

the hill areas of the North East has been most irrational and designed of subserve the service need of a group of bank employees;

(b) the justification for grouping the whole of Khasi and Jaintia Hills where the capital of Meghalaya is situated with Manipur at the other end of the physical spectrum; and

(c) the jettisoning of geographical contiguity by which Nagaland should have been naturally grouped with Manipur and Tripura with Mizoram ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY): (a) No, Sir.

(b) State Bank of India (SBI) has 55 branches in Meghalaya. Normally, these would be controlled by one Regional Manager, who is usually in charge of 150 to 200 branches. However, because of the difficult terrain in this area and inaccessibility of branches for visits by the Regional Manager, two Regional Managers have been given the responsibility to look after these branches. However, as each could have only 27 branches of Meghalaya to manage, SBI thought it advisable to add 12 branches in Manipur to one Regional Manager and 15 branches in Mizoram to another Regional Manager. This arrangement in no way hinders their attention to branches in Meghalaya.

(c) The regrouping has been done for better control by placing a manageable number of branches under a Regional Manager. Care has been taken to ensure that the needs and aspirations of the people are adequately met.

#### Export of Rice

6124. SHRI V. SOBHANADREESWARA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken

a decision to allow export of wheat by any individual or agency and if so, the reasons therefor;

(b) whether Government have taken a similar decision about export of rice; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. A. SANGMA): (a) In view of the excessive stocks of wheat with public agencies and its easy availability in the country, it has been decided to allow export of wheat and wheat products viz. maida, suji and whole meal atta ie. wheat flour of no less than 95% extraction within limited ceilings and subject to minimum export prices determined for each of these items. Further export of wheat on Government to Government basis is being handled by the Food Corporation of India.

(b) and (c). Export of basmati rice is allowed under OGL subject to a minimum export price of Rs. 6500 PMT f.o.b. considering the domestic requirement and the availability position as at present, export of non-basmati rice is not permitted.

#### Availability of Mineral Deposits in Gujarat

6125. SHRI NARSINH MAKWANA: Will the Minister of STEEL, MINES AND COAL be pleased to state:

(a) the names and quantum of mineral deposits available in Gujarat and the full details thereof;

(b) the area in which mining work is in progress and whether this work is being carried out by Government or private agencies;

(c) the area of plot allotted to a person who undertakes mining work for himself; and