

(c) With a view to exploiting the large US — market, export promotion programmes like buyer-seller meets, departmental stores promotion, contact promotion programme and specialised commodity fairs are being intensified in USA.

An export plan for increasing our exports to USA has been drawn up and among other measures included in the plan, emphasis has been laid on upgradation of quality of products and product adaptation to meet the requirements of US consumers, besides undertaking aggressive marketing and publicity programmes.

#### Price hike in iron ore exported to Japan

3400. SHRI G.S. BASAVARAJU  
SHRI S.M. GURADDI:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether a high level group of Minerals and Metals Trading Corporation (MMTC) visited Japan recently to negotiate the price hike in iron ore import from India; and

(b) if so, the details of the agreement reached at ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P.R. DAS MUNSI): (a) and (b). Chairman, MMTC visited Japan in the first week of July, 1988 to discuss various issues relating to iron ore exports by MMTC to Japanese Steel Mills. During the discussions views were exchanged on export prospects of iron ore for 1988-89. No agreement was signed during the visit.

#### Excise duty relief to paper industry

3401. SHRI V. SREENIVASA  
PRASAD :  
SHRI M.V. CHANDRASEKHARA MURTHY :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the paper industry in the country is in doldrums and urging Government to provide excise duty relief;

(b) if so, the reaction of Government on the repeated representations of the paper industry; and

(c) by when Government propose to provide relief to the paper industry ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI A.K. PANJA): (a) to (c). In this year's Budget, Government have granted certain concessions from excise duty to the paper industry. Representations have been received subsequently from the paper industry seeking further duty concessions. These have been examined but the Government do not find any justification at present for granting further concessions.

#### Irrigation project of Andhra Pradesh pending for approval

3402. SHRI V. SOBHANADREESWARA RAO : Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state :

(a) the project proposals from Andhra Pradesh pending with Union Government; and

(b) the latest stage of each of these projects proposals along with the reasons of delay for sanction of the projects ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI KRISHNA SAHI): (a) and (b). Out of eight major and six medium irrigation projects received from the State Government, replies to comments of Central appraising agencies on seven major projects have not been received. One major project has been received in March, 1988. Appraisal of one medium project has been completed. Replies to comments on four medium ones were received in May-July, 1988. The remaining one medium project has been received in February, 1988.