

(d) and (e) The attitude of the Germans towards India remains as cordial as in the past, with increased interest in bilateral cooperation.

#### **Import of Soda Ash through MMTC**

4992. SHRI B. V. DESAI : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government have authorised the Minerals and Metals Trading Corporation to import 10,000 tonnes of Soda Ash to meet the needs of small-scale users like detergent and silicate units ;

(b) if so, whether the step was taken to eliminate mal practices by private trading houses in import of soda ash ;

(c) the other proposals that are being considered to bring down the prices of imported soda ash ; and

(d) whether Government are fully aware of the plight of small units dependent on private trading houses for imported soda ash supplies as domestic production is not sufficient to meet their requirements ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI KHURSHID ALAM KHAN) : (a) and (b) Government have decided to allow minerals and Metals Trading Corporation to import 10,000 M.Ts of soda ash for off-the-shelf delivery to the small scale units who are not in a position to import the material themselves under OGL.

(c) and (d) In order to increase the supply of soda ash, additional capacity has been created to meet future demand. Duty has been substantially reduced on import of soda ash to enable the Actual Users to import the same at a reasonable price.

#### **Indo-Swiss Joint Commission for Trade and industrial collaboration**

4993. SHRI B. V. DESAI : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Indo-Swiss Joint Commission will identify areas of trade and industrial collaboration ;

(b) if so, whether bilateral trade between India and Switzerland has not shown the growth in regard to India's trade with the European Community ;

(c) if so, the main decisions taken in the Indo-Swiss Joint Commission meet in Berne ; and

(d) the steps taken or proposed to be taken to improve the trade between the two countries ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI KHURSHID ALAM KHAN) : (a) to (d) The Fourth Session of the Indo-Swiss Joint Commission held at Berne in September, 1985, among other things, identified the areas of expansion of bilateral trade. Several trade promotion measures were contemplated, particularly for product development and marketing. The need for transfer of technologies was stressed, keeping in view the scope for identifying new areas where Swiss know-how could be used and complemented by Indian partners.

India's exports to Switzerland were of the order of Rs. 116.97 crores in 1984-85 against exports to the extent of Rs. 95.63 crores effected during 1982-83. India's imports from Switzerland increased from Rs. 111.18 crores in 1982-83 to Rs. 161.45 crores in 1984-85. Switzerland is not a member of the European Economic Community.

#### **Imposition of variety of levies on the Minerals in the States**

4994. SHRI B. V. DESAI :  
SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKARA MURTHY :

Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government are concerned over the increasing tendency among the State Governments to impose a

variety of levies on the minerals produced in their States in an effort to improve their ways and means position ;

(b) whether the imposition of a fiscal burden on minerals by the State Governments is rendering mining operations more expensive ;

(c) whether the Mineral Advisory Council had advised the officials committee on the revision of royalty rate on various minerals and also to look into the cess and mineral rights tax imposed on the minerals by various States over and above royalty rates ;

(d) if so, whether the Union Government have taken certain steps in this regard ; and

(e) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF MINES (SMT. RAMDULARI SINHA) : (a) to (e) The Mineral Advisory Council in its 22nd meeting held in New Delhi on 9.5.1985 recommended that the Committee to revise the rate of royalty on minerals should also look into the cess and mineral rights tax imposed on the minerals by various State Governments over and above royalty. Accordingly the matter has been referred to the Study Group on the Revision of Rates of Royalty. The Study Group has since finalised its deliberations and is expected to submit its report

shortly. The matter will be examined by Government on receipt of the report of the Study Group. However imposition of any fiscal burden adds to the cost of operations.

**Progress made in Modernisation of Units of NTC (WBABO) Ltd. Calcutta.**

4995. DR. V. VENKATESH : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) the progress made by each units of N.T.C. (WBABO) Limited, Calcutta under modernisation both in the matter of civil construction/extension of existing premises and in the process of installation of new machines, etc. ; and

(b) the steps being contemplated to implement the projects expeditiously ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI KHURSHID ALAM KHAN) : (a) Modernisation is a continuous process. A statement showing the amount sanctioned and implemented, in each textile unit, under NTC (WBABO) Ltd., as on 30th September, 1985, is given below.

(b) Implementation on modernisation is closely monitored and suitable action taken whenever necessary.

**Statement**

(Rs. in lakhs)

S. No.	Name of the Mill	Amount Sanctioned	Amount Implemented
1	2	3	4
1.	Bengal Laxmi Cotton Mills	362.83	340.98
2.	Central Cotton Mills	85.74	81.94
3.	Rampooria Cotton Mills	299.83	316.76
4.	Shree Mahalaxmi Cotton Mills	142.06	164.63
5.	Bangasri Cotton Mills	382.30	203.00
6.	Gaya Cotton & Jute Mills	258.72	220.85