

[English]

Expansion of Bilateral Trade with Mauritius

820. SHRI GOPI NATH GAJAPATHI:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to expand bilateral trade with Mauritius;

(b) if so, the areas identified for the expansion of bilateral trade between the two countries; and

(c) the details of the programmes drawn up in this regard for Eighth Five Year Plan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) These areas include auto components, bicycle, and parts, toilet articles/cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, chemicals, plastics, wheat/wheat/flour, books leather and leather products, household appliances travel goods, etc.

(c) No specific programme has been drawn up for Mauritius during the Eighth Five Year Plan. However, from time to time we take various steps like exchange of trade and official delegations, organisation of exclusive Indian exhibitions, participation in fairs in Mauritius, organisation of Buyer-Seller meets, etc. The same would be continued during the Eighth Five Year Plan also. Besides this, bilateral trade and cooperation are reviewed regularly under the auspices of Indo-Mauritius Joint Commission.

Trade with Sri Lanka

821. SHRI GOPI NATH GAJAPATHI:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to boost trade with Sri Lanka;

(b) if so, the areas identified in this regard; and

(c) the steps taken to implement the various proposals for expansion of trade between the two countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) to (c). It is the constant endeavour of the Government to increase bilateral trade between India and Sri Lanka. The first meeting of the Indo-Sri Lanka Joint Commission held in January, 1992 had emphasised the need for boosting bilateral trade and stepping up commercial exchanges between the two countries, besides identifying scope for joint ventures in agriculture, small scale industries and oil exploration.

Gold Abandoned by Smugglers

822. SHRI BAPU HARI CHAURE: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to fish out tonnes of gold abandoned by smugglers, believed to be piling up in India territorial waters;

(b) if so, the details in this regard;

(c) whether the Government have sought any foreign assistance in this regard; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) to (d). On the basis of reports received that the seaborne smugglers have been dumping contraband gold into the sea off the Indian coastline on fear of imminent interception by the Customs/Coast Guard, the Government has decided to de-

tail the National Institute of Oceanography for undertaking the task of salvaging such dumped gold lying on the sea-bed in the locations identified by the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence. No reasonable estimate can be made of the quantum of such dumped gold or the quantity that would be salvaged. Foreign assistance is not felt necessary at present.

Allotment of Janata Cloth to Himachal Pradesh

823. SHRI D.D. KHANORIA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the allotment target for Janata Cloth to the States is based on the handlooms functioning in the States and the past performance in its production;

(b) if so, the performance of Himachal Pradesh during the last two years in this regard, year-wise;

(c) the target of Janata cloth allotted to Himachal Pradesh during each of the last two years and the proposed target fixed for 1992-93; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government to ensure that Janata cloth is easily available to the poor people in rural areas of Himachal Pradesh.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT): (a) Yes, Sir. The allotment of target is also based on certain other factors such as production capacity, overall target fixed for the country, entitlement for consumption of janata cloth, etc.

(b) and (c). The details of target fixed and the achievement made in the production of janata cloth in Himachal Pradesh during

the last three years are as under:-

(in million square metres)

Year	Target fixed	Achievement
1989-90	1.00	Nil
1990-91	1.00	Nil
1991-92	0.50	Nil

(till September '91)

In view of non-performance of janata cloth production in Himachal Pradesh, only a token provision of target is likely to be earmarked for the State during 1992-93.

(d) Government of India has included production of Woollen items also under this scheme since April 1989 with the twin objectives of providing sustained employment to weavers in States, including Himachal Pradesh, where woollen activity exists and to provide cloth at reasonable prices to economically weaker sections living in the hill regions of the country. Government of Himachal Pradesh has not so far taken any advantage of this scheme. Recent policy of the Government to phase out the scheme by the end of 8th Plan period resulted in reduction of overall target and has rendered certain other States deficit in janata cloth production. As a result, the earlier arrangement of meeting the cheap cloth requirement of Himachal Pradesh from other States had to be discontinued. The State Government has, however, been requested to take up the production of janata cloth within the State for meeting the requirement of targetted consumers in the State.

Beneficiaries under Self-Employment for Educated Unemployed Youth Scheme

824. SHRI SYED SHAHABUDDIN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state: