1997-98 and 1998-99 (till February, 1999), a total quantity of 1.81 lakh MTs, 1.79 lakh MTs and 1.52 lakh MTs of coffee earning foreign exchange of US $ 451 Mn, US $ 477 Mn and US $ 318 Mn respectively has been exported. The major countries to which Indian coffee has been exported are Russian Federation, Italy, Germany, USA, Japan, Middle East countries, Netherlands, Poland, Spain, Slovenia, Belgium.

(f) and (g) The Coffee Exports have given various suggestions like upgradation of quality controls, improvement of processing system, simplification of export documentation and procedures, exemption from various taxes and levies, development of logo for promotion of coffee etc. Action on most of the suggestions has already been taken by the Coffee Board.

(h) For increasing coffee production, the Coffee Board, besides operating several plan programmes and developmental activities aimed at intensive cultivation, replanting programme, quality improvement programme and water augmentation programme has also been providing necessary support in the form of (a) agricultural research, (b) extension, (c) arrangement for credit and finance and other necessary back-up support like supply of seeds for plantation purposes etc.

For boosting export of coffee, the Coffee Board is focussing on targetted import markets like USA, Japan, Russia, Middle-east countries etc. The Board also participates in selected food fairs, exhibitions abroad, releases advertisements on unique features on Indian coffee in selected overseas trade journals, sponsors trade delegations/invites delegations of roasters from all the target markets to India, arranges service of Indian Coffee abroad through our embassies, distributes gift packets of Indian Coffee through Indian Embassies on special occasions and festivals, promotes logo for Indian Coffee and publishes and distributes literature on Indian Coffee.

115-116

Financial Problems in Cement Industry

*157. SHRI R.S. GAVAI :
DR. ULHAS VASUDEO PATIL :

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is disparity in prices and the demand-supply imbalance in cement in various parts of the country;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether cement industry is facing financial problems in their capacity expansion programmes;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the steps proposed to be taken by the Government to provide financial assistance to cement industry?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Inter-regional prices of cement vary on account of factors such as local demand and supply, distance of market from the cement producing centres, etc. On account of demand recession, at present there is a mismatch between the existing production capacity and demand for cement.

(c) and (d) Since there is excess capacity in cement industry at present, there is no major capacity expansion plan on anvil by the Cement Industry.

(e) Question does not arise.

[Translation]

116-118

P.F. Scheme

*158. SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the Provident Fund Scheme of the Government;

(b) whether Provident Fund Policy is being changed;

(c) if so, whether the changed policy would provide more benefits to the employees as compared to old one; and

(d) if so, the full details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) : (a) Details of the Provident Fund Schemes of the Government are as follows:

(i) General Provident Fund

The General Provident Fund (Central Services) Rules, 1960 are applicable to pensionable Central Government servants. The minimum monthly rate of subscription is 6% of the emoluments of an employee and not more than his total emoluments. Interest is allowed at the rate of 12% per annum compounded annually. The employees are eligible to draw advances and withdraw from the Fund for various purposes as stipulated in the Rules governing drawal of advances and withdrawals. When a subscriber quits the service, the amount standing to his credit in the Fund shall be paid to him with interest.

Members of All India Services are governed by AIS (Provident Fund) Rules, 1955 which are identical in scope and content to the GPF Rules.

(ii) Contributory Provident Fund

The Contributory Provident Fund Rules (India), 1962 are applicable to Central Government Employees borne on non-pensionable services. The monthly contribution of the, subscriber will be not less than 10% of the emoluments and not more than his total emoluments and the contribution by the Government will be at the rate prescribed from time to time. This is presently 10%. The rate of interest allowed on CPF subscriptions is 12% compounded annually as in the case of GPF. Conditions governing drawal of advances and withdrawals from the Contributory Provident Fund are similar to those applicable in respect of General Provident Fund.

(iii) Employees Provident Fund Scheme, 1952

The Scheme is applicable to employees of factories/ establishments employing 20 or more persons. Employees drawing wages up to Rs. 5000 per month are compulsorily covered under the Scheme. The rate of subscription to the Fund is 12% of the montly wage in respect of employees in 172 classes of industries/establishments. In the remaining 5 industries, (brick, jute, coir, guargum and beedi), the rate of subscription is 10%. Under the Scheme, both the employer and the employee are required to make matching contribution to the Fund. Of the employer's share to the Fund, an amount representing 8.33% of the monthly wage is diverted towards the Pension Fund. The employees contribution plus the remaining portion of the employer's contribution is deposited in the individual accounts of the EPF subscribers. The subscribers are paid 12% interest on their monthly running balance. On retirement/resignation from service, the entire accumulation in the subscribers account together with interest is paid back to them. The employees are also entitled to non-refundable advances from their PF account.

(iv) Public Provident Fund

A PPF account can be opened by an individual on his own behalf or on behalf of a minor of whom he is the guardian or on behalf of a HUF of which he is a member or on behalf of an asociation of persons or a body of individuals consisting only of husband and wife governed by the system of Community of Property in force in the Union territories of Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Daman, Diu and Goa State. A person subscribing to GPF, CPF or EPF can also open a PPF account. The account can be opened in a Head Post Office or in a Branch of the State Bank of India or its subsidiaries and also at specified branches of some other nationalised banks. The minimum and maximum annual subscription permitted to the Fund in a financial year are Rs. 100 and Rs. 60,000/- respectively. The balance in the PPF earns an interest at the rate fixed by the Government from time to time. The present rate of interest is 12% per annum. The members are entitled to withdrawal and loan facilities from the Fund as per provisions containod in the Scheme. The account can be closed on expiry of a period of 15 years. If, however, a subscriber intends to continue his account after maturity for any period of time, he is allowed to do so.

(b) There is no proposal at present to change the policies relating to the different schemes in force.

(c) and (d) Does not arise.

[English] 48-49

Abolition of the Scheme of DICGC

*159. SHRI BHARTRAHARI MAHTAB : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether most of the State Financial Corporations and many Commercial Banks have ceased their operation from Deposit Insurance Credit Guarantee Corporation (DICGC) on account of high permia, low coverage and unsatisfactory services;

(b) whether the Expert Committee set up in this regard have recommended abolition of the present scheme of DICGC and making it user-friendly through SIDBI; and

(c) the steps being taken to implement the recommendations of the committee?

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) The Deposit Insurance Credit Guarantee Corporation (DICGC) has reported that it has terminated the small loans (financial corporations) guarantee scheme, 1971 w.e.f. 31st March 1992 on account of negligible participation by the State Financial Corporations (SFCs) and in view of chronic and continuous default in payment of guarantee fee. A