing this artificial scarcity of

land. It is because of this menace, the common man and middle class people are facing hardships. There is a lack of affordable land. It is very difficult to get land at affordable prices. We need to propose that any land which is purchased or entered into an agreement should be developed within three years and made available for public for occupation. If they fail, there must be a provision of heavy tax on the vacant and undeveloped lands. At the same time, this is the need of the hour to protect fertile land from the SEZs. We have to ensure that the barren land is given to set up the SEZ. On the one side, we can make effective use of the barren land to set up industries and on the other side, we can protect fertile land for the agricultural purposes. These steps by the Government will act as a deterrent and land banks will not be maintained which is the cause for the steep increase in the land prices.

Coming to the IT sector, of course, my colleague, Shri Madhu Yaskhi spoke in detail. I will not get into that much of details. I think IT sector cannot be given perpetually year after year tax exemptions. In my view, only new companies should be given tax concessions and all software companies should be taxed.

At the same time, I would urge upon the Government of India to look into the matter of withdrawing tax exemptions extended to corporate farming. While poor farmers are suffering due to lack of funds, these big sharks are enjoying great benefits at large from the Government. I would urge upon the Government to limit the benefits to poor farmers by cutting the exemptions to the corporate farming.

When I come to the package for the tea gardens, of course, my Minister is well versed with that, I would give a few tips to present my case here. Coorg and Assam are the producers of best coffee and tea in the world. Assam, Tripura and North Bengal have numerous tea gardens which were profitable at one point of time and employed lakhs of families. Unfortunately, over the years due to various reasons like militancy and insurgency, the production has come down. In the tea gardens the profitability has come down. Today, we have seen many tea gardens becoming sick and a number of them have been closed down. Of course, this has again added a lot of tension, unemployment problem, naxalite problem and insurgency problems. So, it is the need of the hour to encourage them and support them. If this trend continues, then it will not be a mere case of revenue loss to the Government but it will lead to acute unemployment problem and displacement of labour population. The other day, we were addressing the problems of the labour population.

17.00 hrs.

We must protect those labours who are already in job. The State Governments should try their best to revive the sick tea gardens and industries. Though the Central Government also has taken some steps for their revival, yet unfortunately, those steps are not adequate. That is why, what steps needs to be taken now and what the tea industry now needs is a comprehensive package from the Central Government to ensure that the tea gardens work to full potential and enhance their production and consequently increase their profits. The coffee industry, of course, due to lack of proper marketing, in South India and in other parts of the country where coffee is grown and particularly in Chikmagalur in Karnataka, is facing a problem. I am drawing the attention of the Government towards their agony. Urgent steps should be taken by the Ministry of Commerce in this regard and the Ministry of Finance should also provide all assistance for the revival of the tea as well as the coffee industry in the Eastern and Northern India and in Karnataka.

Sir, we talk a lot of things about empowerment of women. But unless something concrete is done in reality, it remains merely a speech. I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister towards the Self-help Groups being run by women. They have brought about a silent revolution in rural India in empowering women, particularly poor women. But they are facing financial problems in regard to capital investment. Without finances they really cannot do much and they require the help of the Central Government at this point of time. I would like to urge upon the Ministry of Finance to allocate considerable amount of money to help the Self-help Groups by instructing the banks to lend them money at the rate of three per cent interest. It would be a great help to them. They are repaying their loan amount with all honesty. Everywhere, in every Committee we have seen that the recovery rate is 98 per cent. It is really encouraging. I would like to compliment the Self-Help Groups for their effort all over the country.

Sir, I would also like to urge upon the Government to provide them with basic infrastructure like they do not have a place to sit and conduct their meetings. I would like to request the Government to formulate such a scheme in order that Stree Shakti centres are built for them. I think, with an amount of Rs. 3 to Rs. 5 lakhs such centres could be constructed. We have buildings for the Panchayats, we have school buildings, we have buildings for anganwadis, we have veterinary hospitals, but for women we do not have any such centres. Most of the time they have to approach either the schools, or the Sishu Vihars or the

[Shrimati Tejaswini Seeramesh]

Anganwadis for conducting their meetings. It is high time to empower women and the Government must consider giving considerable amounts for construction of Stree Shakti Centres all over the country. By doing such things we can empower women.

