

details of name, address and seizure made in the case of each search. However, if the Hon'ble Member desires to have information about a particular search, the same will be furnished.

(d) Detailed investigation in these cases is in progress and action will be taken against the defaulters evaders according to Law.

#### Stabilisation of wholesale prices

741. SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) rate of rise or fall in percentage terms of the wholesale price index numbers for all commodities and food articles separately; month-wise from April to October, 1980;

(b) what is the basis of his assertion that the process of stabilisation of wholesale prices has started; and

(c) what is the nature of this stabilisation?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI MAGANBHAI BAROT): (a) The monthly percentage variations in the All-Commodities Wholesale Price Index and Food Articles with 1970-71 as base, for the period, April-October 1980 are given below:

	Percentage Variations over the previous month	
	All Commodities Index	Food Articles Index
April 1980	+0.6	(-)0.4
May 1980	+2.5	+3.1
June 1980	+3.0	+1.8
July 1980	+4.1	+3.6
August 1980	+1.0	+1.1
September 1980(P)	+1.0	(-)1.4
October 1980(P)	+0.6	+2.0

P=Provisional data.

(b) and (c). The rate of inflation as measured by the Wholesale Price Index in the recent 3 months, August-October 1980 has come down to 1.1 per cent from 3.2 per cent in the preceding 3 months. The General Index of Wholesale Prices has fallen by 1.2 and 1.7 per cent during the two weeks ended 25.10.1980 and 1-11-1980—the latest available.

The modernisation in inflationary pressures is the result of the abatement of seasonal factors and anti-inflationary measures already taken by the Government. The outlook of agricultural production is good and industrial output has started pulling up. While it is not possible to insulate the economy from imported inflation and the continued rise in the prices of oil and oil products, the falling trend in prices augurs well and price situation is expected to show a reasonable degree of stability in the coming months.

#### Setting up of pelletisation plant at Kudremukh

742. SHRI R. Y. GHORPADE: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether two foreign Governments have evinced interest in setting up pelletisation plant at Kudremukh; if so, facts thereof;

(b) whether costly machinery and components would become rusty if the Kudremukh plant is not worked to full capacity;

(c) whether a labour force of 2,000 is almost idle and the annual loss on the project is likely to be rupees 100 crores;

(d) whether he has been successful in his visit to Romania in October and the Romanian Government have agreed to participate in setting up an integrated steel plant in India with iron ore available from Kudremukh project; and

(e) if so, details thereof?

**THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND STEEL AND MINES (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE):** (a) Only the Government of Romania has evinced interest in setting up a Pelletisation Plant at Mangalore based on Kudremukh concentrate. As offer has been received in this regard from a Romanian State Organisation by the Kudremukh Iron Ore Co. Ltd.

(b) and (c). Only one out of the four production lines has been commissioning and testing of the equipment of personnel required for commissioning and testing of the equipment has been engaged. The Plant has not yet gone into commercial production.

The question of the machinery and components becoming rusty and the project incurring loss does not, therefore, arise at present.

(d) and (e). No offer has been made by the Government of Romania for setting up an integrated steel Plant in India based on Kudremukh Iron Ore concentrate.

**Refusal of State Bank in Delhi to convert Gulf money into Indian currency**

743. **SHRI R. Y. GHORPADE:** Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether State Bank Authorities at Delhi Airport refused to convert Gulf money into Indian currency when 600 passengers arriving from Gulf countries on 20th October requested for it;

(b) were the passengers put to great difficulties and they were unable to go to their homes in various parts of Northern India; and

(c) what action has been taken and what steps ensured for elimination of such situations arising in future?

**THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI MAGANBHAI BAROT):** (a) to (c). State Bank of India has reported that it had to stop converting certain currencies into Indian currency temporarily but in order to avoid hardship to repatriates specially from the Middle East, the SBI has resumed purchasing quantities of some of these currencies. Above certain amounts the bank is prepared to accept these notes on collection basis and pay the proceeds on realisation from abroad without any restriction.

**Tourist bookings on Indian Airlines**

744. **SHRI R. Y. GHORPADE:** Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) what were the tourist bookings on Indian Airlines this winter season as compared to previous two seasons;

(b) has there been a sharp decline in the tourist bookings on Indian Airlines this year resulting in a drop of about 10 per cent and promoting Indian Airlines to cancel some of its flights,

(c) have efforts been made to find out the reasons; and

(d) if so, what are those and remedial measures proposed?

**THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI A. P. SHARMA):** (a) to (d). The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

**Excise duty on beedies**

745. **SHRI E. K. IMBICHICHAVA:**  
**SHRI K. A. RAJAN:**

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the hardship to the Kerala Dinesh