

World bank aid for oil exploration

3861. SHRI ERA ANBARASU: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any special World Bank aid is being obtained purely for oil exploration; and

(b) if so, what is the quantum and nature of loans sanctioned?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI R. VENKATARAMAN): (a) and (b). Discussions are continuing with the World Bank for assistance for the Krishna-Godavari Petroleum Exploration Project of the Oil and Natural Gas Commission. Dates for the appraisal by a World Bank Mission for this project are still to be fixed up. Details in respect of the project such as quantum and nature of assistance will be known only after the project is finally appraised by the Bank and negotiations are concluded between Government of India and the Bank in due course.

Memorandum from All India Weavers Federation

3862. SHRI K. A. RAJAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received a memorandum from the All India Weavers' Federation listing some of their problems and demands; and

(b) if so, the details and Government's reaction thereto?

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

(b) The memorandum listed demands like national wage and pension for weavers, debt relief to weavers for freeing them from the clutches of master weavers, better deal by the State Handloom Development Corporations, establishment of industrial type Handloom cooperatives, ISI

marking on every bundle of yarn by the mills, construction of houses and free education to the children of the weavers.

Government's reaction to the demands has been intimated to the Federation as under:—

(i) States like Andhra Pradesh and Kerala have already enacted minimum wages legislation. However, it is felt that efforts at up-gradation of the skills and productivity of the weavers so as to increase their wages would be more beneficial for them than the minimum wage legislation.

(ii) Since weavers in the cooperative sector, being the members of the society, are self-employed persons, the question of giving pension to them does not arise.

(iii) With encouragement given to the weavers to become members of Handloom Development Corporations and weavers cooperative societies, their dependence on master weavers is likely to be reduced.

(iv) The scheme for setting up of industrial type cooperatives with competent managerial staff has already been in operation in the handloom cooperative sector.

(v) While ISI marking on yarn is not compulsory, the cooperative spinning mills in Tamil Nadu have been marking the CSP on yarn produced by them. This step ensures certain minimum quality of yarn. The system could be adopted in Kerala also.

(vi) As regards housing for weavers, the HUDCO has several schemes for giving loan for construction of houses for economically weaker sections. The weavers can take advantage of this scheme.

(vii) Free compulsory primary education is already being provided all over the country. There does not appear to be a case for making any special education arrangement for handloom weavers.