

(b) and (c) Year-wise numbers of applications received, withdrawn by the

company under process, approved or rejected are as follow:

Year	No. of Applications				
	Received during the year	Withdrawn	Under Process	Letters of Intent or permission issued	Rejected
1981	14	1	..	6	7
1982	29	..	13	9	5
1983	3	..	3

(d) Applications for charter of foreign fishing vessels, when complete in all respects, are considered by the Government on the recommendations of the Screening Committee. As on date, 18 numbers of applications are at different stages of processing.

Drought Policy

1299. SHRI MURLIDHAR CHANDRAKANT BHANDARE: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have evolved any policy to make the drought-prone areas withstand rigours of future drought, if any;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) what is the financial layout for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI HARI NATH MISHRA):

(a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government have launched the Drought-Prone Areas Programme which mainly seeks to restore ecological balance and reduce the severity of drought in areas chronically affected by it. These objectives are sought to be achieved by promoting in these areas a more productive dryland agriculture, soil and moisture conservation, productive use of water resources, afforestation including pastures and farm forestry, and livestock development.

(c) The funds for the programme are contributed equally by the Central Government and the concerned State Government. The outlay for the programme in the Sixth Five Year Plan is Rs. 3.50 crores (Rs. 175 crores in the Central Plan and Rs. 175 crores in the State Plans).

Declaration of Port Blair as major port

1300. SHRI M. BASAVARAJU: Will the Minister of SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT be pleased state:

(a) what are the details regarding the issue of declaring Port Blair as a major port and about constituting a Port Trust at the Andaman and Nicobar Islands; and

(b) what are the reasons for not taking a decision so far for declaring Port Blair as a major port and by when it is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT (SHRI Z. R. ANSARI): (a) and (b) It is not proposed to declare Port Blair a major Port and consequently constitute a Port Trust. The current volume and nature of traffic and the size and nature of operations does not warrant the same.

However, there are proposals to reorganise the Port Blair administration to improve managerial and operational efficiency.