Sir, my last point is that this Government, within its financial constraints, has provided for considerable amount of money for the development of the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes and the Minorities. But at the same time I am disappointed to find that only a sum of Rs. 91 crore has been given for the development of the people belonging to the Other Backward Classes. This is not justified. These days everybody is educated, everybody is conscious of their rights. I would like to appeal to the Central Government that the need of the hour is to provide for more funds for the development of the people belonging to the Other Backward Classes of this country.

Sir, with these words, I would like to support the Finance Bill for the year 2007-08.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN (Indore): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am going to finish my speech in just two minutes because while speaking on budget I had discussed about all the things in detail. I had also spoken that what has been mentioned just now. Hon'ble Finance Minister has said that GDP i.e., Gross Domestic Product is growing up 9 per cent annually. Just now one of his friends mentioned that in agriculture sector it is just 2 per cent. I would only like to say that when we talk about a farmer, we must keep in mind as to why was the situation extremely opposite to this during the time of Vajpayee Government, NDA Government? At that time so much of grain was produced that its storage became a problem.

17.06 hrs.

(SHRI ARJUN SETHI *in the Chair*)

Such a problem had arisen at that time. At that time, we had started thinking of making extra godowns and provide incentive to people in order to motivate them. We talked about giving immediate support price and we also paid revised prices. But today when we talk about the over-all Government we see that a statement of hon'ble Pawar ji came in between at the time when wheat was about to arrive in the market. At that time, the statement was as to how much wheat we would import. Last year also, this caused anomalies as the farmer did not get the actual support price, which they were supposed to get. We

pay more than support price and import wheat and that wheat is also of substandard quality.

Some irregularities have come to our notice regarding pulses. The irregularities have continued to occur even after putting a ban on export of pulses. I had raised this issue in Lok Sabha that the gram which is not used for pulses and was to arrive in market, was not allowed to export and thus, the farmer's interests got jeopardized. As he has mentioned that the manufacturing growth rate has increased, although that too has increased due to private sector, but I feel that the development should result in actual increase of purchasing power of the poor, then only it can be called development. There are more than 25 crore BPL people. As he has mentioned that we would fund maximum for education and health. A number of schemes for development are formulated but it is not reflected in the implementation of those schemes as to how many people have been benefited and come up in the APL category from BPL. Hon'ble Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment is sitting here and I also happen to be the Chairperson of the standing committee related to that Ministry. All the Members emphasize upon this thing that the Government gives crores of rupees to the States for implementation of schemes but do we have any successful story as to how many people have moved above the BPL category, how many people have become independent and the purchasing power of how many people has increased? Development means this only and we must keep this in mind.

I would like to say two things to him. One thing is that he has talked about poly-fiber and the custom duty on fiber has been reduced on that as well as on raw material which is right. I do not have to say anything whether this has been done to benefit anyone but I would like to give two-three suggestions regarding small-scale industries. Everyone knows that small-scale industries generate employment on a large scale. They have not given full attention towards this. They have increased their excise limit upto Rs. 1.5 crore and I thank him for that. I have one more suggestion to give which is that the tax audit limit is presently Rs. 40 lakh and for the income above that one has to preserve smallest of vouchers and has to face a number of difficulties even after spending thousands. If we want to expand small-scale industries, then it would be better to increase the tax audit limit up to Rs. 1 crore, as the limit has been increased up to Rs. 1.5 crore for other things.

They have provided some relief in income tax; he has given a rebate of Rs. 1 lakh 10 thousand, for females it is Rs. 1 lakh 45 thousand, for senior citizens it is Rs. 1

lakh 95 thousand. Actually, these people are taxpayers. They must calculate as to how much tax is to be received from big industrialists. These small taxpayers made certified tax payment to the department and generate revenue therefore, if this limit is further increased by him, it would be better.

