

De-Congestion of cities

164. PROF P.J. KURIEN : Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have any proposal to de-congest the cities and town in the country which are facing the serious problem of congestion and pollution;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether Government have prepared any perspective plan to save other cities and towns which are going to face this problem in the coming years?

THE MINISTER OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) and (b). Urban Development is essentially the responsibility of the State Government. Each State has its own priority and programme of action as far as decongesting of cities and pollution prevention and are concerned. The Central Government also provides assistance in critical cases. The Centrally sponsored scheme of Integrated Development of Small and Medium Towns (IDSMT) is one such scheme aimed to check the migration of the rural population to major metropolitan centres and cities and also to diffuse the economic growth patterns so as to provide reasonable living standards in small and medium towns. The scheme has been in operation since December, 1979. During the Sixth Five Year Plan, 235 towns of different states/Union Territories were covered and Central assistance amounting to Rs. 63.57 crores were released. During the Seventh Five Year Plan, 111 towns have been covered and Central assistance amounting to Rs. 64.08 crores has been released upto 31.3.1989. The Central Government set up the National Capital Region Planning Board in 1985 with the responsibility of preparing the Regional Plan for the development of the National Capital Region,

to coordinate and monitor its implementation and evolve harmonised policies for the control of land-uses and development of infrastructure in the region so as to avoid any haphazard development. The Board has prepared and notified the National Capital Region Plan 2001 aimed at a balanced and harmoniously developed Region.

(c) The Government of India is committed to the ideas of decongestion of cities and towns and also let the small and medium towns grow in a planned way.

The National Commission on Urbanisation which gave its report in August, 1988 has, inter-alia suggested various steps for keeping a check on congestion and pollution in various towns and cities. These suggestions have been kept in view while formulating the draft Working Group Report on Urban Development in the context of the preparation of the 8th Five Year Plan.

Population Growth

165. PROF. P.J. KURIEN:
SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) the total population of country and the rate of growth at present;

(b) whether Government propose to take any new initiatives and preparing a perspective plan to bring about zero rate of growth; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI NILAMANI ROUTHAY): (a) The project population of the country based on Medium estimates of the Expert Committee on Population Projections is 806.8 million as on 1st March, 1989.

The Natural Growth Rate of Population is obtained as difference between birth and death rates as available from Sample Registration System (SRS) of Registrar General, India. The latest provisional estimates of natural growth rate at national level for the year 1988 is 2.04%.

(b) and (c). To keep the population growth in the country within the manageable limits, we have a well-defined strategy which lay emphasis on improving quality of services, enhancing child survival rates through Universal Immunisation Programme, intensifying population education, enhancing community participation, adopting improved communication approaches and involving voluntary organisations. Besides, reinforcement of training and retraining personnel at the grassroot level, establishing and strengthening linkages and improvement of women's status and adoption of area intensive approach are some of the initiatives being considered part of the Eighth Plan strategy.

Low cost Housing Technology

166. PROF. P.J.KURIEN: Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the research and developmental efforts made in developing low cost housing technology have produced the desired results;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken to propagate this technology?

THE MINISTER OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) and (b). Significant contributions of Research & Development in low cost housing technology have primarily been in the areas of planning, design, building foundations, build-

ing materials, energy conservation, functional and thermal efficiency and fire safety in buildings both for rural and urban housing situations.

(c) Governments both at the Centre and States have undertaken a number of measures to propagate the results of research on low cost building materials and technologies. Some of the notable steps in this connection are : (i) National Buildings Organisation is promoting the low cost materials and technologies through its Regional Housing Development Centres (ii) HUDCO is extending financial support to the building materials units producing innovative and low cost materials and components using agriculture and industrial wastes etc. (iii) The National Housing Policy has made several recommendations for giving fiscal incentives to the manufacturers of building materials based on use of agricultural and industrial wastes. Government has exempted fly ash bricks containing more than 50% fly ash from Central Excise duty for a period of two years. (iv) The network of building centres sponsored by central Government is expected to transfer low cost technology, to impart training to workman and to market the low cost building components (v) The National Housing Policy envisages that 10% of the housing units taken up for construction by every public agency incorporate the tested results of R & D.

Entry of Multinational Companies in Food Processing Sector

167. SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government propose to reconsider their policy regarding entry of multinational companies in the field of food processing industries; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?