

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RANA) : (a) No such report has come to the notice of Ministry of Textiles.

(b) to (e) Do not arise.

[English]

Recruitment of Group 'D' Employees of RBI

1533. SHRI KARIYA MUNDA : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to refer to reply given to Unstarred Question No. 6063 on May 14, 97 and state:

(a) whether candidates who were interviewed in August, 1997 and declared selected are still awaiting in queue for joining their duties after completing all selection formalities;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and the number of candidates who have been not offered jobs so far; and

(c) the time by when all such candidates are likely to be recruited?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) to (c) Reserve Bank of India has reported that out of 80 candidates declared selected after interview held in August, 1997 for appointment in the cadre of Mazdoor/Khitmatgar, 18 have already been appointed. Six more candidates have been issued appointment letters. The RBI has further reported that remaining 56 candidates would be offered appointment as and when vacancies arise in the said cadre.

Import of Basmati

1534. DR. SANJAY SINH : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian traders are importing basmati rice from Pakistan;

(b) if so, the quantity being imported and at what rate;

(c) whether the Government are aware of the strong resentment of Indian farmer over the said import which is adversely affecting them; and

(d) if so, the remedial steps proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) to (d) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Production and Export of Black Pepper

1535. SHRI A.C. JOS : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the production and exports of black pepper during each of the last three years; State-wise;

(b) the activities made by the Technology mission on Black pepper for the improvement of productivity of black pepper till date;

(c) the main competitors of black pepper in the International market;

(d) major constraints affecting pepper production in the Country;

(e) the steps taken by the Government to boost the production of black pepper?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) Details of Production and export of Black Pepper are given in the attached Statement.

(c) While Indonesia, Malaysia, Brazil and Vietnam are the main competitors, Thailand, Sri Lanka, China and Madagascar are also producing and exporting Black Pepper.

(d) The major constraints identified in the production of black pepper in the country are (i) Low productivity; (ii) Prevalence of pests and diseases; (iii) Non adoption of scientific crop production practices; (iv) Existence of large number of unproductive senile/diseased vines; and (v) Lack of disease resistant/tolerant varieties.

(b) and (e) In order to increase production and productivity of various spices including black pepper, a Centrally Sponsored Integrated Programme for Development of Spices (IPDS) is being implemented. The measures being implemented for development of black pepper are:-

- (i) Production of rooted pepper cuttings of high yielding varieties;
- (ii) Rehabilitation of old pepper gardens;
- (iii) Distribution of input kits;
- (iv) Plant protection measures against Quick Wilt disease;
- (v) Eradication of Little leaf disease;
- (vi) Establishment and maintenance of demonstration plots in farmers' fields; and
- (vii) Area expansion