I would like to give him a suggestion in the interest of senior citizens. When the interest rate was low in banks, there was a scheme for them under which they could have fixed deposit for 5 years at the rate of 9 per cent. At that time, the normal bank rate was 8 percent. 1 percent subsidy was given by the Government of India. But today the rate of interest in banks has reached up to 10 percent. Now, if he allows the senior citizens to withdraw their money from that scheme, if they wish so, because now they are normally getting 10 percent rate of interest from the banks. It will be beneficial for the Government because it will save the Government from giving subsidy on that. It will also be beneficial for the senior citizens to have withdrawal facility.

Regarding Pan Masala I would suggest that they are having a wrong influence on our younger generation, whether they are tobacco free or not. Therefore, whether the Pan Masala is tobacco free or not, it should not be exempted from duty. There is no need of it. It has adverse effect on our children. Minor children keep pan masala packets in their pockets and consume it. I would once again like to submit that the Government should reconsider this.

Hon'ble Sandeepji had given a very good suggestions, regarding the preservation of environment. He suggested that the Government, in consultation with the State Governments, should make provision to impose heavy penalty on those industries which pollute rivers in villages and towns and spread chemical pollutions. In fact it is essential for us to seriously ponder over it.

Lastly, I would like to give suggestions regarding women. Every time a discussion is held regarding the issue related to women. The women should also be associated with research and development. Neither the Government nor the private companies pay attention in this regard to the extent it should have been paid. Today women are contributing more and more in all the fields. Women have already been working in the agricultural sector. Earlier, when I was the Minister of Women and Child Development, I used to hold discussions with women. At that time the women labourers had suggested that if weeding instrument (khurpa) is designed according to the convenience of the women, it can enhance their efficiency.

At that time, I had pondered as to what R and D can be done towards manufacturing women friendly tools. There is a need to pay attention in this direction as well.

With these suggestions, I conclude.

*SHRI ARUNA KUMAR VUNDAVALLI (Rajahmundry):

Sir, I will speak in Telugu. I rise to support the Finance Bill. Achieving 9% growth rate in past two years, will be a memorable chapter in the Indian history. Today, we have around 200 billion dollars i.e. 20,000 crores of dollars as foreign exchange. At the same time, we have a consistent export growth of 30% every year, and we have the largest pool of NRI funds in the world. These are not ordinary achievements, and I specially congratulate the Government for these achievements. On one hand, we are growing strong in economy and are trying to assert ourselves as a super power, on the other hand, the condition of poor people is pathetic and heart wrenching. Even today, nearly 22% of our population is below poverty line. The parameters fixed for determining poverty line are, an individual with Rs. 7 per day as income in rural areas and a person with Rs. 14 per day as income in urban areas will be treated as above poverty line. The parameters which were fixed long back are still in vogue. I think there won't be a worst situation than this, elsewhere in the world.

We have burgeoning list of millionaires from India. Recently, a newspaper has come out with unprecedented list of Indian millionaires. We are having many varieties of cars. We are widening roads repeatedly, but our traffic is beyond the capacity of these roads. There are many luxury cars. Recently, a car worth Rs. 1 crore 8 lakhs was introduced, and we have people who can afford such cars. On one side, we see people with luxury life styles, on other side we find people without basic amenities, like housing, sanitation, education and health, who lead a pathetic life. I feel that time is ripe now to use our knowledge to bring changes in the lives of poor people. Because, this is not the nation we envisioned.

By 2010 or 2015, there will be three super powers, US, China and India. They will dominate the world and this is being acknowledged by all. We can witness the rising income of the people. Though we could not achieve desired growth in agriculture and industrial sector, we have witnessed glittering success in the fields of Information Technology and Service sector. Today, our country 'India' is identified as a country of talented and hard working people. At this juncture, if we don't put efforts to change the lives of poor people, history will not forgive us, even,

*English translation of the speech originally delivered in Telugu.

[Shri Aruna Kumar Vundavalli]

we cannot forgive ourselves. I have few suggestions to wipe the tears of poor people. In rural areas, there should be more scope for employment.

