

(c) keeping in view the increasing demands of Indian coffee in the international market what steps Government propose to take increase the coffee production in the country ?

**THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI ARJUN SINGH) :** (a) The quantity of coffee exported from India during 1984 was around 65000 tonnes valued at about Rs. 193 crores compared to a quantity of around 70,000 tonnes valued at about Rs. 169 crores exported during 1983.

(b) Indian coffee is exported to over thirty countries in various parts of the world. USSR, USA, Japan, West Germany, Yugoslavia, Italy, Spain, Canada, Newzealand and Australia being the major buyers.

(c) Besides the various development loans and subsidy schemes, the Board has opened seed multiplication units, coffee demonstration farms, research farms, mobile soil testing units etc. for increasing production of coffee in the country.

#### Foreign Exchange Earned by Exporting Pearls and Precious Stones

937. **SHRI MANVENDRA SINGH :** Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) the total foreign exchange earned

by exporting pearls and precious stones from India during last year;

(b) the names of the countries to which these pearls and the precious stones were exported;

(c) the quantity and the value of the stones exported, country-wise details thereof;

(d) whether some steps have been taken by Government to promote the export of these pearls; and

(e) if so, the details thereof ?

**THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI ARJUN SINGH) :** (a) Value of exports of pearls and precious and semi-precious stones during 1984-85 was as under :—

Pearls	Rs. 718.56 lakhs
Precious and Semi-precious Stones	Rs. 3511.63 lakhs

(b) and (c). A statement is given below.

(d) and (e). Import of requisite machinery/equipment/tools with a reduced import duty so as to facilitate product development besides improvement in productivity and market diversification are some of the steps taken to promote export of pearls and precious and semi-precious stones.

#### Statement

Country	Destinations-wise Exports of pearls during 1984-85		Country	Destination-wise Exports of Precious/ Semi-precious Stones during 1984-85
	Quantity in lacs carats	Value Rs. in lakhs		
1	2	3	4	5
Japan	24.54	190.90	U.S A.	1699.65
U.S.A.	23.78	149.49	Hong Kong	792.90
Dubai	15.67	120.66	West Germany	518.06
Hong Kong	13.85	91.67	Switzerland	392.13
West Germany	15.83	36.70	France	391.17

1	2	3	4	5
Kuwait	5.79	30.61	U.K.	244.02
U.A.E.	3.03	17.24	Thailand	161.55
Singapore	3.58	14.03	Japan	144.68
France	0.44	9.82	Singapore	140.83
U.K.	1.60	9.49	Canada	53.12
Other countries	5.88	64.56	Other countries	380.53
Total :	113.99	735.17	Total :	4918.74
Return Cosigament	1.99	16.61	Return consignment	1407.11
Net Exports	112.00	718.56	Net Exports	3511.63

### Finalisation of Branch Licensing Policy for 1985-88

938. PROF. NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Branch Licensing Policy has been finalised by the Reserve Bank of India for the years 1985-88;

(b) if so, the main features thereof and the likely date by which it would be implemented;

(c) if not, the reasons for delay; and

(d) the likely date by which it would be announced ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJA RY) : (a) to (d). The branch licensing policy for the period from 1-4-1985 to 31-3-1990 (co-terminus with Seventh Five Year Plan) has since been finalised by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). RBI has indicated to the banks and the State Governments/Union Territories the main features of the policy on 18th October, 1985. The main objective of the branch licensing policy is aimed at achieving a coverage of 17,000 population per bank office in rural and semi-urban areas of each block and eliminating spatial gaps in the availability of banking facilities. Under this policy, unbanked pockets in each block will be identified and suitable

centres for opening bank offices to cover such unbanked pockets will be selected. The centres will be allowed in such a manner that a bank office would normally be available within a distance of 10 kms. from each village.

### Proposal to abolish Sales Tax

939. PROF. NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the proposal to abolish the sales tax has made any headway with the States;

(b) if so, the names of the States which are still resisting the proposal and the steps taken by the Union Government to arrive at a conclusion in this regard; and

(c) the likely date by which a final decision would be taken in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJA RY) : (a) to (c). There has been a demand from certain sections for abolition of sales tax and its replacement by additional excise duties. As sales tax is mainly a State subject of taxation, the matter was considered in a Conference of Chief Ministers held in September, 1980 and again in February, 1981. Thereafter an Expert Committee was set up to study the financial implications