

Excise Rules, 1944 was resorted to. Pending decision on the audit objection, the dispute remained unsettled.

(c) and (d). Yes, Sir. A decision has since been taken that delivery charges will not form part of assessable value of the goods. The question of refund does not arise.

Policy to make available vital commodities to consumers

7497-A. SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether in view of the acute shortage in the market and alarming rise in the prices of vital commodities like sugar, Government has lately evolved a new policy to ensure that these items become available to genuine consumers on fair prices;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken and directions issued to State Governments and Union Territories Administrations to implement the new policy?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA): (a) to (c). No, Sir. However, the functioning of the Public Distribution System is being constantly reviewed in consultation with the State Governments and the Ministries and Agencies of the Government. The States have been advised to streamline the functioning of the Public Distribution System by enlarging its coverage and strengthening its infra structure. The various agencies of the Union Government are making constant efforts to ensure regular supplies of essential commodities to the States for the Public Distribution System.

Setting up of a Ferro-Vanadium Plant in Orissa

7497. B. SHRI LAKSHMAN MALICK: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Orissa has sought any financial assistance

from the Union Government for setting up of a Ferro-Vanadium plant in Orissa;

(b) if so, the extent of the assistance sought for and the action taken by Government in the matter;

(c) the total expenditure likely to be incurred on the setting up of the project;

(d) by when the construction work of the project is likely to be started and by when the project is likely to start its production; and

(e) what would be the employment potential in the proposed plant?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND STEEL AND MINES (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (e). The State Government of Orissa have requested the Central Government for financial participation in the setting up of a ferro-vanadium plant in Orissa on a 50:50 basis. The request is under consideration. Hence it is not possible to indicate a firm time schedule for the construction and commencement of the project. According to the details furnished in the letter of intent presented in March, 1978, the total investment envisaged for setting up the project was around Rs. 24.62 crores, and the total manpower requirement envisaged for the plant was 269.

Production of Viscose Staple Fibre

7497-C. SHRI ARIF MOHAMMAD KHAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the quantity of viscose staple fibre produced in the country and the total requirement of the same at present; and

(b) whether viscose staple fibre is being imported and if so, the countries from which the imports are made?