In order to provide more employment opportunities, we should improve and expand our irrigation facilities. We should concentrate more on agriculture. Around 70% of our population depend on agriculture even today. We should make it a profitable profession. We should work to revert people, who have left agriculture for other professions. If we don't devise a mechanism to revive agriculture, I believe that justice is not done to this nation. In the same direction, we implemented few programmes like Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme which is a huge challenge. Government has asked as many people to register themselves under this scheme, and innumerable cards are being issued. In a country of 100 crores, asking as many people as they can to enroll under this scheme is in itself a big challenge. Irrespective of, whether an individual is above poverty line or below poverty line, all are being covered under this scheme. And to over come such challenges, this Government is very much capable. The Government has proved it's prowess, which is not an ordinary achievement.

We should initiate some more programmes to eradicate poverty. The day, when we can stop a person migrating from rural area to urban area, that moment will be the moment of self-reliance in Indian economy, which is, I believe is not very far. Keeping in view the growth rate, I believe we can achieve economic independence very soon. To realize economic independence there is a need to arrest rising economic offences. There are numerable white collared offences committed in our country. If an affluent person escapes from the clutches of law by committing such crimes, this will send a wrong signal to the people. We should work to send right message to the masses. For example, I unmasked a big financial scam in my state Andhra Pradesh and had written a letter to Finance Minister on 6.11.2006. Six months have passed and till now no legal action is taken against that person who illegally collected Rs. 2600 crores from public. If RBI, State Government and Central Government are helpless in such situation, I think it's time to give more teeth to our laws. So, to send positive message to people that "who ever be the person, if he commits a crime, he is not above law and is punishable". I request Hon. Finance Minister to look into this matter. Regarding price rise, I feel all essential commodities should be taken out of the ambit of on-line trading.

And on-line trading should be declared as an illegal activity. If required change laws and send the persons who promote black marketing through on-line trading, behind bars. I believe such actions can control price of essential commodities. Though, there is increase in productivity and purchasing power, the commodities are out of markets. I believe that on-line trading is the reason behind such situations. Already, two commodities are taken out of on-line trading and I request Government to take all essential commodities out of on-line trading. Regarding my constituency Rajahmundry. Aluminum trading is abundant. Thousands of workers are dependent on this cottage industry where old Aluminum is melted to make new utensils. A customs duty is being imposed on this cottage industry, which is not in the interests of these workers. I already submitted a representation in this regard to Hon. Finance Minister and I expect him to respond favourably on this representation. And I request him to take steps to promote cottage industries where by, people dependent on cottage industry may feel secure, profitable and can contribute in generating employment. I believe that Government will take steps in this direction. Last year, I raised this issue regarding subsidy given to rich people, which should be cancelled. We are taking subsidy on domestic gas. MP's, MLA's, Ministers, President of India, Prime Minister are using subsidized domestic gas. But we don't deserve it. A person whose income is above Rs. 4 lakh per annum and all MP's MLA's and other constitutional functionaries should not be given subsidy on domestic gas. By doing so, we will be saving 7,000 to 8,000 crores of rupees for our exchequer. I request Hon. Finance Minister to take up this issue and implement it immediately. Similarly, I expect him to take growth rate from 9% to 10%, 11%, 15% or may be 20% in future, and utilize such benefits in bringing about changes in the lives of poor people. With these words I conclude.

[English]

SHRI KHAGEN DAS (Tripura-West): Sir, I thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak on the Finance Bill.

I rise to support the Budget for the year 2007-08. But I would request the hon. Finance Minister to take appropriate steps on the following issues which are important.

At the outset, I would like to say that today price rise is the biggest problem facing the common man. The Budget fails to make any attempt for strengthening and universalisation of the Public Distribution System.

This is to ensure proper nutrition and food security for all the citizens, including the people who are living in

remote areas. The Public Distribution System plays an important part in keeping the prices under control, but the Budget is designed to weaken the Public Distribution System and a reversal from the targeted system to the establishment of a universal system of public distribution is necessary. All three aspects of the Public Distribution System must be strengthened. There should be an increase in food production, there should be adequate procurement and there should be proper distribution. With the big increase in prices of pulses, it is essential for the Government to include pulses within the ambit of the Public Distribution System.

