

In so far as export to Russia is concerned, in order to enforce strict quality control, exports of tea to Russia under the debt repayment mechanism have been brought under compulsory preshipment inspection by the Export Inspection Council.

(e) Steps taken to boost exports of tea include promotional campaigns through Tea Board's offices abroad. These consist of (i) participation in trade fairs/exhibitions; (ii) media campaign to increase consumer awareness towards various unique characteristics of Indian teas; (iii) media campaign to popularise Indian tea through the Tea Board marketing symbol; and (iv) support to various foreign brands containing Indian tea. A part of the expenditure incurred by the importers for promotional campaigns is met from the Tea Board's budget. Tea Board has also undertaken Darjeeling and Assam Logo campaign in U.K. alongwith brand promotion schemes abroad to popularise classic Indian teas.

[Translation]

Import Duty on Pulses

4038. SHRI GUMAN MAL LODHA :

DR. CHINTA MOHAN :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there has been increase in the prices of imported pulses in view of the recent devaluation of rupee in terms of dollar;

(b) if so, the details of the pulses for which increase has been registered;

(c) whether the Government propose to reduce the custom duty applicable on the import thereof;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (DR. DEBI PROSAD PAL) : (a) to (e) Import of pulses has been placed under OGL at a reduced import duty of 5 per cent. The landed cost of pulses varies depending upon the trend in the international prices as also the exchange rate changes. Movement in prices of pulses are monitored by the Wholesale Price Index (Base; 1981-82) which has only one set of Index numbers for prices of pulses irrespective of whether imported or domestically produced. Besides, no import of pulses has been undertaken on Government account and hence it is not possible to report the impact of exchange rate changes on the landed cost of pulses.

[English]

Action Taken on J.P.C. Report

4039. SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the total number of cases filed in connection with the Securities Scam following the presentation of the report of the Joint Parliamentary Committee thereon;

(b) the status of the stage of investigation/prosecution of these cases;

(c) the number of cases yet to be filed on the basis of the recommendations of the Joint Parliamentary Committee; and

(d) the time by which those cases are expected to be filed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (DR. DEBI PROSAD PAL) : (a) to (d) Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) have reported that they have registered 65 cases against various persons involved in irregularities in securities transactions. Investigation has been completed in 62 cases and charge-sheets have been filed in Courts in 21 cases. CBI have also reported that the registration of cases and enquiries is an ongoing process in the CBI. As and when complaints are received from the Banks, PSUs, Ministries etc. based on the JPC Report, the material is examined and appropriate actions is taken.

Beedi Workers

4040. SHRI G. GANGA REDDY : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) the steps being taken by the Union Government to assist the beedi workers of Nizamabad district in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) whether any fresh welfare programme has been formulated for their welfare; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI G. VENKAT SWAMY) : (a) Various welfare schemes in the fields of Health, Housing Education and Recreation are being implemented on an accelerated basis for the welfare of beedi workers under the Beedi Workers Welfare Fund.

(b) and (c) The following schemes have been introduced during 1995-96 for the welfare of beedi workers of the country including in Nizamabad district:-

(i) Payment of incentive/financial assistance of Rs. 1/ - per day to female children of beedi workers on the basis of attendance in schools;

(ii) Payment of incentives to children of beedi workers on passing final University/Board examinations from Class X onwards; and

(iii) Establishment of Community Halls in beedi workers housing colonies alongwith a colour T.V. set.

Foreign Loan

4041. SHRI SOBHANADREESWARA RAO VADDE : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have sought more loan