

Recognition of Jains as Minorities

*385. SHRI ARIF MOHAMMED KHAN : Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have received recommendations from the National Commission on Minorities to recognise Jains as a separate religious minority and allow them all benefits meant for other religious minorities;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI) : (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The Question as to who constitutes a minority is the subject matter of a writ petition in the Supreme Court. The final decision in the matter of recognition of Jains as minorities will depend on the decision of the Supreme Court.

Collection of Revenues/Funds by Extremists/ Insurgents

*386. SHRI RATILAL KALIDAS VARMA :
SHRI DILEEP SANGHANI :

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether extremists/insurgents are collecting revenues and extorting funds from the public, business houses and industries in North-Eastern States;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Tata Tea company in Assam had links with ULFA terrorists;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the company used to give money to the terrorists;

(f) if so, the details of the officers involved and the amount paid to the terrorists;

(g) whether any inquiry has been conducted in this regard;

(h) if so, the outcome of the inquiry; and

(i) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Union Government against the persons found responsible in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI) : (a) and (b) There are reports of various

extremist/insurgent outfits in the North Eastern States indulging in extortion of funds from Government Departments, public, business houses and industries, particularly in the States of Assam, Manipur, Nagaland and Tripura. The names under which such extortion is carried out in certain areas include, *inter-alia*, 'Department Tax' which is an annual tax collected from Heads of Government Departments; 'employee tax' which is a fixed percentage of the salary of Government employees; a fixed percentage of all Government works being executed in the State; and annual 'house tax' from every household; and 'taxes' on shops, vehicles, video/cinema halls, contractors, petrol pumps and other business establishments.

(c) to (i) Certain links between Tata Tea Ltd. and United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) have come to notice of Government. However, the Company has denied having made payment to ULFA. The Assam Police has registered cases against certain senior executives of the Tata Tea Ltd. Action will be taken as per law of the land.

[Translation]

Creation of New States

*387. PROF. PREM SINGH CHANDUMAJRA :
SHRI AJIT JOGI :

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have taken any decision for creation of new States recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the proposals for naming the proposed States, their capitals and demarcation of their areas have been prepared with the consent of the concerned State Governments;

(d) whether the Government are contemplating to constitute a Commission for taking up delimitation and reorganisation of the State ;

(e) if not, the reasons therefor;

(f) whether an additional expenditure of 500 crore Rupees is likely to be incurred every year on this account; and

(g) if not, the estimate made by the Government in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government has approved, in principle, the proposals for the creation of new States of Uttaranchal, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh.