

### Theft of Gold of MMTC

1197. DR. BALIRAM : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether thirty kilogram of gold valued at rupees one hundred and twenty five crore is missing from the coffers of the Minerals and Metals Trading Corporation of India Ltd. during the last three years;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action being taken by the Government against the persons involved therein?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) and (b). Against a quantity of 36487 kgs. of gold released for Export of gold jewellery by MMTC from 1993-94 to 1995-96, MMTC has reported a default of 172 kgs. of gold valued at Rs. 6.88 crore as outstanding against a few exporters in exporting gold jewellery under gold loan schemes operated by them.

(c) The Government have constituted an Inter-Ministerial Group under the Chairmanship of Commissioner (Customs) Delhi, to take coordinated action against defaulting exporters of gold jewellery. Action has been pursued by MMTC in all cases of default in association with Director General of Foreign Trade, Customs Department, Directorate of Enforcement, Revenue Intelligence and Central Bureau of Investigation. Action has also been initiated by MMTC to ascertain negligence, if any, on part of MMTC officials.

[English]

### Export of Rice

1198. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the export of Indian rice have come to standstill recently due to availability of cheaper rice in other countries;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to boost the export of rice and to compete with the International Market?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Steps taken to enhance exports of rice include removal of Minimum Export Price and Quantity restrictions, permitting Food Corporation of India to export/sell for export 5 lakhs metric tonnes of fine and superfine rice from the Central Pool during 1996-97, provision of concessional credit, product development to meet international needs, assistance to exporters for

improved packaging, strengthening of quality control, promoting export of identified products through brand promotion campaigns, arranging buyers-seller meets and participation in international fairs/exhibitions.

[Translation]

### Heavy Engineering Corporation Ltd.

1199. SHRI RAM TAHAL CHAUDHARY : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether casual labourers working for the last twenty years in Heavy Engineering Corporation Ltd. have not been made regular so far;

(b) if so, reaction of the Government thereto; and

(c) the present number of casual labourers working therein alongwith the number of those who have been working regularly for the last five or more years in this company?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) and (b). Heavy Engineering Corporation Limited has reported that as per their available records there is no instance of a casual labour being deployed continuously in the Corporation for the last twenty years.

(c) Nil.

### Synthetic bag manufacturing Industry

1200. SHRI MAHESH KUMAR M. KANODIA : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether synthetic bag manufacturing industry is on the verge of closure;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps being taken by the Government to encourage the use of synthetic bags so as to protect the interests of the persons involved therein?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c). Does not arise in view of (a) above.

[English]

### Voluntary Retirement Scheme

1201. KUMARI SUSHILA TIRIYA :  
SHRI R. SAMBASIVA RAO :

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to make Voluntary Retirement Scheme more attractive and for enhancement of ex-gratia payment in Public Sector Undertakings; and

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the date from which enhancement is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) and (b). Consideration of various schemes, including that for Voluntary Retirement, is a continuous process with a view to making improvements as may be needed.

[Translation]

#### National Institute of Fashion Technology

1202. SHRI JAGDAMBI PRASAD YADAV :  
SHRI P.C. THOMAS :

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) the places where branches of NIFT have been opened in the country so far, State-wise; and

(b) the location of such branches likely to be opened during the current financial year, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA):

(a) five branches of NIFT have been opened in the country so far in the following places :-

Place	State
Calcutta	West Bengal
Gandhinagar	Gujarat
Hyderabad	Andhra Pradesh
Madras	Tamilnadu
Mumbai	Maharashtra

(b) At present, there is no provision for opening of any new NIFT branch during the current financial year.

#### Cement Corporation of India

1203. SHRIMATI CHHABILA ARVIND NETAM : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) the number of Cement Corporation of India units set-up in Madhya Pradesh;

(b) the number of units lying closed and since when;

(c) the number of employees affected due to closure of these units; and

(d) the steps being taken by the Government to revive these closed units?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) 3 (three).

(b) to (d). None of the units in Madhya Pradesh has been closed. However, production in the Mandhar Unit has been suspended since 6.6.96 due to non-viable operations. However, workers numbering 577 are being paid wages and salary as per rules.

[English]

#### Export of Foodgrains

1204. SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have formulated any export policy on foodgrains;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have received any request from the neighbouring countries for importing Indian wheat and other types of foodgrains during 1996-97;

(d) if so, the details thereof with its quantity, country-wise and item-wise; and

(e) the action taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) and (b). The current Export and Import Policy provisions regarding export of foodgrains are as under :-

(i) Basmati Rice - Exports allowed subject to registration of contracts with Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA);

(ii) Non-Basmati Rice (fine and super varieties - Exports allowed without quantitative and price restrictions; and

(iii) Wheat and Wheat products, Grain and flour of Barley, Maize, Bajara, Ragi, Jowar (excluding Hybrid Jowar grown as khariff crop) - Exports allowed against quantitative ceilings and minimum export price as may be notified by DGFT from time to time and Registration-cum-Allocation Certificates (RCACs) issued by APEDA.

For the current year a ceiling of 10 lakh tonnes of non-durum wheat and 5 lakh tonnes of durum wheat has been released for exports. Further, Food Corporation of India (FCI) has been authorised to export/sell for exports 5 lakh tonnes of fine and superfine varieties of rice and 5 lakh tonnes of non-durum wheat from the public stocks against the carry-over commitment made in 1995-96. However, in case of wheat the quantity to be exported/sold for exports by FCI would be within the overall ceiling of exports of wheat. A ceiling of 1 lakh metric tonnes of coarse grains has been released for exports. A ceiling of 1.50 lakh metric tonnes of wheat products has been released for exports during the period 1.10.1996 to 31.3.1997.

(c) and (d). Govt. of Nepal has requested for supply of 45,000 MTs of wheat at concessional rates.

(e) The ceiling earmarked for exports of wheat for the current year has been exhausted. Hence it has not been possible, so far, to accede to the request of Govt. of Nepal.