

August, 1976, it is too early to judge the response from the employees and workers.

Meeting of Regional Consultative Committee of Nationalised Banks for Central Zone

1854. SHRI RAGHUNANDAN LAL BHATIA: Will the Minister of REVENUE AND BANKING be pleased to state:

(a) whether a meeting of the Regional Consultative Committee of the nationalised banks for the Central Zone was held at Bhopal in June, 1976;

(b) if so, whether bank assistance to meet the credit needs of landless labour provided with house sites and those freed from bonded labour under the 20 Point Economic Programme figured in the meeting; and

(c) if so, salient features of the decisions taken therein?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN-CHARGE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE AND BANKING (SHRI PRANAB KUMAR MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) Meeting of Regional Consultative Committee for nationalised banks, Central Area, consisting the States of Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh was held at Bhopal on 19th June, 1976. Twenty Point Economic Programme with particular reference to bonded labour and liquidation of rural indebtedness was one of the subjects discussed at the meeting. The main decisions taken at this meeting are as follows:

(1) Banks would ensure that branches are opened in all unbanked community Development Blocks and/or unbanked Block Head-quarters as possess the necessary infrastructure facilities and have development potential.

(2) The lead banks should take urgent steps to formulate district credit plans for their lead districts in the Central Region.

(3) The question of bringing about uniformity in the rates of interest charged by different banks in specific areas and for specific purposes needs to be examined.

(4) Disposal of loan applications involving credit limits of Rs. 10,000 or less should be secured within a period of 3 to 4 weeks. Banks would accordingly issue instructions to their branch managers.

Trade deficits during 1976-77

1855. SHRI RAGHUNANDAN LAL BHATIA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether 1976-77 will witness a dramatic reversal of massive deficits that have characterised the country's trade ever since the oil crisis; and

(b) if so, facts thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI VISHWANATH PRATAP SINGH): (a) and (b) It is true that there is a surplus of Rs 88 crores in the first quarter of the current financial year as against a trade deficit of Rs. 311 crores in the corresponding period of last year in the country's foreign trade. However, it is difficult to say at this stage anything definite as regards the final picture for the current year.

Involvement of Commercial Banks in Programme Planning in Backward Districts

1856. SHRI VASANT SATHE: Will the Minister of REVENUE AND BANKING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have worked out a well knit programme to involve commercial banks in pro-

programme planning and in financing of the area development programme in selected backward districts of the country; and

(b) if so, the main features thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN-CHARGE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE AND BANKING (SHRI PRANAB KUMAR MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b). Area Development constitutes part of the Lead Bank Scheme in which all public sector banks and three other scheduled banks are taking part. These programmes generally cover one district. Recently, some States have embarked on large composite development projects like Chambal Command Area Development Project (Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh), Rajasthan Canal Command Area Development Project, and Nagarjunsagar Irrigation Project, Andhra Pradesh. Governments of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar also have several such projects. Each of these projects will benefit a number of backward districts. Banks are participating in these projects in collaboration with Agricultural Refinance and Development Corporation and other institutions.

Take-over of Textile Mills

1857. SHRI S. M. BANERJEE: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) what further steps have been taken to takeover the closed textile mills in the country; and

(b) whether any textile mill has been taken over by Government during the period from April to 31st July, 1976?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI VISHWANATH PRATAP SINGH): (a) and (b). Government is generally not in favour of taking over more closed mills but would like serious efforts to be made by all concerned to ensure reopening of closed mills. However, in two specific cases, after

exhausting all avenues of reopening the closed mills Government had to decide in July, 1976 to take over two closed mills.

Reinstatement of audit employees suspended during Railway strike

1858. SHRI S. M. BANERJEE: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the audit employees whose services were terminated or suspended during Railway strike have been taken back; and

(b) if not, the reason for this abnormal delay?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI-MATI SUSHILA ROHATGI): (a) Out of a total number of 96 audit employees whose services were terminated and 170 audit employees who were placed under suspension during May 1974 strike, 36 employees from amongst the terminated ones and 154 from amongst the suspended ones have been taken back.

(b) The reasons for not taking back the remaining persons are given below:

(1) Terminated Employees

(i) 40 persons went to the courts. The cases in respect of 39 are sub-judice. In one case, the court had decided against the petitioner.

(ii) 11 persons had represented to the Reviewing Authority after their services were terminated and the representations were rejected by the Reviewing Authority as all these persons were active participants in the strike.

(iii) 5 persons did not represent against the orders of termination.