

Trade With Syria

498. SHRI DATTATRAYA BANDARBU:
SHRIMATI BHVNA CHIKHLIA:
SHRI DEVI BUX SINGH:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether a meeting of Joint Committee of India and Syria was held in May, 1992 to promote trade between the two countries;
- (b) if so, the details of the talks held; and
- (c) the outcome thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SALMANKHURSHED): (a) to (c). The Second Session of the Indo-Syrian Joint Trade Committee was held in New Delhi from 20th to 22nd May, 1992. The volume of trade between the two countries has increased from about Rs. 7 crores in 1988-89 to about Rs.45 crores in 1991-92. The exports of Indian engineering goods to Syria have risen from about Rs. 2 crores in 1988-89 to over Rs.21 crores in 1991-92. While overall volume of trade has increased considerably, there has not been any significant import of goods from Syria. Keeping this in-view, detailed discussions were held to identify specific products, which could be imported in order to balance the trade. During the 2nd Session of the Indo-Syrian Joint Trade Committee, items like petroleum coke, rock-phosphate, lentils, chemicals, fertilizers, cotton, hides and skins were identified, which could be imported by India from Syria. For exports to Syria from India, items like tea, coffee, jute products, engineering goods, commercial vehicles from Syria, earthmoving equipments, drugs, etc. were identified. The Syrian side expressed their keen desire to associate Indian companies in various engineering

and agro based industries as well as irrigation and tourism related projects. Cooperation in the field of science and technology was also envisaged between the two countries.

Achievement of Objectives by NTC

499. SHRI KASHIRAM RANA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

- (a) Whether the National Textile Corporation has achieved its objectives for which it was set up;
- (b) if not, the reasons therefor ; and
- (c) the step taken or proposed to be taken by the Government to achieve to objectives of the Corporation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT): (a) to (c). National Textile Corporation was incorporated with the main objective of managing the affairs of the sick textile undertaking taken over by the Government. It was also proposed to rehabilitate and modernise these mills to make them economically viable. At present NTC is running 109 nationalised and 15 managed mills. Even after an investment of Rs. 432.77 crores on modernisation/renovation, most of the mills due to old machinery and heavy over-staffing under NTC are incurring losses. Government is periodically reviewing the performance of NTC mills, with a view to improving their performance.

[English]

Ordnance Factory, Aravankadu

500. SHRI MOHAN SINGH (DEORIA):
SHRIMATI SAROJ DEBEY:
SHRI B. DEVARAJAN:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there was a bomb explosion at the Aravankadu ordnance factory recently;

(b) if so, the details of the loss of life and property in this explosion;

(c) whether any inquiry has been conducted in this regard;

(d) if so, the outcome thereof; and

(e) the action taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) No Sir. However there was an explosion accident in the Washing House of Nitroglycerine manufacturing Unit of Cordite Factory, Aruvankadu.

(b) As a result of the accident, 6 employees of the factory lost their lives. Loss of property and material has been assessed at about Rs. 14 lakhs.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) and (e). The recommendations of the Board of Inquiry along with the comments of the OFB are under consideration of Government.

Appointment of Official/Non-Official Members in Banks

501. SHRI K.P. REDDAIAH YADAY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to frame new norms for nominating or appointing official or non-official directors of various banks in view of the involvement of some banks in the recent shares scam; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): (a) and (b). Government have no such proposal under consideration at present.

[Translation]

Assistance for Road Projects

502. KUMARI UMA BHARTI:
SHRI SHASHI PRAKASH:

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:-

(a) whether any talks had been held with Asian Development Bank for seeking loan for certain Central and State sector road projects in recent past; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) yes, Sir. an Asian Development Bank Mission had visited India in November-December 1991 for identification of National Highway Projects for possible assistance under a Third Highway Loan.

(b) The Mission identified 14 National Highway projects in various States for carrying out feasibility studies. The inclusion of these projects for loan will however depend upon results of the feasibility studies.

[English]

Godowns Hired by Customs Department

503 SHRI ANANTRAO DESHMUKH: Will the MINISTER of FINANCE be pleased to state: