

(b) and (c) MMTC increasing its procurement of iron ore for exports from different states, including Karnataka. The Corporation is following a liberalised procurement policy but state-wise procurement targets have not been fixed.

Assistance to handloom sector to boost export of textiles goods

3964. SHRI JAGANNATH PATNAIK: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are extending possible assistance to the handloom sector to boost exports of textile goods and garments, including knitweaves and other incentives to raise its standard ;

(b) if so, whether any committee has been set up to go into the matter and suggest ways in this regard ; and

(c) if so, the details thereof ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR) : (a) The Govt. extends necessary assistance to handloom sector to increase its exports through financial assistance to Handloom Export Promotion Council for export promotional activities. Besides handloom exporters are granted cash compensatory support, duty drawback and REP facilities. Packing credit and reduced rates of interest are also available to handloom exporters. In the recently concluded bilateral agreement between India and EEC, a special dispensation has been obtained for four categories of handloom garments from 1987 onwards with a special allocation of 3.35 million pieces with an annual growth of 4%.

(b) and (c) No separate Committee has been set up by the Govt., for boosting handloom exports.

Per hectare yield of F.C.V. tobacco

3965. SHRI V. SOBHANADREESWARA RAO : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the average per hectare

yield of FCV (Flue-cured Virginia) tobacco in the country is far lower than that of many other countries due to which the unit cost of our tobacco is higher in world market ; and

(b) if so, the steps being taken to increase the yield and quality and to reduce cost of curing and production ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P.R. DASMUNSI) : (a) Yes, Sir. The low yield is due to unfavourable climatic conditions and non-observance of recommended cultural practices by the farmers.

(b) Different technical programmes aimed at improving the yield and quality of FCV tobacco are being taken up every year by the Tobacco Board. These include (1) varietal trial demonstrations (2) package demonstrations (3) irrigation trials, (4) topping and desuckering schemes etc. The Tobacco Board has drawn up a scheme covering a large area for improving yield and quality of FCV tobacco during the current crop season, 1986-87. The Tobacco Board has also initiated a scheme to supply JTS Jackets to the farmers at 50% of the cost to reduce the cost of curing.

Improvement in profit Ratio of Banks

3966. PROF. NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to refer to the reply given to Starred Question No. 487 on 21st March, 1986 regarding profit ratios of Indian Banks vis-a-vis foreign banks and state :

(a) whether the Public Sector Banks have responded to the advice to pursue various objectives such as improvement in customer service, modernisation of operation, streamlining and strengthening of system and procedures, orderly house keeping and improvement of profitability ;

(b) if so, the names of public sector banks which have initiated these measures alongwith the results achieved ;

(c) whether any improvement in the