

Besides, Government has been taking a number of steps from time to time to provide an enabling environment for the industry to meet the emerging global competition and thereby increase India's exports. Some of the important initiatives taken are

- (i) The Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme (TUFS) has been made operational from 1-4-1999 to facilitate the modernisation and upgradation of the sector
- (ii) Weaving, processing and garment machinery, which are covered under TUFS, have been extended the facility of accelerated depreciation at the rate of 50%. Cost of machinery has also been reduced through Fiscal Policy measures. This further encourages modernisation
- (iii) The Government has launched a centrally sponsored scheme titled "Apparel Park for Export Scheme" for imparting focused thrust for setting up of apparel manufacturing units of international standards at potential growth centres and to give fillip to exports
- (iv) For upgrading infrastructure facilities at important textile centres, a scheme "Textile Centre Infrastructure Development Scheme" (TCIDS) has been launched

(c) and (d) In order to encourage investments in the knitted and hosiery sector, the Government increased SSI investment limit for these items from Rs. 1 crore to Rs. 5 crores. The Budget Speech (2004-2005) has mentioned that 85 items from various sector can be safely taken out of the reserved list. The items to be taken out of the reserved list are yet to be announce

National Youth Festival

395 SHRI S M LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government organizes a National Youth Festival every year;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the criteria for young people who can participate in this National Youth Festival;
- (d) whether State Governments are encouraged to hold State-level youth Festivals; and

[14 July, 2004]

RAJYA SABHA

Under scheme of 'National Welfare Fund for Sportspersons', an outstanding sportsperson, who has represented the country in an international competition including Asian Games and championships and is living in indigent circumstances is entitled to a pension not exceeding Rs 2500/-p m

Construction of Olympic size swimming pools by SAI

398 SHRI S M LALJAN BASHA Will the Minister of YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS be pleased to state

(a) whether it is a fact that the Sports Authority of India has agreed to build Olympic size and standard swimming pools in all States,

(b) if so, the details of this decision by the SAI,

(c) when will the SAI start working on this scheme in various States,

(d) what will be the funding required for such a project, and

(e) the details of the funding pattern available if State Governments want to build such swimming pools?

THE MINISTER OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS (SHRI SUNIL DUTT) (a) No, Sir

(b) to (d) Do not arise

(e) Under the 'Scheme of Grant for Creation of Sports Infrastructure', State Governments can avail of Central assistance for a 8-lane swimming pool measuring 50m x 21m along with filtration plant, change rooms, toilets and showers. The cost sharing pattern between the Government of India and the State Government is 50 : 50 subject to a maximum Central assistance of Rs 60 lakhs, whichever is less. In case of special category States and projects in notified hilly/tribal areas, the cost sharing pattern is 75 : 25 subject to a ceiling of Rs 90 lakhs, whichever is less.

Steps to check doping menace among athletes

399 SHRI R P GOENKA Will the Minister of YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS be pleased to state

(a) whether it is a fact that some athletes who are preparing for the Athens Olympics, slated for August, 2004, have reportedly been taking performance-enhancing drugs, code-named "white tablets", that are banned by the International Olympics Committee, and are meticulously following a doping chart given to them,

(b) if so, the results of any enquiry made in this regard, and