

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The sharing of net proceeds of taxes & duties between the Union and States is done on the basis of recommendations of the Finance Commission set up under Article 280 of the Constitution.

(d) States are expected to switch over to Value Added Taxes from 1-4-2003. This will result in higher realizations than the current regime of Sales Tax.

Moreover, States have also been encouraged to draw up Medium Term Fiscal Reforms Programmes (MTFRP). An important ingredient of the MTFRPs is to raise user charges on services such as irrigation and electricity.

Insurance cover for Amarnath pilgrims

1424. SHRI KAILASH JOSHI: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have allowed the Jammu and Kashmir Bank to take up the insurance cover for Amarnath pilgrims, during the "Chaddi-Mubarak";

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the allocations made therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE): (a) and (b) Government of Jammu & Kashmir has introduced an insurance scheme which is being operated through the Jammu and Kashmir Bank Ltd. Under this scheme, a Yatri can opt to insure himself by paying a premium of Rs. 20/- per Rs. 1 lac of insured amount at the time of registration for the yatra.

(c) No allocation has been made for this purpose by the Central government or the State Government.