

Delay in changes in the production Technology of Bharat Ophthalmic Glass Project

2968. SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether delay to bring changes in the production technology of the Centre owned Bharat Ophthalmic Glass Project from the present batch production system to continuous process will cost the State exchequer Rs. Six crores; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b). The Bharat Ophthalmic Glass Limited (BOGL) started commercial production in 1968 using the Batch Process Technology for manufacturing ophthalmic blanks. Because of the inherent inadequacies of the technology, however, B.O.G.L. has been attempting to switch over to the Continuous Process Technology. A technical team was sent abroad in 1974 to explore the possibility of obtaining know-how in this field. Unfortunately the technology is closely held by a few multi-national companies, and it has not been easy to obtain the new technology. Recently, however, BOGL has received a number of offers for foreign collaboration, which are under examination. B.O.G.L. has also been exploring the possibility of developing the technology indigenously in collaboration with Central Glass and Ceramic Research Institute and with financial participation by the National Development Research Corporation. It is not possible to quantify the loss, if any, on account of the non-availability of a better technology at an earlier point of time.

Proposal to stop Gambling

2969. SHRI BAPUSAHEB PARULEKAR: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to stop gambling at all levels in the country;

(b) whether Government propose to ban horse races and State lotteries in the country by making suitable changes in the Prevention of Gambling Act; and

(c) if so, when Government propose to make such changes in law?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI S. D. PATIL): (a) and (b). "Gambling", which covers horse-racing too, is a State subject. The State Governments are, therefore, competent to legislate in these matters. However, to deal with the offences connected with gambling effectively, the Central Government propose drafting a comprehensive model legislation covering various forms of gambling for consideration by the States.

As regards State Lotteries, the Government propose to take up legislation to regulate the conduct of these lotteries.

(c) Both the proposals referred to above are in a preliminary stage. It is not possible to indicate when they will be finalised in the form of legislation, particularly as the model Bill will have to be adopted by the State Governments who alone are competent.

Covering of U.P. and H.P. Under Vulnerable Areas

2970. SHRI YUVRAJ: Will the Minister of SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the border areas of Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh etc. are covered under vulnerable areas;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Bihar is not covered under the above programme; and

(c) whether it is also a fact that when national highway No. 31 (Kodha-Katihar-Labha) of Bihar will be linked with national highway No

34 (Harish Chanderpur of Bengal) then far flung areas will be linked with these highways?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN CHARGE OF THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT (SHRI CHAND RAM): (a) and (b). For the purpose of construction of roads, no area has so far been declared as "vulnerable area".

(c) This road, when constructed, would be a State road and it is the responsibility of the States concerned.

Cooptex Cloth lying Unsold

2971. SHRI C. N. VISVANATHAN: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that textiles valued at several lakhs of rupees of Cooptex cloth is lying in stock unsold causing hardship to the Handloom Industry;

(b) whether Government have taken any steps to promote and improve the sale of such cloth in United States of America and the United Kingdom;

(c) if so, the outcome of such steps; and

(d) the nature of emergency steps taken by Government to relieve the industry of its present stagnation?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES):

(a) It is reported that stocks of handloom cloth worth Rs. 14 crores were carried by Cooptex in September/October, 1977.

(b) and (c). Two delegations, one to USA, UK and France and the other to Singapore, Malaysia, Japan and Indonesia were sponsored by the Government of Tamil Nadu. They have secured export orders worth Rs. 1 crore. Further exports may also be generated.

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(d) The Government of Tamil Nadu had sanctioned special rebate and Cooptex also extended such rebate at varying rates from time to time during the period from 3-9-1977 to 22-11-1977. This would have given some relief to the handloom industry.

Annual Expenditure incurred by the Salt Commissioner's Organisation

2972. SHRI K. T. KOSALRAM: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the total annual expenditure incurred by the Salt Commissioner's Organisation from 1948 to 1976;

(b) how is this expenditure met;

(c) whether any review has been undertaken to study the essentiality of such an expenditure taking into account the objective for which this organisation was set up; and

(d) if so, review has been undertaken, would Government restructure the set up to make the organisations an instrument for the development of salt industry?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES):

(a) Rs. 25,02,87,468.

(b) The expenditure is met out of cess proceeds collected in accordance with Section 4(a) of the Salt Cess Act, 1953.

(c) and (d). The Review is in progress.

तेनूघाट सुपर थर्मल पावर स्टेशन

2973. श्री रामदास सिंह: क्या ऊर्जा मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) तेनूघाट सुपर थर्मल पावर स्टेशन का निर्माण कार्य कब शुरू होगा ; और