

to meeting the requirements of plastic processes units and to bridge the gap between indigenous production and demand, STC was authorised to import LDPE in April, 1986. Since STC has been earlier handling imports of LDPE till 1976 and meeting the requirements of industry satisfactorily, it is expected that interest of industry will not be adversely affected on account on entrusting STC with imports of LDPE.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) The country is not likely to be self-sufficient in LDPE in the near future.

Power Shortage to Tea Industry

189. SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Tea Industry in Kerala is badly hit due to power shortage as reported in the 'Times of India' dated 4 July, 1986 ;

(b) whether this would affect production and export ; and

(c) if so, the steps taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BRAHMA DUTT): (a) to (c). A representation has been received against power cuts imposed by the Kerala Government on all high tension consumers including tea industry. The matter has been taken up with the State Government.

[Translation]

Security Arrangements at Tourist Centres for Safety of Foreign Tourists

190. SHRI KAMLA PRASAD RAWAT: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether there has been decline in the number of foreign tourists in view of the extremists' activities ;

(b) if so, whether any steps have been taken by Government to tighten the security

arrangements at tourist centres for their safety ;

(c) if so, the details thereof ; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (MUFTI MOHD. SYED) : (a) Foreign tourist traffic to the country has shown a significant increase of account 14.6 per cent during the first six months of 1986 as compared to the arrivals during the same period in the previous year.

(b) to (d) . Does not arise.

[English]

Merger of Regional Rural Banks with Commercial Banks

191. SHRI AMAR ROYPRADHAN · SHRI R. P. DAS :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are considering a proposal to merge regional rural banks with commercial banks ;

(b) if so, the details thereof ;

(c) whether Government have received any demand in this regard ;

(d) if so, the action taken by Union Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Yes Sir,

(d) Government are of the view that regional Rural Banks should continue to function as separate entities.

Development of Kushinagar (U.P.) As Tourist Centre

192. SHRI RAM DHAN : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that Kushinagar in the district of Deoria (UP) where Bhagwan Buddha attained Hirvana, and which attracts large number of foreign tourists and is also a place

of national importance presents an ideal site for a tourist centre ; and

(b) if so, whether Government propose to develop it as a tourist centre which is expected to fetch foreign exchange besides earning good-will of Buddhists all over the world?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (MUFTI MOHD. SYED) : (a) and (b). Yes, Sir. Kushinagar is a place of international religious importance, and is visited by Buddhists from all over the world. Government has already constructed a 20-room travellers lodge at Kushinagar.

Decline In Export of Oil Cake

193. DR. K. G. ADIYODI : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state.

(a) whether it is a fact that India's performance in the field export of oil cake upto May 1986 turned worse; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and the step being taken to overcome the decline in export earning ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BRAHMA DUTT) : (a) India's export of de-oiled cakes and de-oiled rice bran during 1985-86, as per provisional data available, indicate a declining trend compared to exports during 1984-85. Exports of major oilcakes during April-May 1986, have, however, shown an improvement over the corresponding period of the previous year.

(b) The reasons for decline in exports include stringent quality control regulations enforced by the European Economic Community Member countries ; increased domestic production of grains and substitutes in major importing countries and decline in international prices of deoiled cakes. Government have taken a series of measures to improve the export earnings. These include grant of cash compensatory support on export of solvent extracted oilcakes including deoiled rice bran ; and fiscal incentives to the solvent extraction industry to improve the competitiveness.

Import of Raw Sugar

194. SHRI R. P. DAS: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the import of raw sugar is cheaper than the import of refined (finished) sugar ; and

(b) if so, the reasons as to why Government do not favour import of raw sugar particularly in view of difficult foreign exchange situation ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BRAHMA DUTT) : (a) and (b). Since the reprocessing of imported raw sugar into refined sugar is costlier, the Government are not in favour of import of raw sugar as such.

Attempt to Murder Punjab Planning Minister in Vancouver (Canada)

195. SHRI P. M SAYEED

SHRI D. N. REDDY :

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether a report has been received through diplomatic sources regarding shooting of the Punjab Planning Minister at Vancouver in Canada ;

(b) if so, the details of the incident ;

(c) whether the persons who attacked the Minister have been identified and apprehended ; and

(d) if they are Indians whether their extradition to India has been arranged with the help of the Canadian Government?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. SHIV SHANKER) : (a) Government were informed by the Indian High Commission in Canada about the attempt on the life of Shri Malkiat Singh Sidhu, Minister of Planning, Punjab Government, in Vancouver.

(b) While travelling with his wife and some relatives from Thasis to Vancouver by