

(a) the work of the public sector aluminium plant in Ratnagiri district of the backward region of Konkan in Maharashtra being held up for years while new aluminium or alumina plants are being cleared in different States ; and

(b) whether Government propose setting up a time limit for commissioning the aluminium plant in Ratnagiri district ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND STEEL AND MINES (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) and (b) . The Ratnagiri Aluminium Project which was sanctioned in 1974 could not be taken up for implementation owing to the then financial constraints. A review of the project has since been conducted on the basis of updated cost estimates and it has been found that the project as then conceived would not be economically viable because of the following reasons :

- (a) low scale of operation.
- (b) obsolete technology.
- (c) high cost of power.
- (d) inadequate infrastructure resulting in high cost of material transportation.

The project may become viable if the plants are scaled up to currently economic sizes. It would, however, be necessary to establish adequate reserves of bauxite for sustaining an alumina plant of the requisite capacity. It has, therefore, been decided to conduct further explorations and re-assess the bauxite reserves in the area. Depending on the final picture of the bauxite reserves, a decision on taking up fresh feasibility study for the project will be taken. Since the techno-economic feasibility is not yet clear it is not feasible to set a time limit for commissioning the Ratnagiri Project.

News-item captioned "the case of cardboard Kolhapur Chappals"

1622. SHRI R.K. MHALGI : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have noticed the report in the "Statesman", New Delhi dated 18th July, 1980 under the caption "The case of cardboard Kolhapur Chappals" ;

(b) what action Government has taken against the "S.P.S. International Delhi", the defaulting firm ;

(c) what action Government has taken against the Inspector of Export Promotion

Council and against the concerned Customs Official for the reported wrong declaration about the despatch of the consignment Form Delhi Air Port ; and

(d) if no action taken so far, the reasons thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KHURSHED ALAM KHAN) : (a) to (d) : Yes, Sir.

The matter is under investigation by CBI. In the mean time, the firm have been suspended from the simplified payment scheme for payment of cash compensatory support. Action has also been initiated by the concerned Leather Export Promotion Council to de-register the firm. The Inspecting Officer of the Export Inspection Agency who was found responsible for certifying the consignment has also been placed under suspension.

As regards action against the concerned Customs Officer, no such involvement has yet been brought to the notice of the concerned customs authorities by the Delhi Police/CBI. Appropriate action will be taken on receipt of Police Investigation report.

Functioning of Rural Banks in Mayurbhanj, Orissa

1623. SHRI MANMOHAN TUDU : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the number and names of the rural banks functioning at present in the Mayurbhanj District of Orissa ;

(b) the number of such banks opened during 1978-79, 1979-80 and 1980-81 in that district ; and

(c) whether Government have any proposal to open some more rural banks in this tribal district during 1981-82?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI MAGANBHAI BAROT) : (a) and (b) . A regional rural bank viz, Baitarni Gramya Bank has already been set up on 23-6-1980 covering the districts of Keonjhar and Mayurbhanj of Orissa. However, presumably the Hon'ble Member has in mind the number of branches of commercial banks functioning in rural and Semi-Urban areas of Mayurbhanj District

of Orissa. The relevant data in this regard are set out below .

	Rural Centre	Semi-Urban Centre	Total
1. Number of branches functioning as at the end of August, 1980 .	29	9	38
2. Number of branches opened during			
1978 .	7	..	7
1979 .	1	1	2
1980 (Upto August) .	6	1	7

(c) : In terms of the current branch licensing policy of the Reserve Bank of India, branch expansion efforts of the commercial banks during 1979-81 are primarily to be directed towards opening of branches at unbanked rural and Semi-Urban centres in districts having poorer coverage than one branch for every 20,000 people in the rural and Semi-Urban areas. Out of the 71 rural and Semi-Urban branches required in Mayurbhanj district of Orissa in terms of the above norm, as at the end of August, 1980, 38 rural and Semi-Urban branches were functioning in this district. The remaining 33 branches are expected to be opened before the end of 1981 in consultation with the State Government.

Loan Granted by I.D.B.I. to National Development Bank of Sri Lanka

1624. SHRI D.S.A. SIVA PRAKASAM : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the I.D.B.I. has granted a loan of 5 crores to the National Development Bank of Sri Lanka to finance import of Indian engineering goods ; and

(b) if so, what are the value of such goods exported so far and the names of exporters and the nature of such goods ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI MAGANBHAI BAROT) (a) : Yes, Sir. IDBI has sanctioned in June,

1980 a line of credit for Indian rupees 5 crores to the National Development Bank of Sri Lanka for financing Export of Indian capital and engineering goods to Sri Lanka.

(b) No goods have so far been exported to Sri Lanka, under this line of credit.

Private Postal Service involved in Black Money Transactions

1625. SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Intelligence wing of the Income-tax department has detected a clandestine private postal service involved in transactions of black money in crores ; and

(b) if so, the details and action taken against the persons involved in this racket ?

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

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) As a result of simultaneous searches carried out in different places the department has seized prima-facie unaccounted cash of Rs. 6,56,027 and other documents indicating transfer of 4 crores in the shape of hundis. Preliminary examination of seized documents indicates that this organisation is involved in the transfer of approximately 25 crores of rupees during a year.

The incriminating materials seized during the search have been sent to the concerned Commissioners of Income-tax for utilisation in assessment proceedings according to Law.

2 तथा 5 रुपए के करेंसी नोटों
'की छपाई

1626. श्री निहाल सिंह : क्या वित्त मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या यह सच है कि वाटर मार्क कागज के अभाव में सिक्योरिटी प्रेस, नासिक महाराष्ट्र में 2 रुपए तथा पांच रुपए के करेंसी नोटों की छपाई रोक दी गई है; और

(ख) यदि हां, तो प्रेस को समय पर कागज की सप्लाई न करने के क्या कारण हैं और इस से कितनी वित्तीय हानि हुई है ?