

(b) if so, the facts thereof and the extent of accountability of officers working in Khetri and Malanjkhand ;

(c) whether Government have received serious complaints against some odd deeds of senior officials of the said two copper complexes ;

(d) whether huge expenditures have been regularly incurred towards transportation of ore from Malanjkhand to Khetri ;

(e) if so, the details thereof and action taken thereon ; and

(f) the details of modernisation of smelters and refineries being undertaken and whether any foreign agencies are involved therewith ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF MINES (SHRIMATI RAM DULARI SINHA) : (a) to (f) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Transfer of Mining work to Gujarat State Mineral Development Corporation

5063. SHRIMATI PATEL RAMABEN RAMJIBHAI MAVANI : Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government have received any application from Gujarat Government for transfer of mining work to the Gujarat Mineral Development Corporation ; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and action taken thereon ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF MINES (SHRIMATI RAM DULARI SINHA) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

National Handloom Development Corporation

5064. SHRI RADHAKANTA DIGAL: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) the reasons why the headquarters of National Handloom Development Corporation has been set up at Lucknow instead of Delhi ; and

(b) whether Government propose to open its branches in all the State capitals ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI KHURSHID ALAM KHAN) : (a) The Government of India considered it desirable to locate the headquarters of the National Handloom Development Corporation in a state which has a large number of handlooms and needs infrastructural support in order to provide fillip to the growth of the handloom sector. Hence, it was decided to locate the head-quarters of National Handloom Development Corporation at Lucknow.

(b) The Corporation has opened its regional offices in Bombay, Coimbatore and Gauhati. It has also opened yarn depots at Gauhati, Biharshariff and Bhagalpur. Opening of offices/yarn depots elsewhere will depend on operational requirements

Evasion of Customs Duty by Misusing Advance-Free Import Licences

5065. SHRI K. S. RAO :
SHRI ANANDA PATHAK :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that customs duty to the tune of over Rs. 1,000 crores have been evaded by misuse of advance free import licence by some parties ;

(b) if so, the details in this regard ; and

(c) the stops proposed to be taken by Government in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY (a) and (b) It is a fact that misuse of advance licences under the Duty Exemption Scheme has been noticed. These abuses consist of either non-fulfilment of the export obligations or misutilisation of the duty free material

imported. No separate data on the extent of evasion of customs duty due to abuse of Advance Licences are being maintained. However, the estimate given by the Hon. Member appears to be exaggerated.

(c) Stricter scrutiny of the applications before issue of Advance Licence—especially to check bonafides of the applicants, careful examination at the time of import and export by the customs, especially for sensitive items and a rigorous monitoring of all duty exemption cases by the Licensing Authorities in coordination with the customs are some of the steps which have been taken to prevent/detect attempts of misuse of advance licensing benefits. Deterrent penal action (including prosecution), under the provisions of relevant law is also being taken by the Licensing Authorities/Customs against those found misusing the Advance Licensing benefits.

Scarcity of Corn

5066. SHRI SRIKANTA DATTA NARASIMHARAJA WADIYAR : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware of the severe scarcity of corn due to drought condition in many States ;

(b) whether the availability of corn is not sufficient to meet the demand of corn in the starch industry ;

(c) if so, whether Government propose to import corn in view of shortage due to drought and due to the growing demand of corn ; and

(d) if not, the alternative steps proposed to be taken in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI KHURSHID ALAM KHAN) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) There is no shortage.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

Reduction in Prices of Aluminium

5067. SHRIMATI D.K. BHANDARI : Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state whether Government propose to reduce prices of aluminium/steel used in furniture/buildings manufacture to reduce large scale felling of trees at the earliest ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF MINES (SHRIMATI RAMDULARI SINHA) : There is no such proposal under consideration.

Fatal Accidents Stone Quarries in South Delhi.

5068. SHRI MAHENDRA SINGH : Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state :

(a) whether number of fatal accidents like the one that took place in September, 1985 in stone quarry in South Delhi, have taken place in Badarpur mines ;

(b) if so, the number and details of such accidents in 1984 and 1985 so far ; and

(c) the steps taken to effectively prevent the illegal mining without proper security measures in the area ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF MINES (SHRIMATI RAMDULARI SINHA) (a) and (b) : No fatal accident took place in Badarpur Mines of South Delhi during the years 1984 and 1985.

(c) Mining of badarpur was departmentalised in June, 1983. A new corporation under the name and style of Delhi State Mineral Development Corporation was set up in May, 1985 and it has taken over the mining functions from the Delhi State Industrial Development Corporation with effect from the 1st June, 1985. Besides this, the Collector (Mines and Quarries) and the Delhi Police make raids on the sites of illegal mining. Delhi State Mineral Development Corporation is also