

period of the previous year;

(b) if so, the reasons for the decline in exports of gems and jewellery;

(c) the steps taken by Government to improve the exports; and

(d) Government's stand on more man-power utilization foreign expertise and equipment, productivity increase and rationalisation of procedures as the areas where remedial action is necessary, training of artisans, techno-marketing consultancy arrangements etc?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND SUPPLY (SHRI P. A. SANGMA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Some of the reasons for the marginal decline in this sector include hike in the interest rates in major markets abroad, reluctance on the part of Indian exporters to sell on long term credits because of reported bankruptcies, rising strength of the dollar and restricted availability of rough colour gem stones, etc.

(c) Steps taken by Government to improve these exports include facility to import essential equipment and tools under OGL, reduction in import duty on a number of essential tools and equipment and broad-basing of export production of gold jewellery for exports.

(d) Emphasis is constantly laid on increase in productivity and value realisation in the gem and jewellery sector by means of training of artisans and upgradation of technology and skills for which proposals are considered on merits for utilisation on equipment as well as personnel from abroad.

Opposition to IJMA'S demand for production cut due to raw Jute Shortage

1444. SHRI AMAL DATTA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND

SUPPLY be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have received any resolution adopted by the Bengal Chatkal Mazdoor Union at their Central Executive Committee meeting opposing the Indian Jute Manufacturers Association's (IJMA) demand for a production cut on the plea of raw jute shortage;

(b) if so, the salient features of the said resolution; and

(c) the reaction of Government thereto and the steps taken or proposed to taken in the market by the Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND SUPPLY (SHRI P. A. SANGMA) : (a) and (b). A Resolution was adopted in the Central Executive Committee meeting of Bengal Chatkal Mazdoor Union held on 16-2-1985 and the following main demands were put forward by them :

(i) Mills must work all the days and there should not be any stoppage or closure of mills;

(ii) Raw jute be declared as an Essential Commodity and hoarded stocks be seized;

(iii) Reopen all closed/locked out mills failing which Government must take over all closed mills immediately;

(iv) There should be monopoly procurement of raw jute by Government of India from growers;

(c) A Statement is attached.

Statement

In so far as stoppage of work in jute mills and closure/lock-out of jute mills is

concerned, it may be mentioned that the matter comes under the purview of the Industrial Disputes Act and the State Government is the appropriate authority for matters dealing with industrial disputes. It is, therefore, for the State Government to take appropriate action in the matter.

With regard to take-over of closed/locked out mills, it may be clarified that take-over of an industry is the last method of reactivating sick units. Government's role is primarily to monitor and coordinate measure aimed at revival of the sick units, coupled with assistance from banking and financial institutions who are primarily responsible to take remedial measures inclusive of financial and managerial restructuring of the units in order to rejuvenate the industry.

Raw jute has already been declared as essential commodity under the Essential Commodity Act, 1955. In the Tripartite meeting held under the Chairmanship of Labour Minister, Govt. of West Bengal on 26-2-1985, trade union representatives stressed the need for undertaking drive to unearth excess stocks lying with affluent mills and traders. It was clarified in the said meeting by the Jute Commissioner that if the State Government, on the basis of enquiry reports from its authorised field officials, brings the fact to the notice of the Jute Commissioner, appropriate action could be taken under the Jute (Control and Licensing, Order, 1961.

In so far as monopoly procurement of raw jute is concerned, it may be mentioned that monopoly procurement of raw jute will imply a lot of operational, administrative and infrastructural commitments on the part of the State Governments in the form of creation and development of regulated markets, co-operative organisations of jute growers etc. In the absence of any decision regarding such commitments by the State Governments, it is difficult to launch any scheme for monopoly procurement of raw jute.

Opening of Branch of Commercial Bank in Sripalli-Hill View-New Upper Chelidanga of Asansol

1445. SHRI AJIT KUMAR SAHA : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to open a branch of any commercial bank in Sripalli-Hill View-New Upper Chelidanga of Asansol which is more populated area:

(b) if so, when and details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons thereof; and

(d) The criteria for opening of the bank branch ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY):

(a) to (c). Reserve Bank of India has reported that no proposal for opening a branch of a commercial bank at Sripalli-Hill View-New Upper Chelidanga of Asansol is currently pending with it. The Centre was also not identified by the Government of West Bengal for branch opening during the current branch licensing policy period, April 1982 to March 1985.

(d) Under the above policy, the State Governments were advised to identify rural unbanked centres for opening bank branches. The applications received from banks for opening offices at Semi-urban centres and rural centres other than those identified by the State Governments are considered by Reserve Bank on merits taking into account the population of the centre, number of offices functioning at the centre or in also proximity thereat, business potential available at the centre etc. The Centres are generally allowed to Regional Rural Banks in their command areas and to commercial banks having adequate representation in the area.