

VADDE: Sir, is it a fact that a large part of the savings mobilised in the rural areas is diverted to urban areas by the Government for investment in industry and business? In view of the fact that enough capital is not being invested in rural areas, will the Government take the necessary steps to see that the amount mobilised in the rural areas is definitely utilised in those very same rural areas to provide loans and other assistance to farmers, weaker sections, agricultural labour and small entrepreneurs?

[Translation]

SHRI DALBIR SINGH: We will talk to the State Governments about the suggestions made by the hon. Member. The State Government will be requested to invest more and more funds which are mobilised through Indira Vikas Patra and Kisan Vikas Patra, in the rural areas.

Freight for Goods Transported by Ships

*635 SHRI SUDHIR SAWANT: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT to pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a fixed freight for all goods transported by ships along the Coast;

(b) if so, the details thereof and its effect on the coastal shipping industry;

(c) whether the Government propose to relax the freight fixation formula presently being followed to revive the coastal shipping; and

(d) if so, the details there of?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) and (b). A Statement is laid on the table of the House.

STATEMENT

(a) and (b). The Central Government presently exercise powers conferred by

Merchant Shipping Act to fix or revise coastal tariffs, on the advice of the Shipping Rates Advisory Board, only in respect of industrial coal and salt along the Mainland Coast at all freight and passenger tariffs between Mainland and Andamans and Lakshadweep Islands. The tariffs of other goods traffic along the coast are fixed through direct negotiations between the shipowners and shippers on a bilateral commercial basis. Director General of Shipping has been delegated powers to fix bunker surcharge for carriage of coal and salt and also to fix freight rates where no subsidy is payable by the Government. The freight rates in respect of traffic to the Andamans and Lakshadweep Islands, which involves payment of subsidy to Shipping Corporation of India, are fixed by the Government of India. There has been a sharp increase in the movement of thermal coal, crude oil and petroleum products along the coast over the years.

(c) No such proposal is under consideration.

(d) Does not arise.

SHRI SUDHIR SAWANT: Sir, I am not really satisfied with the answer, specially the answer given to part (b) of my question, wherein I asked about the effect on the coastal shipping industry. I asked the question, through I know the answer and the answer is that the coastal shipping industry has totally collapsed. There are only 14 passenger-cum-cargo ships operating in the country, mainly for Andamans and Lakshadweep. Even in the Annual Report, there is no policy statement as far as shipping is concerned....

MR. SPEAKER: You please put the question. You are not expected to give information. You can make use of that information to frame that question.

SHRI SUDHIR SAWANT: Sir, on the Goa-Bombay belt itself, there are many ports. The Coastal Shipping was operation well, when it was nationalised in 1983. And then, it was closed in 1985. We are not interested

whether it is privatised or in the public sector. Our main concern is that it should be rejuvenated. There is no difficulty for the SCI to take over the coastal shipping...

MR SPEAKER: A Member is expected to make to use of the information available to him to frame the question. Please ask the question.

SHRI SUDHIR SAWANT: My question relates to this aspect. Why is the Coastal Shipping not taken over by the SCI and why is it not commenced again?

SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER: Sir, I would like to inform the hon. Member..

MR. SPEAKER: You can exclude the information that he has already given.

SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER: Already, about 166 ships are plying in the coastal region.

As far as the traffic handled in the coastal shipping is concerned, it has gone up. In the year 1952 it was 26 lakh tonnes which has gone up to 244 lakh tonnes. Now, because of the better infrastructure of roads and railways, the traffic has been diverted. The Shipping Corporation only handles the passengers traffic from the main land to the Lakshadweep and Andaman Islands.

We not only have a policy, rather we are encouraging people to come and put more number of ships, more small boats and so on. As far as the Ministry of Shipping is concerned, we have no objection to the people who want to ply on the Indian Flags.

SHRI SUDHIR SAWANT: The private licences were given some three years ago and they are going to expire in October, 1991. Though licences were given no private company has acquired any ship and no passenger service or cargo service has started operation as on date. Under-development of the Konkan belt and the Western coastal regions has resulted in the lack of the communication facility. Coastal shipping which

was being operated for the last three years, has now been stopped.

Hon. Minister just now said that due to the increase in the rate of transportation the capacity was diverted. I would like to say that there is no increase in the road transportation in the Western coastal belt. When the rate of transportation is hindrance in the increase in the private shipping, a package has to be developed so that transportation permission licence be granted for passengers traffic in urban areas like Bombay.

MR. SPEAKER: Your time is getting lost. You can say, are you intending to reduce the freight.

SHRI SUDHIR SAWANT: My question is, Sir, Whether the Government proposes to develop a package for the private shipping liners to operate passengers cum cargo services in urban centres like Bombay and the other coastal regions of Maharashtra.

SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER: Sir, the Government encourages private people to come up and operate these routes.

SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES: Sir, there was a proposal to start shipping services from Bombay right down to Cochin touching Goa, Mangalore and Cochin. I would like to know from the hon. Minister at what stage this proposal is and when the private sector is not coming forward to take up this service, whether the Government or the shipping company will take it up or not.

SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER: We do not have any proposal of this kind.

DR. VISWANATHAM KANITHI: Sir, through you I would like to know from the Minister, how many passengers ships are plying from main land to Andaman Islands because the passengers are facing a lot of inconvenience because of their unscheduled and un-announced dates.

SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER: We are doing everything possible to increase the frequency

of the shipping services from the mainland to the Andaman Islands. We have recently got one brand new ship and we are expecting very soon, two more such ships. I hope after getting these two ships, the inconvenience which is caused to the people of Andaman will be reduced.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[English]

Agricultural Exports

* 636 SHRI P.C. THOMAS:
SHRI M.R. KADAMBURJAN-
ARTHANAN:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the impact of the new EXIM policy on exports;

(b) whether agricultural exports have been boosted in the recent past;

(c) if so, the amount of foreign exchange earned from agricultural exports from Kerala during the year 1990-91 and whether the foreign exchange earning is expected to increase this year;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken or proposed to be taken by the Government to further increase the agricultural production?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHEED): (a) to (e). Government announced an initial package of trade policy on 4th July, 1991 followed by a few other changes in the policy on 13th August, 1991 which aimed at strengthening export incentives.

Some of the salient features of new Trade Policy are given below:

i) REP licences have been replaced by a new instrument named Eximscrips. The basic rate at which Eximscrips will be issued against exports will be 30% of FOB value. For certain value added agricultural products which inter-alia included cashew kernels roasted/salted in consumer packs of 1kg. or less, fresh fruits, vegetables, cut-flowers, plants and plant materials and spices going by air, all types of canned, bottled and aseptically packed fruits, vegetable products and spices etc. entitlement of an additional Eximscrips of 10 percentage points has been allowed, taking the total Eximscrips rate to 40% of FOB value.

ii) Procedures for considering Advance Licence applications have been simplified;

iii) A number of items of exports including Molasses, Khandsari Molasses and Sugar have been decanalised and placed under Open General Licence (OGL) 3.

iv) State Governments have been requested to exempt exports from all fiscal levies.

Separate state-wise export figures are not maintained. As such it would not be possible to indicate the amount of foreign exchange earned from agricultural exports from Kerala during the year 1990-91.

A statement showing exports of agricultural Commodities in 1990-91 as compared to 1989-90 is enclosed. As the Trade Policy has been revised very recently, it would be premature to estimate its impact on foreign exchange earnings.

To increase agricultural production in