

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.

The Government has also decided that the Union territory of Delhi be granted full Statehood except for National Capital Territory which will be administered by the Central Government.

(c) The proposed States of Uttaranchal, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh are being carved out of the existing States of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh respectively. The Resolutions passed by the State Legislature of Uttar Pradesh specify the boundaries of the proposed State of Uttaranchal/Uttarakhand. The Resolutions passed by the State Legislative Assembly of Bihar and the State Legislative Assembly of Madhya Pradesh speak of the formation of separate States of Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh. Jharkhand Area of Bihar and Chhattisgarh Region of Madhya Pradesh are distinct geographical entities. Anyway, in view of the provisions of article 3 of the Constitution of India, the Legislatures of the existing States of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh will get due opportunity to express their views on various provisions of the Bills providing for the creation of new States. These Bill will *inter alia*, contain provisions in regard to the boundaries, names, etc. of the proposed States.

(d) and (e) The Government is not contemplating any general re-organisation of the State and, as such, no proposal to constitute a State Reorganisation Commission is under its consideration.

(f) and (g) The Creation of new States may lead to an increase in administrative expenditure but this has to be viewed in the context of the aspirations of the people of the concerned areas. There are well laid down norms for providing financial assistance to the States.

[English]

Appointment of Governors

*388. SHRI N.K. PREMCHANDRAN : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are consulting the State Governments and eliciting their views prior to the appointment of Governors;

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

(c) whether there is any proposal under consideration to keep the institution of Governor out from being politicized; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI) : (a) and (b) Article 155 of the Constitution of India provides that the Governor of a State shall be appointed by the President by warrant under his hand and seal. However, as a matter of practice, the Chief

Minister of the State is normally consulted before its Governor is appointed.

(c) and (d) The Sarkaria Commission on Centre-State Relations had made certain recommendations in regard to the criteria for selection of Governors. These recommendations were considered by the Standing Committee of the Inter-State Council in its meeting held on the 10th of November, 1997. However, the Inter-State Council is yet to take a view in the matter.

VIP Security

*389. PROF. AJIT KUMAR MEHTA :
SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH :

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the general road users are forced to waste precious time everyday during VIP security arrangement;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have any other optional device to save the VIP's from this show of exorbitant safety measures and thereby save the common road-user from harassment;

(d) the criteria observed in providing and withdrawing security for various categories;

(e) whether any efforts have been made by the Government to reduce the expenditure and lessen the burden on the security force; and

(f) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI) : (a) to (c) During the road journeys of the Prime Minister and the President of India, traffic is closed/diverted from the route of the VVIP to provide clear passage, on security considerations. This causes some inconvenience to the public. The Government is concerned about his inconvenience, but it is considered necessary to resort to this practice on security considerations. However, the endeavour of the Government is to ensure that the inconvenience to the general public is reduced to the minimum. The guidelines in this regard are reviewed from time to time.

(d) to (f) Security is provided based on threat perception in individual cases. The security of the protectees is reviewed periodically based on latest threat perception in each case and necessary changes are made as warranted. This is a continuing exercise and in the last such review security of 111 persons was withdrawn. This exercise of review keeps the expenditure as well as deployment of police personnel on security under check.