

foreign assistance fully within the specified period; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) to (c). The estimated unused foreign assistance on Government Account as on 31.3.90 works out to Rs. 45669 crores. Most of the External assistance is tied to specific projects and the disbursements are therefore linked to the project implementation schedule. The pace of actual implementation varies from project to project. However the loan amount not utilised during a particular financial year does not normally lapse and would be carried forward for utilization in the subsequent years. Government have taken a number of steps to accelerate the implementation of externally aided projects and the utilisation of external assistance. These include simplification of procedures for release of foreign exchange and tender evaluation. Monitoring of externally aided projects has also been intensified.

Exploitation of Steel-Grade Limestone in Meghalaya

368. SHRI KUSUMA KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Meghalaya has vast reserves of steel-grade limestone, a raw material currently being imported for the steel plants;

(b) if so, the steps proposed to be taken for the exploitation of the limestone reserves in Meghalaya;

(c) whether any agreement has been reached with Bangladesh under which

Bangladesh could import a specific quantity of limestone for its cement factories and also to transfer in return the steel-grade variety of limestone to Calcutta by river transport for steel plants in India; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI BASAVARAJ PATIL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) It has not been possible to exploit Meghalaya limestone for steel plants so far due to logistic consideration.

(c) and (d). No, Sir.

Export of Rice, Wheat, Sugar

369. SHRI KUSUMA KRISHNA MURTHY:

SHRI C.P. MUDALAGIRIYAPPA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to export large quantity of rice, wheat, sugar and other agricultural commodities to earn foreign exchange;

(b) if so, whether Government have worked out modalities for export of these commodities if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether Government have also assessed the impact of price rise on the domestic consumers as a result of exports of these commodities, if so, the outcome thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SHANTILAL PURUSHOTTAMDASPATEL):

(a) to (c). In view of the country's critical balance of payments position, Government

has decided that non-Basmati rice, wheat and sugar as well as other agricultural items be exported having regard to the surpluses available. Ceilings for these exports have been decided keeping in view the interests of the consumers and so that these exports should not have an adverse effect on prices of these commodities in the domestic market. These exports are to be effected through various Government and non-Government agencies.

Economic Policy

370. SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKARA MURTHY:
SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD:
SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry have urged the Government to come out with a comprehensive long term economic policy;

(b) if so, the reaction of Union Government thereon; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken to have a stable economic policy?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH):

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c). Formulation of Long Term Fiscal Policy is under consideration of the Government of India.

Impact of Gulf Crisis on Engineering Exports

371. SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKARA MURTHY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have asked the Engineering Export Promotion Council (EEPC) to carry out a study on the impact of the current Gulf crisis on the Country's engineering exports and also initiate necessary measures to achieve the export target;

(b) if so, by when the EEPC would conduct study in this regard; and

(c) the details of the assistance Government propose to give to EEPC to boost its export performance?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SHANTILAL PURUSHOTTAMDAS PATEL):

(a) and (b). EEPC was asked in August, 1990 to undertake a study on the impact of the present crisis in the Gulf region on export of engineering products from India to the Gulf region. The EEPC conducted the study and reported erosion of liquidity among local traders due to substantial transfer of funds outside arising out of fear of war fare. Bank finance has also come down and high premiums due to war risks have increased shipping costs. Measures proposed to achieve the export target include concerted promotion efforts in the markets of Iran, Egypt, Oman, Bahrain and UAE, Buyer-seller meets, contact promotion and exhibitions in these countries and giving more attention to future Government projects in this region.

(c) An Empowered Committee has been set up in the Ministry of Commerce to attend to the problems faced by exporters and to take decisions so that India's exports do not suffer. Some specific actions taken by this Committee to help exporters include activation of the Tramp Committee under the Chairmanship of Chairman, Bombay Port Trust, to resolve shipping problems of exporters, consideration of all cases of extension of packing credit beyond 180 days upto 270 days for exports to Gulf Countries at a