

(c) The Government has set up a National Task Force on Information Technology and Software Development to formulate the draft of a National Informatics Policy. The Task Force has submitted its 1st Report covering both bottlenecks area and broad promotional measures that are crucial for boosting IT in India. The recommendations cover a wide spectrum of issues relating to telecommunications, finance, banking, revenue, commerce, electronics, human resource development, defence and rural development. They address critical national needs in the areas of information infrastructure, Internet access, software development and exports, hardware manufacture, electronic commerce, R & D in IT, manpower training and education. The Government of India has also announced in the Parliament on 15th July, 1998 various tax incentives for the IT sector based on the recommendations of the Task Force.

#### Remote Sensing Agency

5091. SHRI N. JANARDHANA REDDY : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

- (a) the details of the activities of Remote Sensing Agency;
- (b) the achievements of this Agency so far; and
- (c) the success achieved in utilising the data provided by this Agency?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE) :  
(a) The main activities of National Remote Sensing Agency (NRSA) are : (i) satellite data acquisition, processing and dissemination; (ii) application services for management of the natural resources; (iii) aerial survey services; (iv) imparting training in remote sensing and Geographic Information System (GIS) applications and (v) development and transfer of related technology to private industry.

(b) Major achievements of this Agency include :  
(i) regular generation and dissemination of satellite data products to end-users (about 150,000 data products supplied over the past 10 years); (ii) aerial photography of about 300 towns and geophysical survey of about 70% of country's geographical area; (iii) training of about 5,400 personnel; (iv) carrying out a number of major remote sensing application projects in the areas of agriculture, forestry, water resources, geology, integrated land and water resources development, urban planning, marine resources survey, Environmental Impact assessment, disaster monitoring, etc.

(c) The major success achieved in utilising the data provided by this Agency include : (i) biennial

monitoring of forest cover of the country on 1:250,000 scale; (ii) nation-wide mapping of land use/land cover, district-wise, on 1:250,000 scale, for agro-climatic zone based regional planning; (iii) mapping the types and extent of wastelands on 1:50,000 scale, for 241 districts with more than five per cent of their geographical area under wasteland; (iv) mapping saline/alkaline soils of the country on 1:250,000 scale, towards planning their management/reclamation; (v) command area management with increased water use efficiency in selected large irrigated commands; (vi) sustainable development of selected watersheds (through implementation of locale-specific land and water resources development plans - generated under the Integrated Mission for Sustainable Development (IMSD); (vii) pre-harvest Crop Acreage and Production Estimation (CAPE) for major crops; (viii) planning relief operations during drought and flood events; (ix) identification of prospective ground water zones (for identifying drinking water source in about 1.6 lakh problem villages under the National Drinking Water Technology Mission); (x) development planning for metropolitan regions of Mumbai, National Capital Region and Bangalore; (xi) generation and dissemination of Potential Fishing Zone (PFZ) forecasts to about 287 Maritime Fishing Centres in the country; etc.

Besides, NRSA has also developed 23 remote sensing data analysis equipment and transferred their technology to private industries for regular production.

#### UPSC Examination Centre

5092. COL. SONA RAM CHOUDHRY : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

- (a) whether the UPSC propose to open new examination centres for exams in Jodhpur and other parts of the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor?

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) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise, in view of (a), above.

(c) The present arrangement has been found to be adequate.

#### Seed Growing Programme

5093. SHRI RAMKRISHNA BABA PATIL :  
SHRI PRABHASH CHANDRA TIWARI :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :