

(c) if so, the reaction of Government thereon ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY) : (a) Reports received indicate that most of the cigarette companies had suspended clearances of cigarettes temporarily after the budget, even though the Government had relaxed the condition relating to printing of length on cigarette packages in respect of pre-budget stock of cigarettes and a time limit of one month ending 31.3.87 had been given for obtaining approval of surface design on cigarette packages.

(b) The cigarette manufacturers had also asked for relaxation of the condition relating to printing of the length of cigarettes on the cigarette packages in respect of post-budget production and clearance of cigarettes and had sought extension of time-limit for obtaining approval of surface designs on cigarette packages.

(c) The Government have permitted clearance of cigarettes without printing of length on cigarette packages upto 31.3.87 and have also extended the time-limit for obtaining approval of surface design on cigarette packages upto 15.4.1987.

Loans Extended by Banks in Hill States/ Regions

6027. PROF. NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the nationalised Banks have played any significant role in the extension of financial assistance/loans for self employment and other anti-poverty programmes in hill States/Regions ;

(b) if so, the credit deposit ratio of Punjab National Bank, United Commercial Bank, State Bank of India and its associated banks and other major banks operating in the Hill States/Regions ; and

(c) the percentage of loans/financial assistance extended by those Banks under the category of differential rate of interest in each of Hill States/Regions ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY) : (a) The public sector banks have played a significant role in providing credit assistance under various credit-linked anti-poverty programmes, and the scheme for providing Self Employment for Educated Unemployed Youth throughout the Country including hilly areas.

(b) and (c). Details of credit deposit ratio of the State Bank of India and its associates, Punjab National Bank, UCO Bank and other Public sector banks and the percentage of their outstanding advances under the Differential Rate of Interest scheme to their total outstanding advances in the hill States/Districts are being collected and would be laid on the Table of the House to the extent possible.

Change in the Freight Equalisation Policy

6028. SHRI R.P. DAS : Will the Ministry of PLANNING be pleased to state :

(a) whether West Bengal State Government has urged upon the Union Government to change the policy of freight equalisation as it adversely affects the economy of that State and no compensation is granted to the State for such loss of locational advantages ; and

(b) if so, decision of the Government ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI SUKH RAM) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Government have already accepted in principle the recommendations made by the National Transport Policy Committee (Pande Committee) to phase out gradually the existing freight equalisation in the case of cement and steel, subject to subsidisation of transport for remote, inaccessible and isolated areas.

In the case of cement phasing out of freight equalisation has already commenced with the introduction of partial de-control with effect from 28-2-1982.