

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (DR. DEBI PROSAD PAL) : (a) to (c) . While the average life of rupee one note is six months, that of rupees two and five is about one year. As against this, the life span of coins is about 15-20 years. The above denominations have been coined and the capacity so released has been diverted for printing of higher denomination notes. In view of this position, the quality of notes already in circulation might have deteriorated. There is no specific proposal to withdraw Rs. 1/-, Rs. 2/- and Rs. 5/- notes except when these notes become soiled. Under the RBI Note Refund Rules 1975, all branches of public sector banks maintaining currency chests have been authorised to exchange soiled and mutilated currency notes from the general public.

(d) and (e). There has been a temporary setback in the production of 50p. and Rs. 1/- coins. The supplies of Rs. 2/- and Rs. 5/- coins have not, however, been affected. The work of supply of currency is carried out by RBI through its 17 issue offices and a net work of 4108 currency chest branches of nationalised banks and 3313 small coin depots which are authorised and are also obliged to supply notes and coins to their customers.

Custom Duty on Drugs

1051. SHRI KASHIRAM RANA : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the guidelines for classification of various drugs and drugs intermediate under various rates of custom duty;

(b) whether any concession to all drug intermediate used for manufacturing bulk drugs classified under the National Health Programmed bulk has been given ; and

(c) the reasons for discrimination of custom, duties on various independent drugs intermediate used for production in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKHARA MURTHY) : (a) to (c). Customs duty structure and rates (including concessional rates) on drugs and drug intermediates have been prescribed, taking into account all relevant considerations including, their essential nature, domestic availability, prices and the interest of the domestic industry. Separate concessional rate of customs duty has not been prescribed for all drug intermediates used for manufacturing bulk drugs, for use in the National Health Programme.

National Institute of Fashion Technology

1052. SHRI MULLAPPALY RAMCHANDRAN: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the State Government of Kerala have sent any request to set up a branch of the National Institute of Fashion Technology in Kerala; and

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

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI G. VENKAT SWAMY) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No final decision has been taken in this regard.

Employment to Marble and Granite Workers

1053. SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) the number of workers affected due to closure of marble and granite mines in the country;

(b) whether the Government proposes to provide alternative employment to those workers elsewhere;

(c) whether any tripartite discussion is proposed to be held for the purpose; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI G. VENKAT SWAMY) : (a) According to available information 2500 workers were affected due to closure of Granite mines in Karnataka and 220 workers were affected due to closure of Marble mines in Rajsamand Distt. of Rajasthan.

(b) In both cases the matter is pending in the High Courts. In case of Marble mines of Rajasthan, the employers have appealed in the High Court against the cancellation of mining lease by the State Government.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Bank Loans to Tribals in Andhra Pradesh

1054. SHRI A. INDRAKARAN REDDY : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that the nationalised banks are not giving due attention in the matter of loan to tribals in Andhra Pradesh; and

(b) if so, the latest guidelines issued to nationalised banks to finance the tribals adequately?