

formulated proposals to introduce computers and other electronic equipments in areas such as Mine Planning and designing, process control, materials management, ore reserve estimation, reclamation, re-vegetation, ground water control, personnel management, cost control, Mine communication system etc.

(c) Some of the proposals known for introduction of computer and other electronic devices by different mining companies with effect from May, 1990 are as follows:

Hindustan Zinc Limited:

N-Fold computer programme for Rock Mechanics studies to determine ground stresses.

Hindustan Copper Limited:

- i) Installation of super mini computers in Khetri Copper Complex, Indian Copper Complex and Malanjkhand Copper Project.
- ii) Engineering and Graphics computer work stations in various units of the company.

#### **Payment of Fire Insurance Claims**

8353. SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the total amount of insurance claims lodged and paid during 1989 in respect of destruction of buildings by fire in the capital;

(b) whether any nationalised banks were involved in major fires during 1989;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the amount of insurance claims received by such nationalised banks?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRIANIL SHASTRI): (a) to (d). The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

#### **ITDC Project in Kerala**

8354. SHRI PALAIK.M. MATHEW: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the construction work on India Tourism Development Corporation project in Pathanamthitta (Kerala) has been started;

(b) if so, whether the work is going on as per schedule and the present position thereof; and

(c) the time by which it is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRI SATYA PAL MALIK): (a) The Annual Plan 1990-91 of ITDC does not envisage any scheme/provision for taking up any project in Pathanamthitta, Kerala.

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

#### **Minimum Export Price on Psyllium**

8355. SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of times a minimum export price for the export of Psyllium (Husk, Powder and Seeds) have been imposed and removed during the last ten years;

(b) the reasons therefor; and

(c) the quantum of exports of Psyllium (Husk, Powder and Seeds) during the last three years, year-wise and category-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI AR-ANGIL SHREEDHARAN): (a) and (b). India enjoys a virtual monopoly in the cultivation export of Psyllium. There is relatively little domestic consumption and the cultivators are largely dependent upon export. It has been observed that the export price realisation depends upon the crop position: in the year of fall in output, the prices tend to rise and when the crop is good, the price falls. The inter se competition among the exporters also affects the export realisation. Keeping in view these factors, a Minimum Export Price (MEP) was introduced for the first time on 13.5.1985 as follows:

<i>Psyllium Husk</i>	<i>Minimum Export Price</i>
98% Purity	US \$ 2.50 per Kg. POB
95% Purity	US \$ 2.35 per Kg. FOB
85% Purity	US \$ 2.50 per Kg. FOB
<i>Psyllium Seed</i>	
99% Purity	US \$ 0.70 per Kg. FOB
97% Purity	US \$ 0.60 Per Kg. FOB

*Psyllium Powder*

MEP is higher by 20% in all cases of export effected in powder form. Since the prices did not pick up and stocks started accumulating because of an exceptionally good crop, the position was reviewed and MEP was reduced on 17.7.1986, as follows:

<i>Psyllium Husk</i>	<i>Minimum Export Price</i>
98% Purity	US \$ 2.00 per Kg. POB

95% Purity	US \$ 1.90 per Kg. POB
85% Purity	US \$ 1.75 per KG. POB

*Psyllium Seed*

99% Purity	US \$ 0.55 per Kg. POB
97% Purity	US \$ 0.47 per Kg. POB

*Psyllium Powder*

MEP US cent 20 per Kg. more than the MEP for Psyllium Husk.

However, Since the position did not improve, the MEP was abolished w.e.f. 25.2.1987. These items were removed from the purview of Exports (Control) Order, w.e.f. 30th March, 1988. Subsequently, the position was further reviewed and the export of Psyllium Seed, Psyllium Husk and Psyllium Powder was again brought under control w.e.f. 10th April, 1989, and was allowed under OCL No.3 against registration of Contracts with CHEMEXCIL. Recently certain representations from the different Organisations were received saying that the Farmers are not getting remunerative prices and exporters are losing advantage of monopolistic position. After due consideration, it was decided to re-introduce MEP for export of Psyllium Husk w.e.f. 7th July, 1989, which is as follows:

<i>Psyllium Husk</i>	<i>Minimum Export Price</i>
98% Purity	US \$ 3.20 per Kg. POB
95% Purity	US \$ 3.00 per Kg. POB
85% Purity	US \$ 2.80 per Kg. POB

Similarly MEP for Psyllium Seeds and Powder was re-introduced w.e.f. 18th August, 1989, which are as follows:

<i>Psyllium Seed</i>	<i>Minimum Export Price</i>
99% Purity	US \$ 0.95 per Kg. POB
97% Purity	US \$ 0.85 per Kg. POB

US \$ 0.25 per Kg. higher than the MEP or the corresponding grade of husk.

(c) Value of exports of Psyllium husk/Powder and Psyllium Seeds during the last 3 years are as follows:

*Psyllium Powder*

*Exports (in Rs. Crores FOB)*

<i>Year</i>	<i>Psyllium Husk/Powder</i>	<i>Psyllium Seed</i>	<i>Total</i>
1	2	3	4
1986-87	22.04	1.91	23.95
1987-88	41.41	1.05	42.46
1988-89	38.82	0.58	39.40
April '89 to Feb '90.	41.00	1.00	42.00

**Profitability of Public Sector Banks**

8356. SHRIMATI J. JAMUNA:  
SHRI B.N. REDDY:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether recent analysis of public sector banks has revealed improvements in their profitability;

(b) if so, the bank-wise details thereof indicating inter alia the ratio of net profits to working funds; and

(c) the steps contemplated by the Reserve Bank of India to further increase the profitability of the banks?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI ANIL SHASTRI): (a) and (b). As per the published accounts, the aggregate published profits of

the 28 public sector banks increased from Rs. 261.80 crores during the year 1987 to Rs. 364.90 crores as at the end of March, 1989 (for the period 1.1.88 to 31.3.89). The overall profitability of public sector banks expressed as a percentage of published profits to their working funds has also risen from 0.17% in 1987 to 0.19% in 1988-89. A statement indicating the bank-wise details of published profits earned by the public sector banks and their profitability during the years ending 31st December, 1987 and 31st March, 1989 is given below.

(c) Government and Reserve Bank of India have taken series of measures to improve the profitability of public sector banks. These include higher coupon rates on Government Securities, higher returns on cash balances maintained with Reserve Bank of India augmentation of the capital base by Government/Reserve Bank of India. Banks have also taken certain measures like enhanced staff productivity through contain-