

Collection of Revenue from North Bengal

5016. SHRI PIUS TIRKEY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state how much revenue is collected by Union Government from different sources from North Bengal comprising five districts e.g. Jalpaiguri, Cooch-Bihar, Darjeeling, West Dinajpur and Maldah?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI ZULFIQUARULLAH): Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Universal adoption of Farm Levy proposed by Government of West Bengal

5017. SHRI A. BALA PAJANOR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of the Minister has been drawn to the proposed farm levy by Government of West Bengal as seen from the Budget speech of the State Finance Minister;

(b) the salient features of the levy proposed; and

(c) the reaction of Government thereon and the possibilities of universal adoption of this method of raising resources by all States including the Centre?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI H. M. PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A Task Force has been set up by the State Government to formulate the details of the proposed farm holding tax and draw up appropriate legislative proposals.

(c) Agricultural taxation is a State subject and other States can be expected to consider the West Bengal measure only when its full details become available.

Service conditions of Employees of Public Sector Undertakings

5018. SHRI HALIMUDDIN AHMED: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have given instructions to all public sector undertakings, which are working as corporate bodies, not to negotiate with their respective employees for their service conditions;

(b) whether it is a fact that Supreme Court in the case of Hindustan Automobiles Ltd., a public undertaking decided that the service conditions of the employees in public sector undertakings should be fixed on the basis of industry-cum-region as the wages prevailing in the private sector undertakings; and

(c) if so, whether Government propose to adopt the policy as laid down by Supreme Court in case of all Public Undertakings Managements?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI H. M. PATEL): (a) No instruction of the type referred to has been issued. However, Government have decided that till a policy on incomes and wages is formulated on the basis of the recommendations of the Study Group on Wages, Incomes and Prices under the Chairmanship of Shri S. Bhoothalingam set up in October, 1977, no wage agreement should be finalised by any Public Sector Enterprise without getting the specific approval of Government.

(b) and (c). Presumably, the Hon'ble Member is referring to the verdict of the Supreme Court given in October, 1966, in respect of the workers in Hindustan Antibiotics Ltd., a Public Enterprise. The relevant extract from the judgement in question is given in the attached statement. Government keep in view the principles enunciated in the judgement as well as other relevant factors like the need to bring about rationalisation in the emoluments structure of the employees in the

different Public Enterprises while considering proposals from the Public Enterprises for the revision of wages of their employees. In most of these cases, formal wage settlements, spelling out the pay and allowances admissible, are entered into by the Managements with the workers.

Statement

By and large, therefore, the acceptance of the principle of region-cum-industry will be more conducive to industrial relations than that of the Governmental wage structure framed on an All India basis. Nor can we appreciate the argument that the principle of region-cum-industry will lead to discriminations. But, if the expression "labour force" is understood to mean the labour force employed in both the sectors, the alleged discrimination between different parts of the public sector will disappear, for, as far as possible, the labour to whichever sector it may belong in a particular region and in a particular industry, will be treated on equal basis.

On a consideration of the relevant material placed before us, we have come to the conclusion that the same principles evolved by the industrial adjudication in regard to private sector undertakings will govern those in the public sector undertakings having a distinct corporate existence.

Establishments maintained Abroad by Public Undertakings

5019. SHRI S. S. SOMANI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of establishments maintained abroad by public undertakings and agencies on the pattern of Indian Missions; and

(b) the amount of foreign exchange spent by these undertakings on these establishments during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE. (SHRI H. M. PATEL): (a) According to information obtained out of 157 public enterprises, 23 have foreign offices.

(b) The information is given in the Statement laid on the Table of the House. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-1976/78].

Financial irregularity by United Commercial Bank, Calcutta

5020. DR. BIJOY MONDAL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) is the Government aware that Chairman of United Commercial Bank has allowed some loans to be granted on political considerations without adhering to the Banking norms;

(b) is it a fact that a loan of about Rs. 60 lakhs has been given to Himalaya Paper Board Industries Ltd. by the Calcutta branch of the Bank;

(c) is it also a fact some Ex-Ministers of Congress Government have interest in the said company;

(d) if yes, the name of Ministers concerned;

(e) whether the amount of loan has been recovered; and

(f) if not, the present position of the account?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI H. M. PATEL): (a) to (f). No advance has been granted by the United Commercial Bank to Himalaya Paper Board Industries Ltd. However, three concerns viz. (i) Himalaya Paper and Board Mills (P) Ltd., (ii) P. G. Paper Mills (P) Ltd., and (iii) Himalaya Paper (Machinery) (P) Ltd., in which Shri Parimal Ghosh an ex-Minister of the Congress Government is the promoter Director enjoy certain credit facilities at the Bank's Dum Dum (Calcutta) Branch. All the three concerns are constituted by Shri Ghosh and his family mem-