

(c) Total value of herbal medicines exported during 1997-98 (upto August, 1997) as per latest available figures, is Rs. 69.93 crores.

(d) The following steps have been taken to popularise the Indian Ayurvedic medicines in these countries. Continuing interaction with the trade and industry to identify and deal with problems related to exports; extension of Market Development Assistance to the exporting community through the Export Promotion Council for participation in trade fairs/exhibitions; Integrated Marketing Programme for Indian Herbal Products in West Europe and other market promotion activities.

Powers to I.T. Commissioners

5564. SHRI BIJOY KUMAR 'BIJOY': Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government propose to give more powers to the Income Tax Commissioners throughout the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof in the context of powers already bestowed to them; and

(c) the purpose for which more powers are proposed to be given?

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) The Commissioners of Income Tax have been vested with statutory powers for the administration of Direct Tax Laws. The powers are exercised within the frame work of laws passed by the Parliament and rules prescribed thereunder. At present the powers made available to the Commissioners of Income Tax under the various provisions of law are considered adequate for the smooth administration of the Direct Tax Laws.

Canara Bank

5565. PROF. AJIT KUMAR MEHTA:

SHRI SITA RAM YADAV:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the newsitem appearing in the "Times of India" dated June 12, 1998 captioned "CBI registers case against Canara Bank, Vinyl Flooring officials";

(b) if so, the facts of the matter reported therein; and

(c) the actions taken by the Government thereon;

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) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Canara Bank has reported that two import bills for US \$ 1,13,040 and US \$ 2,43,250.02 were received by the Safdarjang Development Area branch of the bank on collection basis from the Overseas Chinese Bank Taoyun with the condition that the documents should be delivered only after receiving payment and in one case of draft after taking acceptance of payment on Bill of Exchange. On scrutiny of the documents it was observed that the branch officials delivered the documents viz., Bill of Lading and invoice duly discharged by the bank and parted/endorsed in favour of the company without any payment to the bank by the company to enable them to take delivery of goods from customs. Bank's internal investigation revealed that the company and its directors in collusion with officials of the branch has caused financial loss of Rs. 1,41,81,277 to the bank. It is also revealed that the Chief Manager of the bank and an officer were found responsible for the above irregularities and have been placed under suspension. The bank has also placed under suspension three more officials of the branch for their alleged involvement in the fraud/gross negligence. Central Bureau of Investigation has registered a case on 3.6.1998 on the basis of complaint lodged by the bank against the Chief Manager and one officer of the branch besides directors/officials of the Company.

Pyto-Sanitary Certificate for Export of Edible Agricultural Products

5566. SHRI VAIKO:

SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN:

SHRI A. GANESHAMURTHI:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that Pyto-Sanitary Certificates have been made compulsory for exporting edible agricultural products only from Chennai port from 1997;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Government propose to withdraw this order in view of the inconvenience faced by the exporters as well as farmers; and

(d) if so, by when?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.