

(c) if so, the nature of the enquiry conducted, its findings and the action taken by the Government, if any?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI MAGANBHAI BAROT): (a) Certain complaints against the Chairman, Champaran Kshetriya Gramin Bank, Motihari (Bihar) alleging corrupt practices and allegations of casteism in the matters of recruitment were received by the Government.

(b) and (c). The Sponsor Bank of this Regional Rural Bank, the Central Bank of India, has inquired into the allegations. Preliminary enquiries revealed that the Chairman did not enjoy a good reputation and there were several complaints of his having asked for and accepting illegal gratification. In view of this, it was proposed to transfer the Chairman and Government have already notified on 4-3-1981 the appointment of another Chairman. The Central Bank of India have also reported that they will initiate departmental action against the said Chairman for the irregularities which could be substantiated in a departmental inquiry.

Export of Spices

7175. SHRI XAVIER ARAKAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) total quantity of spices exported, which are the countries importing spices from India, total amount earned by exporting spices during the current year; and

(b) whether Government propose to form "Spices Development Authority" to streamline the export, quality and better prices?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KHURSHED ALAM KHAN): (a) A total of 57,321 M.T. of Spices including cardamom has been exported upto 28th February, 1981. The total value realised is Rs. 891 million*. The countries that imported

spices from India are U.K., France, Italy, Netherlands, West Germany, Belgium, Denmark, U.S.S.R., Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Poland, G.D.R., Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Austria, Switzerland, Sweden, Norway, Spain, Cyprus, Greece, Ethiopia. Y.A.R., Abu Dhabi, Dubai, A.R.E. (Egypt), Iran, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain Is., Somalia, Sudan, Kuwait, Qatar, Syria, Muscat, Oman, Israel, Iraq, Lebanon, YMN, P.D. Rep., Jordan, Libya, U.A.E., Bangla Desh, Nepal, Afghanistan, Hong Kong, Singapore, Japan, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Malaysia, Seychelles, Kenya, Tanzania Rep., Nigeria, Malawi, Zambia, Canary Island, Sierra Leone, Australia, Fiji Is, New Zealand, U.S.A., Canada, Trinidad.

(b) There is no such proposal with the Government.

Loss in Bangalore-Based Public Sector Units

7176. SHRI K. MALLANNA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state whether Government have made any assessment regarding the aggregate loss due to the 77-day old strike in the Bangalore-based public sector units?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SAWAISINGH SISODIA): A detailed assessment regarding the aggregate loss due to the 77-days' strike in the Bangalore-based public sector units has not yet been made. The loss of production in the 5 public enterprises in Bangalore is however estimated at Rs. 2 crores per day approximately.

Mining of Potassium and other Salts Found in the Tsokar Lake of Ladakh

7177. SHRI P. NAMGYAL: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that huge quantity of crude Potassium and

*These figures are Prov.

other salts have been found in the Tsokar lake of Ladakh;

(b) if reply to (a) above be in the affirmative, the total estimated quantity of potassium and other salts separately, the purity percentage and total estimated value of each of the salt; and

(c) what steps Government have taken to mine these salts?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND STEEL AND MINES (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Crude Potassium and other salts have been found in the Tsokar Lake of Ladakh. The salts occur in the form of concentrated brine, as precipitates at the lake bottom and in the efflorescent zone around the lake.

(b) Out of the estimated quantity of 0.78 million tonnes of total salts dissolved in the Brine, 0.2 million tonnes are of Potassium Chloride, 0.38 million tonnes of Sodium Sulphate, 0.10 million tonnes of Sodium Chloride and 0.10 million tonnes are of Magnesium Sulphate. Out of about 0.65 million tonnes of precipitated salts, estimated at the lake bottom, 0.1870 million tonnes are of Potassium Sulphate, 0.2175 million tonnes of Sodium Sulphate, 0.345 million tonnes of Sodium Chloride and the rest are of Magnesium and Calcium Salts.

In the Efflorescent zone around the lake, about 7.8 million tonnes of salts are estimated out of which 2 million tonnes may be of Potash salts.

Values of the salts estimated by the Fertiliser Corporation of India around 1976, in respect of the salts in the Brine amount to Rs. 1,023 million for total salts including Rupees 146 million for the Potassium Chloride, Rupees 852 million for Sodium Sulphate and Rupees 25 million for Sodium Chloride.

The value of the precipitated salts, estimated by the Fertilizer Corporation of India, amount to Rupees 709.53 million which include Rupees

224.4 million for Potassium Sulphate, Rupees 476.63 million for Sodium Sulphate and Rupees 8.5 million for Sodium Chloride.

(c) Because of the severe logistic problems and difficulties in transportation of the salts over long distances from a very high altitude area where the lake is situated, and limited working period and because of the inclement weather, it is considered uneconomic to extract the salts from the lake waters.

Increase in Project costs of Public Sector Undertakings

7178. DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOIR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether due to delay in taking policy decision and execution of work the project costs of some ongoing major Public Sector Undertakings have gone up;

(b) if so, the details of such projects whose costs of execution have gone up; and

(c) what steps Government propose to take to ensure stability in project cost in future projects?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SAWAI SINGH SISODIA):

(a) and (b) The completion of a project within the allotted time and cost estimates depend on a number of factors like availability of infra-structural facilities, power, transportation, besides availability of infra-structural industrial raw materials. These factors also affect supply of equipment for the project. Some major projects which have been delayed with considerable cost overruns include Bhilai Steel Plant (2.5 MT to 4.0 MT), Korba Aluminium Project (Smelter & Fabrication), Kerala Newsprint Project, Nagaland Pulp and Paper Project, Cochin Refineries Ltd.—Secondary Processing Facilities, and Bhatgaon Project in the Western Coalfields Ltd.