

## Reserves

48. Reflecting the developments on current and capital accounts of BOP, the foreign currency assets of RBI rose from U.S.\$ 22.4 billion at the end of March, 1997 to U.S.\$ 26.0 billion at the end of March, 1998. The foreign currency assets rose further to U.S.\$ 27.4 billion at the end of January 1999. Total foreign exchange reserves (including gold and SDRs) at the end of January 1999 amounted to U.S.\$ 30.4 billion, which provides cover for about 7 months of imports in 1998-99.

49. In accordance with the decision of the Government to repeal FERA and replace it with a new Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA), the Foreign Exchange Management Bill, 1998 was introduced in the Parliament on August 4, 1998 and was referred to the Standing Committee on Finance for its consideration and examination. The Standing Committee has since submitted its report, which is under consideration in consultation with the RBI, Department of Revenue and the Ministry of Law.