

the producing countries have been unable so far to arrive at a comprehensive commodity agreement to stabilize the tea market. India has been regulating exports under the Tea Marketing Plan 1985 with the objective of maintaining stable domestic prices, while optimising export earnings.

#### Opening of Branches of Banks in Asian Countries

1788. SHRI YASHWANTRAO GADAKH PATIL : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether various public sector banks have planned to open their branches in several Asian countries; and

(b) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY) : (a) and (b) Reserve Bank have received some proposals from a few public sector banks for opening branches in some Asian Countries. However, without clearance from Reserve Bank and the host countries, these cannot be said to form part of Banks' plans for opening branches abroad.

#### Export Markets in Handicrafts

1789. SHRI YASHWANTRAO GADAKH PATIL : Will the Minister of SUPPLY AND TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that India is losing its various export markets in handicrafts due to strong competition from several Asian countries ; and

(b) if so, the steps being taken to recapture the export markets ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SUPPLY AND TEXTILES (SHRI CHANDRASHEKHAR SINGH) : (a) and (b) Although India faces competition from several Asian countries in the field of handicrafts, the recent trend of export of Indian handicrafts do not indicate any overall loss of export markets. The exports of India handicrafts have risen from Rs. 345.92 crores (Prov.) in

1683-84 to Rs. 397.37 crores (Prov.) in 1984-85. However, to increase India's share in the imports of handicrafts in other countries, greater stress is being given on holding exhibitions of Indian handicrafts specially in West European and North American countries. To promote exports of handicrafts a separate Export Promotion Council for carpets has already been set up and another for other handicrafts is being formed. Recently a Sales-cum-Study tea of carpet exporters visited Japan, Hongkong, South Korea and Singapore.

[*Translation*]

#### Increase in Amount of Interim Relief Pending Finalisation of Fourth pay Commission Report

1790 : SHRI VIJOY KUMAR YADAV :  
PROF. P. J. KURIEN :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether pending finalisation of report of Fourth Pay Commission, Government propose to increase the amount of interim relief :

(b) if not, the reasons therefor ?

(c) whether employees have also demanded another instalment of interim relief ; and

(d) if so, the reaction of Government there to ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY) : (a) and (b) The interim relief to the Central Government employees granted recently was based on the recommendations of the Fourth Pay Commission. The question of increase in the amount of interim relief can only be considered on any further recommendation of the Fourth Pay Commission.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. Representations, however, have been received from the Unions/Associations of employees stating that the amount of interim relief now