

encourage and sponsor bankers to set up any private bank in Assam;

(f) 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) At the instance of the Government, the Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI), the largest shareholder in North-Eastern Development Finance Corporation Ltd. (NEDFI), conducted a review of operations and functioning of NEDFI last year. After considering the report of IDBI, IDBI has been requested to initiate speedy remedial measures to ensure that NEDFI is able to improve its performance and achieve the objectives for which it was set up. IDBI has also been asked to review and monitor the performance of NEDFI on a regular basis.

(c) and (d) NEDFI was incorporated in 1995 with an authorised capital of Rs. 500 crores. The initial paid up capital of Rs. 100 crores has been subscribed by the promoting institutions. IDBI has reported that the fund position of NEDFI is quite comfortable at present.

(e) and (f) The Reserve Bank of India (RBI), consequent on issue of guidelines on setting up of new banks in the private sector gave an 'in-principle' approval in October 1995 to a company to set up a new bank with its Headquarters at Guwahati. However, as the said company could not complete the formalities connected with the setting up of the bank even after a period of more than one and half years, the approval was withdrawn by RBI in May 1997.

#### **Import of Wheat from Australia**

1521. SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Australian wheat has been "Over Priced":

(b) the criteria of STC contract in this regards; and

(c) the programme for taking delivery, the target fixed and actual delivery received?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) and (b) The contract with Australian Wheat Board has been concluded by STC keeping in view its

price competitiveness on C & F cost basis, its conformity to health standards and Phytosanitary norms laid down as per Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, 1955 and PFS (Plant, Food, Seed) Order, 1989.

(c) At the time of finalising the contract, the delivery period for 1 million MT was stipulated as March-April 1998 and 0.5 Million MT for May-15 June 1998 extendable to 31st July, 1998. As per present indications 10.5 lakh MT will be shipped from Australian Coast by end June '98. The balance quantity will be shipped in the post monsoon period commencing from 15th August-15th October, 1998 as per the directors of the Deptt. of Food & Civil Supplies and FCI. As on 25.5.98, a quantity of 3.14 lakh MT has arrived at Indian ports.

#### **Security Scam**

1522. SHRI SURENDRAN CHENGARA :

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a special court to dispose of security-scam related cases was set up; and

(b) if so, the number of cases charged and disposed of so far and the details of the funds which were lost by various banks and financial institutions?

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) A Special Court was set up in 1992 under the provisions of Special Court (Trial of Offences Relating to Transactions in Securities) Act, 1992 for trial of offences relating to transactions in securities and the matters connected therewith.

(b) Office of the Custodian have reported that 104 suits and 31 criminal cases were filed between 1992 and 1998 (upto 31st March, 1998). Out of these, 37 suits and 3 criminal cases have so far been disposed off.

The value of attached properties of 41 out of 42 persons notified under the Act as at July 1997 prices is Rs. 3037 crores. The Custodian has filed applications before the Special Court praying directions of the Court to enforce disclosure of assets by the remaining 11 notified persons. The Special Court has passed orders directing these parties to disclose their assets. The claims lodged by the banks, financial institutions and others with the Custodian/Special Court against Harshad Mehta Group, Dalal Group and Fairgrowth Financial Services are to the tune of Rs. 3478.93 crores.