

Non-availability of Permitted Explosives affects Mining Activities

2038. SHRI AHMED M. PATEL:

SHRI SUKHDEO PRASAD VERMA:

Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that mining activities have been severely hit as a result of the non-availability of "permitted explosives"; and

(b) if so, the action taken by the Government to solve the problem?

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY (SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) Yes, Sir. Due to reduced availability of permitted explosives as a result of a strike at the Gomia Explosives factory, the loss of coal production was approximately one million tonnes. Production of certain other minerals such as copper, zinc, lead etc. was also affected.

(b) The procurement of explosives from other suppliers was stepped up to the extent possible. Apart from this, a new explosives plant at Korba is likely to go into production in Dec., 1977. Steps have also been taken to set up additional explosives manufacturing capacity to meet the needs of the coal industry.

Tapping of Private Calls by C. B. I. Police

2039. DR. BAPU KALDATY: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Central Bureau of Investigation and other branches of Central or local police authorities are allowed to tape private telephones;

(b) whether Government have received complaints in this regard; and

(c) what remedial action has been taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI DHANIK LAL MANDAL): (a) Sub-Section 2 of Section 5 of Indian Telegraph Act, 1885 empowers the Central Government or a State Government or any officer specially authorised in this behalf by the Central Government or a State Government to order, under certain specified circumstances, interception of telephonic conversation. Central Government have not authorised CBI or other branches of Central police to tap private telephones.

(b) Government's attention has been drawn to a news-item published in "Times of India" dated 19-10-77 regarding alleged tapping of telephones of Members of Parliament belonging to Janata Party. Enquiries have revealed that the allegations are unfounded.

(c) Does not arise.

Plight of Handloom Weavers

2040. SHRI KUSUMA KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the plight of three crores of handloom weavers today is mainly due to (i) ineffective Regulatory Laws which could not check the unauthorised growth of powerloom sector (ii) inability of the Government in supplying the necessary inputs like yarn dyes and other chemicals at rates at par with those of mills along with the necessary credit facilities; and

(b) if so, what steps Government have taken so far in order to enable this cottage industry of our country to survive and succeed?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b). There are at present 3.8 million handlooms in the country and nearly 10 million people are dependent on this cottage industry for their livelihood. To a certain degree, this industry has been handicapped by the

growth of both authorised and unauthorised powerlooms which produce some of the varieties reserved for the handloom sector. This industry is also affected from time to time by fluctuations in the prices of yarn particularly Cotton Yarn, and of dyes and chemicals.

Government have taken a number of measures to develop the handloom industry and its weavers. 21 Intensive Development and 21 Export Production Projects have been set up under the handloom development programme. In these projects, the implementing agency, usually State Handloom Development Corporation, makes arrangements for the supply of inputs and credit, and for under-writing the marketing of finished goods of the weavers covered by the Project. In addition, a massive programme for revitalisation and restoration of working of dormant co-operative Societies, besides formation of new ones has been launched. As many as 1,00,000 weavers have been brought in to the Coop. fold in 1976-77, and it is proposed to bring 4,00,000 weavers in Cooperatives during 1977-78. Share capital assistance to the Apex Marketing Organisations for strengthening the infra-structure of marketing channels and for opening of new showrooms and retail outlets have been provided in the current years budget for the development of handloom programme. Centres for pre-loom and post-loom processing are also being set up in the country to improve the strength and look of the handloom fabrics.

A scheme of production of Janata Cloth has been under implementation since October 1976 and a target of 100 million metres per annum to be reached by March, 1978 has been fixed for this sector for the benefit of the handloom weavers.

Government is also having a constant dialogue with the representatives of textile industry, N.T.C., Co-operative Spinning Mills, etc. in order to

contain the prices of essential raw materials required by the handloom industry.

Arrangements have been evolved in consultation with the State Governments and the industry for State Apex Organisations to lift yarn directly from the mills in bulk, at ex-mill rates. This would give some relief in case of increase in open market prices of yarn, and/or difficulties of availability.

Organised Credit for handloom weavers has to be secured either through the R.B.I. Scheme of handloom finance, in respect of Co-operative Societies of handloom weavers, or through Commercial Banks, for weavers outside the co-operative fold. The volume of R.B.I. Credit has been stepped up from Rs. 20 crores in 1976-77 to Rs. 40 crores in the current year, and is proposed to be further increased. Commercial Bank lending is also being stepped up by linking weavers with the State Handloom Development Corporations in increasing measure.

The provision for the above programmes in the Central Plan, has been doubled from Rs. 10 crores in 1976-77 to Rs. 20 crores in 1977-78.

Take over of Jute Industry facing crisis in West Bengal

2041. SHRI SHYAM SUNDER GUPTA: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that Jute Industry in West Bengal has been facing crisis;

(b) whether production of Jute was not satisfactory during the last 6 months and if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether Government propose to take over the Jute Industry in view of the crisis in that industry and if not, the reasons therefor?