

Export of Mica to U.S.S.R.

1446. SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK : Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND SUPPLY be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have proposal to export Mica to the Soviet Union;

(b) if so, the quantum of Mica proposed to be exported to the Soviet Union; and

(c) whether Government propose to export mica directly or through any of their agency ?

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

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) in January 1985, a contract for 3242 MT of mica valued at Rs. 1124 lakhs has been signed by the Mica Trading Corporation of India Ltd., with USSR for supplies upto September, 1985. Further contract is also likely to be concluded towards 3rd/4th quarter of 1985.

(c) Export of processed mica is canalised through Mica Trading Corporation of India Ltd.,

Reward to Informers of Tax Evasion etc. by Companies

1447. SHRI K. KUNJAMBU : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any scheme for giving cash reward to any informer who gives information about foreign exchange violation, evasion of customs duty etc. by private companies;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the criteria adopted for determining cash reward; and

(d) whether the identity of the informer is kept strictly secret ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY) : (a) to (c). Under the existing scheme, informers are eligible for a cash reward upto 10% of the value of Indian currency and foreign currency confiscated and the penalty realised. In customs cases, it has been decided, on review and as part of the intensification of the anti-smuggling drive, to raise the reward eligibility of informers from 10% to 20% of the value of contraband good seized.

I considering the cash reward, factors such as, accuracy, utility, difficulty in obtaining information from other sources, his antecedents, the risk to which he is exposed, etc. are taken into account.

(d) Yes, Sir.

Companies Violating Foreign Exchange Regulations

1448. SHRI V. S. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the particulars of companies with import licences, found indulging in violation of foreign exchange regulations and evasion of customs duty during 1984-85;

(b) the amount involved in each case; and

(c) the action taken against each of these companies ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY) : to (a) (c). The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Memorandum from A.P. Country Tobacco Cheroot Manufacturers Association

1449. SHRI B. B. RAMAIAH : Will

the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have received a detailed memorandum recently from the Andhra Pradesh Country Tobacco Cheroot Manufacturers Association highlighting need for relief on the cheroot cottage Industry which is in poor condition;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) Government's reaction thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY) : (a) to (c). A memorandum of Andhra Pradesh Country Tobacco Cheroot Manufacturers Federation has been received, which seeks either complete exemption from excise duty on branded cheroots, or enhancement of the exemption limit based on value, available to such cheroots. This has been considered by the Government, and it has not been found possible to accede to the request.

Decline in Export Market for Jute Goods

1450. SHRI BHOLA NATH SEN : Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND SUPPLY be pleased to state :

(b) whether the market for jute goods has become stagnant with domestic and export enquiries and prices of nearly all categories drifting downwards; and

(b) if so, the reasons for such decline and the steps taken and/or contemplated ?

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

(a) and (b). The jute goods market has recently become stagnant in both domestic and export sectors. Price of nearly all categories of jute goods, particularly sacking, are drifting downwards due to the following factors :

1. Consumers resistance, both in

domestic and overseas markets, to abnormally high prices of jute goods, which was caused by steep increase in raw jute prices and in the cost of production.

2. Increased use of synthetic substitutes in some foreign countries because of high prices of jute items.
3. A larger jute crop is expected next season, which may reduce prices of jute goods. Consumers have, therefore, confined their purchases to the barest minimum for the time being.
4. Present period is also the domestic off-season for the jute industry. The purchase of sugar bags is practically over. Government agencies have also built up comfortable stocks of R. Twill bags for packing rabi crop of foodgrains.

In order to boost exports of jute goods, the Government have taken several steps which include :

- (i) providing higher CCS to jute carpet backing cloth and yarn on the basis of matching performance by industry;
- (ii) formulation of STC jute industry consortium on 50 : 50 loss-sharing basis for exports of carpet backing cloth to North America;
- (iii) Arranging participation in international trade fairs and sponsoring market oriented trade delegations from time to time;
- (iv) Encouraging development of exportable products through R and D efforts; and
- (v) Constituting a new JMDC and a jute Fund out of proceeds of Jute Cess to give boost to R and C efforts and export promotion.

The Government have been taking several steps, from time to time, to improve the viability of the jute industry which include :