

Harassment of Opium Growers of Mandsaur District, Madhya Pradesh

4483. SHRI V.N. GADGIL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received a presentation from Opium growers from Mandsaur District, Madhya Pradesh about harassment by officers of the Police Department and Narcotics Department;

(b) whether the Opium growers have suggested amendments to the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act;

(c) whether they have also demanded increase in the price of Opium; and

(d) what is Government's reaction to these demands?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI R. JANARATHANAM): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The Central Bureau of Narcotics has been advised to guard against any harassment of innocent poppy cultivators, while maintaining its drive against illicit drug trafficking in the country. The suggestions made by opium growers in so far as they dilute the spirit of the NDPS Act have not been found acceptable. However, the Government has introduced a Bill during the current Session of Parliament for amendment of the NDPS Act, 1985. The Bill provides for a number of matters including rationalisation of sentences under the Act. The Government has already increased the price of opium payable to cultivators in 1997. The demand for further increase in price would be looked into.

Economic Crimes

4484. SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of economic crimes committed during the last three years;

(b) whether adequate steps have been taken to prevent them; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI R. JANARATHANAM): (a) to (c) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

New Banks in Private/Public Sectors

4485. DR. JAGANNATH MISRA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of new banks including co-operative banks, established during each of the last three years in the country in private and public sector, State-wise; and

(b) the number of application pending in this regard for clearance. State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI R. JANARATHANAM): (a) No New banks has been established in the public sector during the three years. During 1994—97 ten new banks have been set up in the private sector with following year-wise and State-wise details:—

Year	Name of State	No. of banks having Head Office in State
1994	Gujarat	2
	Maharashtra	1
	Andhra Pradesh	1
1995	Maharashtra	2
	Goa	1
	Punjab	1
	Haryana	1
	Andhra Pradesh	1

(One Development Cooperative Bank

has been converted into a private sector bank)

State Co-operative Banks

1996	NIL
1997	Sikkim State Co-operative Bank
1998	NIL

District Central Co-operative Banks

1996	2
1997	1
1998	—