

The CBI which investigated the matter has filed two chargesheets against the dealer and other in the Court of Metropolitan Magistrate, Delhi in October and November, 1982. The dealer is reported to be in Hong-kong and has not been arrested.

[Translation]

Steps to Increase Export and Reduce Imports during Seventh Plan

1863. SHRI KALI PRASAD PANDEY : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Reserve Bank has cautioned Government in their report ending June, 1985 presented recently, that if export was not increased, an acute financial crisis will come up during the Seventh Five Year Plan; and

(b) if so, keeping the above fact in view, the action taken by Government to increase the export and to reduce the import along with the details regarding some other facilities recently provided to the exporters ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI KHURSHID ALAM KHAN) : (a) The Annual Report of the Reserve Bank of India for '984-85 has made the following observation : "The balance of payments situation could come under some strain during the Seventh Plan Period. Firstly, prospects for concessional external assistance are not good. Secondly, since the short-term prospects of a further major step-up in crude oil production of the order witnessed in the Sixth Plan Period are not bright, there could be pressure on balance of payments from the oil sector. However, the present softness of the world oil market and gradual weakening of the US dollar, in which oil prices are denominated, may prove to be mitigating factors. Thirdly, debt service obligations, especially to the International Monetary Fund, would be considerable. The investment needs of the Seventh Plan would raise the import bill substantially. In view of these prospects, export growth would be a critical factor in determining the health of the balance of payments. Equally relevant in this context would be the possibilities of import substitution, particularly in the areas of essential

commodities like edible oils. Further, while imports of essential commodities for bridging gaps in domestic supplies and containing prices have been helpful, it is important to recognise the limitations of balance of payments to sustain such large recourse to imports in the longer run."

(b) Policy measures are being continuously evolved for increasing India's exports. These include measures for increasing and diversifying the production, making our exports more competitive, finding new markets for our products and processing commodities for higher value realisation. Efforts would be made to gear up these measures further during the Seventh Plan Period.

The Government has taken a number of policy initiatives in the sphere of trade policies, industrial policies and fiscal policies. The current import-export policy which will be operative for a three year period, 1985-88, is designed to introduce an environment of continuity and stability in foreign trade planning. It aims at providing a major thrust towards increased production, both for domestic consumption and exports, and to bring about efficient import substitution. The Government have also identified sectors for export promotion which can make a substantial contribution to growth in exports over the medium term. Public Sector undertakings are being involved for greater participation in export efforts. Simultaneous efforts are also being made to step up our indigenous production of importables during the Seventh Five Year Plan period, particularly in the sphere of bulk imports.

[English]

Evasion of Central Excise Duty by Manufacturers of Safety Matches

1864. SHRI KAMLA PRASAD SINGH : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the manufacturers have spread up number of smaller units to manufacture safety matches but do not maintain any accounts in each and every such unit to evade payment of Central Excise duty;

(b) whether there is any proposal to make it mandatory for the safety matches

having outer card board to have inner also of the card board to improve the quality;

(c) whether the safety matches do not contain the requisite number of fifty splints and large number of them are broken and without match heads; and

(d) if so, whether there is any proposal to ask the Central Excise Department to check these aspects while clearing the safety matches from the factories so as to realise the Government dues in full, check the tax evaders and quality of the safety matches ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY) : (a) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

(b) No, sir.

(c) and (d). Under the Central Excise rules, Central Excise officers are required to test check the contents of the match boxes to safeguard the interest of revenue.

Yarn Bank in West Bengal

1865. DR. PHULRENU GUHA : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government have opened a yarn bank in West Bengal;

(b) if so, where the bank is located; and

(c) how many weavers have taken advantage of this bank ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI KHURSHID ALAM KHAN) : (a) The National Handloom Development Corporation has not opened any yarn bank in West Bengal. However, NTC assists the handloom sector by offering supplies at ex-mill prices direct to the State agencies/apex coop. societies. Further, three NTC subsidiaries have opened yarn depots in Calcutta to ensure better availability of yarn.

(b) and (c). Do not arise.

Opening of Hotel in Public Sector at Digha (West Bengal)

1866. DR. PHULRENU GUHA :
SHRI R.P. DAS :

Will the Minister of PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether Digha in West Bengal is a place of tourist attraction;

(b) if so, whether there is any proposal to open a hotel there in the public sector; and

(c) if not, whether such a proposal is likely to be considered ?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND TOURISM (SHRI H.K.L. BHAGAT) : (a) to (c). Yes, Sir. In the Seventh Plan neither the India Tourism Development Corporation nor the Hotel Corporation of India have any proposal to set up a hotel at Digha in West Bengal.

Women Officers in Nationalised Bank

1867. DR. PHULRENU GUHA : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the number of women officers in different nationalised banks in India; and

(b) the number of direct recruits and promotees separately ?

THE MINISTERS OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY) : (a) and (b). The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House, to the extent available.

Increase in Trade Exchanges and Joint Ventures between India and Mauritius

1868. PROF. K.V. THOMAS : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) the steps taken to increase the trade exchanges and joint ventures between India and Mauritius; and

(b) when the shipping service between the two countries will be commissioned ?