

[Translation]

Export of Makhana, Lichi and Banana

2675. SHRI UPENDRA NATH VERMA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a great potential for export of lichi, makhana and banana in the country particularly from the state of Bihar;

(b) is so, the details thereof;

(c) whether makhana is already being exported and the export of lichi has also commenced from 1993-94;

(d) whether the Government have formulated any scheme to promote the export of lichi, makhana and banana; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b). India is one of the largest producers of liches. Lichi produced in Bihar is of very good quality suitable for exports. European and West Asian countries have shown interest in purchase of lichi from India.

India accounts for about 14% of the World's banana production and there is a good potential for export of this item. Banana being produced in the State of Bihar is of a small size and there is not much potential of exports of this variety.

No study/survey has been conducted in respect of export of Makhana.

(c) statistics regarding export of makhana are not being maintained separately. As regards lichi, a small quantity was exported during 1993-94.

(d) and (e). Measures initiated for promoting export of fruits and vegetables including lichi, makhana and banana include, inter-alia.:

(i) providing financial assistance for establishing infrastructural and post harvest facilities, export promotion and market development; and

(ii) arranging buyer-seller meets and participation in International Fairs/Exhibitions.

[English]

Payment of Wages in PSUs.

2676. SHRI HARADHAN ROY :

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that the employees of sick public sector undertakings are facing hardship due to delayed payment and non-payment of salaries and wages to them;

(b) whether the Government have taken any step in this regard; and

(c) if so the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI P.A. SANGMA): (a) to (c). Government is aware of the problems of delayed payment of wages to the workers in certain sick Central Public Sector Undertakings.

Ministry of Labour has already taken up the matter with the concerned administrative Ministries as well as the Ministry of Finance so that funds are made available in time for payment of salaries and wages to workers of sick PSUs.

Revival of Braithwaite and Company Ltd

2677. SHRI MANORANJAN SUR:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR) has evolved a revival plan for Braithwaite & Co. Ltd.; and

(b) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKHRA MURTHY) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Income Tax Exemption

2678. SHRI RAM KAPSE :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the individuals who wish to donate specific sums for the projects in rural development sector are allowed exemption to the extent of 100% of the donation under the Income Tax Act, 1961; and

(b) if so, the details of the scheme and conditions to be fulfilled in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKHARA MURTHY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Under Sections 35CCA and 80GGA of the Income Tax Act, 1961, taxpayers are entitled to full deduction of the contributions made by them to the National Fund for Rural Development set up by the Government of India.

Under Sections 35AC and 80GGA of the Act, taxpayers are allowed full deduction in respect of payments made to a public sector company or a local authority or an association or institution which is approved by the National Committee for carrying out any eligible project or scheme. The National Committee has been constituted by the Government in this behalf and is headed by Shri P.N. Bhagwati former Chief Justice of India. The Central Government, on the basis of the approvals given by the National Committee, notifies the eligible projects or schemes, whereupon the contributors can claim full deduction in respect of their contributions. The eligible projects or schemes include projects for rural development which will have the effect of promoting the social and economic welfare of the rural areas.