

[English]

Joint Venture with Bahrain

1897. SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have any proposal to set up joint-ventures with Bahrain; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) and (b) Government has recently approved 3 proposals for setting up joint ventures in Bahrain. These relate to (i) repair of ships & services (ii) processing of marine products (iii) manufacture of computer ribbons.

PNB Capital Services

1898. SHRI R.SUDENDER REDDY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the PNB Capital Services (PNB Caps), a fully owned merchant banking company of Punjab National Bank has recently decided to solicit brokers for underwriting;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the objectives to be achieved by the PNB Caps by adopting the market strategy not normally adopted by the subsidiaries of the nationalised banks;

(d) whether the aforesaid course of action by PNB Caps is within the RBI guidelines; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

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

(a) PNB Capital Services Limited have intimated that they have not solicited brokers for underwriting.

(b) to (e) Do not arise.

Bank Loan to Women for Self Employment

1899. KUMARI SUSHILA TIRIYA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the loans are made available to the women for Self Employment by the public sector banks;

(b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken by the Government to ensure that the loans are made available to women easily?

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

(a) to (c) Public Sector Banks extend loans to women for self employment as a part of their priority sector lending programmes. Target has been fixed for women beneficiaries under the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP). 40% of the beneficiaries assisted under IRDP should be women. The Scheme of Urban Micro Enterprises (SUME) provides that 30% of the funds meant for the

scheme are to be utilised for women beneficiaries. Under SUME, women beneficiaries are entitled to subsidy amount of Rs. 5000/- as compared to Rs. 4000/- for general categories. Under the Prime Ministers' Rozgar Yojana (PMRY) for the Educated unemployed Youth, launched in October, 1993, women are to be given preference.

[Translation]

Opium and Ganja Cultivation

1900. SHRI RAM PRASAD SINGH:
SHRI MANJAY LAL:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to news-item captioned 'Afeem Key Patton Key Liye Kisaano Key Saath Bejaan Sharten', published in the 'Jansatta', dated April 6, 1994;

(b) if so, the policy adopted by the Government for cultivation of opium and ganja in the country;

(c) the number of States where licences in regard to cultivation of opium and ganja has been given and the total harvest thereof;

(d) whether the Government provides opium for using the medicines for statutory use and for consumption;

(e) whether the Union Government issues licences for its sale in the States;

(f) the total number of countries in the world wherefrom opium is exported; and

(g) the steps taken/ proposed to be

taken by the Government for increasing the cultivation and export of these crops?

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

(b) and (c) Opium poppy is cultivated in the notified tracts in the States of Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh under strict licensing control and supervision by the Central Government. Production of opium is done primarily to meet export commitments and domestic requirement for production of opiate alkaloids. The General Conditions relating to grant of licences to poppy cultivators are framed annually by Central Government in the month of September/October every year. During the crop year 1993-94 about 530 MTs of opium at 70°C (provisional) was produced by the above three States. As for the cultivation of Ganja (Cannabis) is concerned, the same can be permitted by the State Governments for medical or scientific purposes under the provisions of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985.

(d) and (e) Medicinal opium is released by the Government to the manufacturing chemists for production of medicinal preparations and to State Governments for use by the registered addicts.

(f) India is the only exporter of licit opium in the world. USA, Japan, UK and Russia are major buyers of Indian opium.

(g) Market surveys are undertaken to estimate the requirement of opium for export purposes. Production of opium in India is based on actual requirement.