

(b) While the working of the erstwhile All India Handicrafts Board had been under constant review, no formal assessment was made by the Government.

(c) Does not arise.

Visit of Minister of State for External Affairs to South East Asia

5512. SHRI P. R. S. VENKATESAN : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Minister of State for External Affairs recently visited South-East Asia;

(b) if so, the countries visited by him; and

(c) the outcome of the visit ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K NATWAR SINGH) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri K. Natwar Singh, visited Indonesia, Thailand, Brunei, Malaysia and Singapore from 1st-7th March 1987.

(c) The Minister of State had useful exchange of views on regional and bilateral matters. The visit resulted in better perception of each other's point of view.

Purchase of cardamom by STC

5513. CH. RAM PRAKASH : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the State Trading Corporation has started purchasing cardamom from three auction centres in Kerala; and

(b) if so, the quantity purchased so far and the target fixed ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. R. DAS MUNSI) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) As the purpose of market intervention by STC is price stabilisation no specific targets have been fixed. A quantity of 6906 Kgs. has been purchased by STC during February, 1987.

Fraudulent import of silk

5514. SHRI K. S. RAO : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether certain cases of fraudulent import of raw silk have been detected;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action being taken by Government against the persons found guilty ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. R. DAS MUNSI) : (a to (c). The matter is being investigated and if made be appropriate action would be taken under the provisions of Imports and Exports (Control) Act, 1947 and the orders issued thereunder.

Low budget tourist accommodation at Ajanta and Ellora

5515. DR. T. KALPANA DEVI : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether there are no facilities for overnight stay at Ajanta and Ellora for low budget tourists.

(b) if so, the reasons therefore; and

(c) the steps Government propose to take to provide these facilities ?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (MUFTI MOHD. SYED) : (a) Dormitory Accommodation for low budget tourists is available at Fardapur which is 5 Km. from Ajanta.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The Government of Maharashtra has plans to construct a Holiday Resort at Ellora.