Sir, it is said that agriculture is the backbone of the nation's economy. But after 60 years of Independence, it has become a casualty. In the Budget, only a token attempt has been made for crop insurance. It should be expanded to cover the entire country and all crops along with creation of a fund for stabilization of price fluctuation in agricultural products, reduction of interest rate on agricultural loans to 4 per cent simple interest, distribution of land to every landless household, creation of a fund on the lines of the National Calamity Fund to assist farmers affected by crop losses, ban on future trading on all essential agricultural commodities to protect the interests of the producer and the consumer along with the introduction of quantitative restriction on the import of agricultural commodities. Speculative future trading in agricultural commodities has had disastrous results. The large mass of farmers, mainly the small and marginal farmers, has been pauperized and the number of suicides of farmers continues to rise.

Coming to the North East Region, the Finance Minister has given a step-motherly treatment to the backward States of the North East Region. Out of the total estimated Plan expenditure of Rs. 2,05,100 crore, only Rs. 14,365 crore has been allocated for the North East Region which is far less than 10 per cent of the total Plan expenditure. The backward areas deserve more Plan support to bring them at par with other parts of the country. But the outlay of less than 10 per cent of Plan expenditure to the North East Region in the Budget for 2007-08 will only add to the disparity and discontent among the people of the North East Region.

Special Accelerated Road Development Programme for the North East (SARDPNE) was started to provide much needed connectivity in the region. But the programme has remained a non-starter. The Finance Minister, in his Budget Speech, mentioned that 450 km. work has been awarded in 2006-07, but the fact is that a substantial portion of the fund has remained unutilised and with the scheme in its present form, the people of the region will

continue to suffer from the problems of poor connectivity and isolation. Given the economic and security environment in the region, public-private partnership is not going to work there. If the Government is interested to provide roads to the people of the region, the highways need to be constructed with support from the Government. Otherwise, programmes like SARDPNE would remain only on paper and find a mention in the speeches of the Finance Minister without any benefits reaching the people of the region. In this connection, I would like to mention that on 27th, under the leadership of the Chief Minister of Tripura, myself, Shri Sitram Yechury and two other MPs met the hon. Prime Minister.

We raised this issue and he had categorically stated that the PPP would not be workable in the North-Eastern region. So, I would request the hon. Finance Minister to have a re-look into the matter.

The hon. Finance Minister has mentioned that Rs. 1,380 crore has been provided to the Ministry of DONER for the year 2007-08 without clarifying that, out of this a substantial portion is on account of the Non-Lapsable Central Pool of Resources, which could not be effectively utilised by the several Central Ministries for their schemes in the region.

The Finance Minister should clarify why the concerned Ministries could not utilise these funds in the region, rather created a false impression that additional resources are being provided for the development of the N-E region through the Ministry of DONER.

There is an acute shortage of power in the North-East region. In Tripura, against the demand of 168 MW, the availability from the State's own resources is only 68 MW. The State Government has sought financial assistance from the NEC for funding a 21 MW gas based power project at Baramura in Tripura. The Ministry of DONER and the Ministry of Power recommended the project on the basis of 90 per cent grant and ten per cent loan.

The hon. Prime Minister had given a specific assurance to a delegation of Members of Parliament from the North-East Forum on 25th August, 2006 that the project would be executed on the basis of 90 per cent grant and ten per cent loan, that is, 90 per cent grant from the Central Government and ten per cent loan. It may also be mentioned that the generation of power from the said project would be shared by Tripura, Mizoram and Manipur, which are facing severe power shortage at present. The Finance Ministry should take an immediate decision in the light of the assurance given by the hon. Prime Minister.

[Shri Khagen Das]

To address the problem of growing unemployment in (he North-East region and to make 'Right to Work' a reality for the needy sections of the society, particularly for the poorest of the poor of the North-Eastern Region, the remotest region of the country, I would request that all the districts of the North-East region, particularly, the North-Tripura districts, which have so far not been covered by NREGA, should be included in the NREGA in this year's Budget.

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO (Kalahandi): Sir, I stand to oppose the Finance Bill.

Though the fiscal performance of the Central Government has been good, their receipts in direct and indirect taxes have gone up. At the same time, the inflation is so much that as per the RBI guidelines, it has overtaken the RBI principal of 5.5 and in the month of March, it touched about 6.4. So, this directly hits the common man, Aam Aadmi, the UPA Government, the huddled coalition which we are running today, is talking about.

