

of-concept research would be funded to an academic institute along with a industry partner. A new Centre of excellence scheme has also been initiated under which specialized centres/units are being established for innovative research leading to product and process development. These are being built around scientists with expertise in focused areas. Industrial partnerships are being encouraged.

(e) Special schemes for promoting the biotech industry have been launched-public private partnership funding, biotech parks, tax incentives etc. a simplified regulatory procedure have also been suggested in the proposed strategy and steps have been taken to simplify import of biologicals. Strategies for human resource development promoting innovations, infrastructure strengthening and industrial development are proposed in the Draft National Biotechnological development Strategy aim at developing a strong Biotech industry. These steps would encourage the industry to move forward at a greater pace and would facilitate product development through innovative research efforts thereby giving a boost to this sector.

Sea-level along western ghats

†1766. SHRI DEVDAS APTE: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether a study conducted by Indian Meteorological Institute, Ahmedabad revealed heavy rains and rising in sea-level along western ghats in near future.

(b) whether it poses any threat to Konkan railways; and

(c) if so, Government's proposed plan to combat this threat?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) No, Sir. India Meteorological Department (IMD) is not aware of any such specific study. Sea level rise is a global phenomenon related to climate change and is very gradual. According to Interagovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)- Third Assessment Report the anticipated rate of sea level rise is only a few mm per year. The sea level at a particular location changes with the tides on a daily basis and is not affected by events of heavy rainfall.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) and (c) There is no apparent threat to Konkan Railways due to rise in sea level. Konkan area is prone to heavy to very heavy rainfall during monsoon months, for which IMD issues heavy rainfall warnings.

Technology for increasing paddy production

1767. SHRIMATI SUKHBUNS KAUR: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Technology Information Forecasting Assessment Council has developed a technology, which having been tried in Bihar, resulted in trebling the production of paddy; and

(b) if so, whether the technology has been tried in other regions also, if so, the details thereof and the resultant increase in productivity thereby?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) Yes Sir, Technology Information, Forecasting and Assessment Council has promoted and facilitated the adoption of a 'Systems Approach' using scientific agronomic practices to suit the prevalent local agro-climatic conditions in low productive areas of Sone Command distributaries of Patna district, Bihar in a demonstrative project mode. Farmers who have adopted this technology have obtained enhanced yields in paddy crop by 2 to 3 times of earlier productivity levels.

(b) Systems Approach has also been adopted in Deoria and Balia districts of eastern UP in projects made, and farmers who have adopted the technology have obtained enhanced yields in paddy crop by about two times.

Bus services between India and Pakistan

1768. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of bus services existing between India and Pakistan so far;

(b) the revenue earned so far in each case; and

(c) the passengers journeyed so far in each case?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIAPPA): (a) So far only one point-to-point bus service between India and Pakistan, namely, Delhi-