

the erratic supply of power, ageing plant and equipment, some periods of unsatisfactory industrial relations and managerial inadequacies.

(d) Among the various steps taken in this direction are the modernisation and technological upgradation of Plants, augmentation of captive power generation, import of low ash coking coal, systematic maintenance and greater technological discipline and a better work culture.

(e) The details of targets for the entire Eighth Five Year Plan are yet to be finalised though tentative targets indicated by SAIL ARE 52.284 million tonnes.

Major Rivers Facing Pollution

414. SHRI SRIKANTHA DATTA NARASIMHARAJA WADIYAR: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the names of major rivers in the country which are now polluted;

(b) the reasons for the pollution of these rivers; and

(c) the steps taken to check pollution of these rivers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) and (b). All major rivers in the country are polluted in certain stretches because of industrial and domestic sewage discharges.

(c) The steps taken include:

- (1) Effluent standards have been prescribed for major pollution units and for sewage treatment plants;

- (2) Major polluting industries and municipalities have been directed to install pollution control devices within a specified time-schedule;

- (3) Assistance is being given to clusters of Small Scale industrial units to set up common effluent treatment plants;

- (4) Fiscal incentives are provided to industries for installing pollution control devices;

- (5) Monitoring stations have been set up to monitor water quality of these rivers; and

- (6) Legal action is taken against the defaulting units

Import of Oil From Gulf countries

415. PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the extent of the impact of the increase in the prices of oil imported from the Gulf countries on the foreign exchange position; and

(b) the steps proposed to be taken to meet the adverse effect on the foreign exchange position?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) The extent of the impact, in terms of the increase in the POL import bill, depends on the price of oil in the international markets, which have been volatile though at a far higher level than before. The present assessment of the increase in the POL import bill, for the period October, 1990 to September, 1991 is as follows:—

at \$ 25 per barrel of curde	:	Rs. 4250 crores
at \$ 30 per barrel	:	Rs. 5600 crores
at \$ 35 per barrel	:	Rs. 7600 crores

(b) the steps taken constitute a package of measures consisting of export promotion, import restraint, accelerated disbursement of external assistance, mobilising resources from NRIs and other foreign sources, suppliers' credit and efforts for additional bilateral assistance.

Cell for Expenditious Disposal of Loan Applications of Women Entrepreneurs

416. SHRI R.N. RAKESH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to issue instructions to all nationalised banks to create separate cells for expeditious disposal of loan applications from women entrepreneurs;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the time by which the above proposal is likely to be implemented; and

(d) if the reply of part (a) above be in the negative, the reasons therefore?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) to (d). Reserve Bank of India (RBI) have not issued instructions to the banks for the creation of such a separate cell. However, women entrepreneurs like other beneficiaries, can approach commercial banks for financial assistance, who may consider their request depending upon the technical feasibility and economic viability of the proposal.

In terms of guidelines issued by RBI to all Scheduled Commercial Banks for priority sector advances, banks have been advised to dispose of all loan applications, including those of women entrepreneurs, upto Rs. 25,000/- within a fortnight and those over Rs. 25,000/- within 8 to 9 weeks.

Decentralisation of DGS & D

417. PROF. RAM GANESH KAPSE: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the decision to decentralise the functions of the Directorate General of Supplies and Disposals has been taken after an indepth study by an expert committee;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, whether Government propose to appoint such a Committee to take a thorough analysis of pros and cons of the decision?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SHANTILAL PURUSHOTTAMDAS PATEL): (a) to (c). The entire matter is under review.

[*Translation*]

Waiver of Agricultural Loans

418. SHRI BHOGENDRA JHA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the criteria and the time bound practical steps being taken to waive the