The hon. Finance Minister is an efficient man. I read a newspaper about two months back that the Budget Estimate kept for disinvestment was around Rs.3,800 and some odd crore, but they have not received any capital from that. It is nil. The hon. Finance Minister has made a statement in a newspaper that disinvestment should be reconsidered or re-thought of. So, this is a grey area in managing the financial system in the country because this good work which they received in indirect taxes, the improvement they have made in the recovery of taxes is due to the legacy created by the NDA Government, the openness created by the NDA Government.

The disinvestment policy was there, by which they get a lot of capital and take up ambitious projects like PMGSY and other rural reconstruction programmes.

So, I would like to know from the Finance Minister, while he replies, about the amount of money he was supposed to receive from the capital assets, if he had disinvested, that money is to go for the social programmes of the country for the underprivileged, for the BPL people, for mitigating regional disparity. But I do not think UPA Government is able to do it. I would like to say that they have done very good in the manufacturing sector; they have increased a lot; but their grey area remains in the mining sector. Today, our State of Orissa, where an investment of nearly Rs. 2 lakh crore is coming in the form of steel plant, in the form of two aluminium bauxite projects - the Vedanta project and the Indal project - they are

unable to go ahead because of the mining laws and mining reforms. If you want to utilize the natural resources of the country properly, mining reforms have to be brought. Otherwise the performance of this sector, as projected, is abysmally low. This has to be improved, otherwise it will eventually and gradually affect the manufacturing sector; it will affect the producers; and it will affect the total economy of the country. You must have a clear thinking on this.

It has been seen at the outgo side sometimes the non-plan expenditure is projected to be 4.5 per cent higher than the budget estimate. In this case the revenue expenditure exceeded the target by 4 per cent. Why did the revenue expenditure exceed by 4 per cent? Capital expenditure declined by over one per cent because you do not have any capital to spend. Fiscal deficits ran ahead of the budget estimate by 2.4 per cent but yet as a percentage of GDP managed to come down to 3.7 per cent as against the budgeted 3.8 per cent on account of unexpected high growth in GDP. There might be a growth in GDP because that comes from the manufacturing sector, service sector and other sectors. But the major contribution to our economy is from the agricultural sector, which is abysmally low. We are expecting a growth of minimum 4 per cent to maintain a GDP of 10 per cent. For the Eleventh Finance Commission you have said that there will be average 9 per cent GDP growth. But the agriculture sector is still segregated, neglected. The credit structure is very poor and yields are coming down. Your wheat procurement target has fallen; and this year the rice procurement target has fallen. So, the concept of the Green Revolution, which was there during the first Green Revolution, is slowly fading away. There is magnanimous growth of population which has touched more than one billion. How do you expect to feed them? Things have to be thought properly for our democracy, for our country to remain economically strong. Consumers have been hit; producers have been hurt. There is also damaging of the future prospects of maintaining the current momentum of economic growth which was spearheaded by our Government. The NDA Government had opened the country for everybody, for NRI investments, for investment in backward areas and there was backward area regions funds. I would like to give the example of KBK region. I am very happy that the hon. Finance Minister mentioned in his Budget Speech about the KBK region and also backward regions grant was awarded for the KBK region. But, we are still running with the shortfall of Rs. 130 crore. The projected economic development which we had decided to do is not reachable. We require another Rs. 130 crore so that we get Rs. 500 crore every year for the eight districts in the KBK region

which has been the thrust area for development since Rajiv Gandhi's time when he visited our district. Every Prime Minister visited our district. The hon. Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh tried to visit Orissa but there was bad weather and the helicopter could not land; he could not come. We had gone to receive him. But I hope that the Finance Minister do visit our area some time.

Please come and see the ground realities as to how the people are living there. See their condition of education, health and development. Compared to the parameters of other regions in other States, their conditions are very pathetic. All these are required to be improved.

