

(b) While the price of cotton is dependent on the demand and supply situation, Government keeps a close watch on the price of cotton, and takes suitable measures if the situation so warrants. Meanwhile, cotton is freely importable at zero rate of duty.

Coal Handling and water Treatment Plants in BCCL

3591. SHRI MOINUL HASSAN : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) the number of Coal Handling Plants and Water Treatment Plants made in BCCCL, till March 31, 1998;

(b) the amount spent on them separately; and

(c) the number out of them actually operating presently?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI DILIP RAY) : (a) and (b) The details of Coal Handling Plants and Water Treatment Plants constructed by BCCL till 31st March, 1998 are as under :

	Number	Amount spent (Rs. in Lakhs)
1. Coal Handling Plant	32	4803.34
2. Water Treatment Plant	64	860.00

(c) Of the 32 Coal Handling Plants and 64 Water Treatment Plants, 30 Nos. Coal Handling Plants and 64 Nos. Water Treatment Plants are in operation. 2 Coal Handling Plants are not operating as the two linked mines which have serviced these 2 Coal Handling Plants, have closed down.

Financial Gain Due to Increase in Retirement Age

3592. SHRI GEORGE EDEN : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have calculated the total financial gain due to increase in the retirement age; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) : (a) and (b) The enhancement in the age of superannuation by two years in respect of Central Govt. civilian employees will result in fiscal relief of about Rs. 3700 crores in a full year for two years. As per the calculation made by the Ministry of Defence, the annual savings in respect of Defence personnel will be about Rs. 1500 crores. The aggregate savings would, thus, amount to about Rs. 5200 crores per annum for two years.

Impact of New EXIM Policy on Export/Import of Copra, Rubber

3593. SHRI T. GOVINDAN : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government is taking action to contain the adverse effect of the liberalised export import (EXIM) Policy affecting the coconut oil/copra and natural rubber producers, mainly in Kerala; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) and (b) The import of Coconut (copra) oil is canalised through State Trading Corporation and Hindustan Vegetable Oil Corporation. Natural Rubber can be imported against Special Import Licences (SIL).

There have been no recent changes in the importability of these items.

Loan by RRB and NABARD

3594. SHRIMATI RANI CHITRALEKHA BHONSLE :
SHRI RAM TAHAL CHAUDHARY :
DR. MADAN PRASAD JAISWAL :
SHRI NRIPEN GOSWAMI :
DR. SAROJA V. :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the loans provided by Regional Rural Banks and NABARD to small and marginal farmers during the last three years, separately, State-wise and project-wise;

(b) the number of SC/ST and OBC farmers benefited therefrom, State-wise; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to remove the problems being faced by the farmers in getting such loans?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House to the extent available.

FERA Violation

3595. SHRI RAM TAHAL CHAUDHARY :
DR. MADAN PRASAD JAISWAL :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the charges against the persons involved in Foreign Exchange Regulation Act (FERA) violations have not been framed since 1995 till date, as a result of which they have not yet been punished;

(b) if so, the number of persons involved in FERA violations since 1995 against whom charges have not been framed yet and the reasons for delay in each of such cases;

(c) whether the Government propose to review the long pending cases; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) and (b) No, Sir. However, in certain complicated/group cases, investigations take considerable period of time, which lead to delays. Since 1995, the number of cases taken up for investigation, and the number in which Show-Cause Notices (SCNs) have been issued and prosecution launched, are as follows :

No.	1995	1996	1997	1998 (upto March)
(i) Cases taken up for investigation	5633	5486	5577	880
(ii) SCNs issued	2456	2291	2721	636
(iii) Prosecution launched	202	101	90	17

(c) and (d) Government periodically, reviews, interalia, the pendency of cases under investigation/adjudication/prosecution, and issues appropriate instructions.

Agricultural Wages

3596. SHRI ASHOK NAMDEORAO MOHOL : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether some studies undertaken in the country under Economic Survey during the last five years have indicated that agricultural wages have declined sharply;

(b) if so, the details of States and Union Territories where declining trend prevailed and to what extent;

(c) whether such declining trend was improved in some States/Union Territories during 1992-93 and 1993-94;

(d) if so, the details thereof Statewise;

(e) whether Government propose to take some steps to improve the declining trend in this regard; and

(f) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) : (a) to (f) Average real wages for unskilled labour have increased during the last five years i.e. 1992-93 to 1996-97 (agriculture year July to June) for the country as a whole except for 1994-95 where there was a marginal fall by 0.39 per cent. A statement indicating annual percentage change in real wages for unskilled agriculture labour for selected States is annexed. It is observed that there have been no uniform trends across the States implying that local conditions exert significant influence on agriculture wages.

Statement

*Annual Percentage Change in Real Wages for Unskilled Agriculture Labour for Selected States
Percentage Change for agricultural year (July to June) over previous year*

State	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95(P)	1995-96(P)	1996-97(P)
1	2	3	4	5	6
Andhra Pradesh	(+) 1.57	(+) 8.60	(+) 2.71	(-) 1.73	(+) 1.35
Assam	(+) 0.58	(-) 6.58	(-) 1.67	(+) 2.68	(+) 1.68
Bihar	5.00	(+) 5.98	(+) 1.69	(-) 2.30	(-) 10.80
Gujarat	(+) 7.92	(+) 2.86	(+) 1.27	(+) 2.92	(+) 5.70
Karnataka	(-) 14.39	(+) 41.31	(-) 15.60	(-) 8.61	(+) 21.48
Kerala	(+) 9.74	(-) 2.84	(+) 5.24	(+) 13.20	(+) 14.03
Madhya Pradesh	(+) 12.57	(-) 3.53	(+) 4.93	(+) 1.24	(+) 1.23
Maharashtra	(+) 0.66	(+) 25.58	(-) 0.68	(-) 7.89	(-) 2.88