Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) in the country have been received in the Ministry as on 26.7.2011. The complaints mainly relate to cases of job cards not provided, misappropriation of funds, engagement of contractors, forgery of muster roll, manipulation in job cards, under payment of wages, non-payment of wages, corruption and other irregularities, use of machinery, delay in payments etc. Out of these, 1003 cases have been disposed off. 233 complaints related to Rajasthan were received of which 111 have been disposed off. As implementation of the Act is done by the State Governments in accordance with the Schemes formulated by them as per the provisions of the Act, all complaints received in the Ministry are forwarded to the concerned state Governments for taking appropriate action as per law. In complaints of serious nature, the Ministry deputes National Level Monitors (NLMs) to investigate the complaints. Reports of the NLMs are shared with the concerned State Governments for taking corrective action. The efforts made by the Government to make MGNREGS more effective and improve performance in States include the following measures:

(i) Instructions have been issued directing all States to appoint Ombudsman at district level for grievance redressal.

(ii) The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Audit of Schemes Rules, 2011 have been notified in the Gazette on 30 June, 2011.

(iii) ICT based MIS has been made operational to make data available to public scrutiny including Job cards, Muster rolls, Employment demanded and allocated, number of days worked, shelf of works, Funds available/spent and funds released to various implementing agencies, Social Audit findings, registering grievances and generating alerts for corrective action.

(iv) Payment of wages to MGNREGA workers has been made mandatory through their accounts in Banks/Post Office to infuse transparency in wage disbursement.

(v) Independent Monitoring and verification by National Level Monitors and Eminent Citizens.

Proposal for exemption of service tax on Sheep Insurance Scheme

1614. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Government of Andhra Pradesh has requested the Ministry for exemption of Service Tax on Sheep Insurance Scheme from validity period of 31 December, 2009 to 31 December, 2012 for the benefit of poor sheep rearers of the State;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reasons for not acceding to the request so far; and

(d) by when a final decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) and (b) Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh had requested for extension of exemption from levy of service tax on Sheep Insurance Scheme expiring on 31.12.2009 for a further period of three years upto 31.12.2012 vide letter dated 26th October, 2009.

(c) The request was not acceded since it did not qualify as per the policy criteria of Ministry of Finance in regard to extending exemption from service tax to such schemes. As a general policy, end use based service tax exemptions are not considered favourably, since they introduce distortions in the tax structure. Moreover, with the advent of Goods and Service Tax (GST), exemptions have to be kept minimal to ensure that the benefits of GST like zero cascading effect and seamless flow of input tax credit, are fully realized.

(d) The decision in this regard has already been communicated vide letter no. D.O.F. No. 354/261/2009-TRU dated 09.01.2010.

Employees strength in offices of Accountant General in Kerala

1615. DR. T.N. SEEMA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of sanctioned strength of employees in various offices of the Accountant General (A&E) and Accountant General (Audit) in Kerala, Post-wise and cadre-wise;

(b) the presents staff strength and the number of vacancies in each office; and

(c) by when these vacancies will be filled up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI NAOM NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) As per the information provided by C&AG's office, the statements showing the