Therefore, Sir, I oppose the Finance Bill. But I hope, the hon. Finance Minister would reply on the Disinvestment Policy of this Government and not get influenced by the huddled ruling coalition by which they are ruling; and also not get pressurized by the trade unions and the Left Front because unnecessarily they are creating hurdles. *...(Interruptions)* Otherwise, where from you get the money?

Besides, as you have had a robust collection of taxes from direct taxes, I hope, Mr. Minister, you would give further exemptions on income tax and further high interest rates for the senior citizens. By doing all this, definitely, conditions of the people would improve.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Members, discussion on the Finance Bill would continue on 3rd May, 2007.

Now, the House shall take up matters of urgent public importance.

[Translation]

* SHRI LONAPPAN NAMBADAN (Mukundapuram): Sir, thousands of land owners who had given their lands for the widening of NH-47 are now driven to the verge of suicide due to non-payment of compensation by the Government. Sir, the process of land acquisition for the four-lane national highway from Ankamali to Mannuthi and Mannuthi to Valayar should be completed immediately and the land owners should be paid compensation. Though the process of land acquisition for the national highway NH-17, started more than 25 years ago it has not yet been completed. So the land acquisition for NH-17 should be completed immediately and the highway should be developed in time. The land owners have not yet been paid the meager amount fixed by the Government many years ago. Therefore, they cannot buy land anywhere.

* English translation of the speech originally delivered in Malayalam.

Sir, the land price in Kerala has increased ten-fold. The poor cannot buy land even to construct a small house. They are literally on the highway. Sir, considering the density of population of Kerala and also scarcity of land, the attempts to convert NH-47 into a six-lane highway should be immediately dropped. Sir, by constructing a new fly-over on the NH-47 at the Chalakkudi Municipal Junction, the road block on the Chalakkudi – Mala route can be removed. The various difficulties that the common man may face due to the expansion of NH-47 and their problems in travelling should be solved by the Centre by taking appropriate and timely steps.

[English]

SHRI P.S. GADHAVI (Kutch): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to invite the attention of the Government on one of the very important issues regarding inordinate delay in the completion of the programmes of the National Highway. All these programmes of the National Highway were envisaged by the NDA Government including the Golden Quadrilateral, East-West and South-North Corridor and Port Connectivity Projects. It has appeared many times in the newspapers also.

As per the news appeared in The Sunday Express of 22nd April, 2007 published from Chennai, it is reported that on an average all the 28 projects of the National Highway Authority of India are running behind the scheduled time, say by over 28 months.

As per NHA's 8th April, 2007, Status Report, (a) one Port Connectivity Project in Andhra Pradesh and (b) two GQ Projects in West Bengal and Maharashtra are still not complete.

The National Highway Authority has shifted the goalpost saying 16 projects are now expected to be completed in next three months, but this period of three months is being repeated over and over since past some years.

To put matters in a proper perspective, most of the 28 projects of National Highway Authority of India were started either in 2001-2002, and one project was started as early as in 1999. On an average, all these projects were to be completed by the end of October last year, but they were running behind the scheduled time by over 28 months.

Golden Quadrilateral, East-West and South-North Corridor and Port Connectivity Projects envisaged by the NDA Government are the national programmes, which are to be carried out by the National Highway Authority of India but the same are languishing with inordinate delay, and that is causing unbearable burden on the nation.

I, therefore, urge upon the UPA Government to see that this national programme of building of GQ and other national highways be completed as per the scheduled time fixed for its completion. Thank you very much.

[Translation]

SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH VERMA (Jalaun): Mr. Chairman. Sir, the sub-post office located at Kaunch Nagar of Jalaun district in Uttar Pradesh is a very old post office and its building is in a dilapidated condition. The building is so dilapidated that it may collapse at any time.

Thousands of people of this area visit this post office to purchase postage stamps and post cards. The employees of the post office remain under perpetual terror that the building may collapse at any time. I had raised this issue

on earlier occasions as well. I would like to demand from the Central Government that a new building should be constructed for the sub post office located at Kaunch Nagar at the earliest to protect the people of my area from such untoward incidents.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: The House stands adjourned to meet on Thursday, the 3rd May, 2007 at 11.00 a.m.

17.47 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Thursday, May 3, 2007/Vaisakha 13, 1929 (Saka).

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