

Interim relief to employees

†197. SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have advised the Sixth Pay Commission to provide interim relief to the Central Government employees/pensioners for providing them relief from inflation; and

(b) if so, by when the Sixth Pay Commission will submit the proposal with regard to interim relief to Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) and (b) The terms of Reference of the Sixth Pay Commission, which was constituted by the Government of India through Resolution No. 5/2/2006 EMI (A) dated 5.10.2006 include the following:—

"to examine desirability and the need to sanction and interim relief till the time the recommendations of the Commission are made and accepted by the Government."

The Commission will give its recommendations on the terms of reference within 18 months of the date of its constitution.

Discontinuance of central schemes

†198. SHRI BRIJ BHUSHAN TIWARI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry has taken a decision to wind-up Government schemes in the next Five Year Plan;

(b) if so, the total number of such schemes along with their names and the reasons for their discontinuance; and

(c) what will be the effect of winding-up of current schemes by his Ministry on the employees working therein, and how the pending work of schemes will be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) to (c) No decision has been

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

taken as yet to wind up the schemes. However, a Zero Based Budgeting (ZBB) exercise to rationalize/merge/weed out/transfer from Plan to Non-Plan Central Sector and Centrally Sponsored Schemes to conserve resources, improve quality of implementation and allocate resources according to Plan priorities is underway in the Planning Commission. Such an exercise is necessary to evaluate development outcomes of schemes and to improve financial management and accountability of public funds, and is generally undertaken at the beginning of any Five Year Plan.

Exemption of excise duty on pesticides

†199. SHRI BRIJ BHUSHAN TIWARI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any effective steps to check increasing inflation in the country which is getting uncontrolled;

(b) whether Consortium of Indian Farmers' Association has submitted a memorandum to Government either exempt or give a rebate thereon the excise duty on pesticides, if so, the decision taken by Government; and

(c) the reasons due to which Government are not ready to exempt excise duty on pesticides on the lines of seeds, agricultural tools, tractor and fertilizers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALAJMIMANICKAM): (a.) Measures taken by Government to contain inflation, *inter alia*, include reduction in price of petrol and diesel; exemption/reduction in import duty on a number of commodities like pulses, maize, wheat, edible oils, cement, metals, capital goods, increasing availability of wheat, pulses, etc. through imports by STC, NAFED and banning export of certain essential items such as pulses, skimmed milk powder. The Reserve Bank of India has also taken steps to reduce liquidity.

(b) and (c) Government has received representations seeking exemption or reduction in excise duty on pesticides from 16% to 8%. These representations are under examination. In view of the forthcoming budget, it is not possible to indicate the details at this stage.

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