

News-Item "Yarn Import a threat to Orissa sericulture"

3068. SHRI SHEO SHARAN VERMA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item "Yarn import a threat to Orissa Sericulture" appearing in the "Times of India, dated 10th February, 1982 highlighting the consideration of a proposal by the Central Silk Board to liberalise the import of superior quality of raw silk to facilitate export of silk goods when the indigenous silk yan industry is facing stiff competition in the domestic market as a result of increased availability of imported silk yarn of Chinese origin;

(b) if so, reaction of Government thereto; and

(c) action taken, with details thereof, to safeguard the interest of the Tribals?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. A. SANGMA): (a) to (c) Orissa produces mainly tassar silk and the Import Policy allows only 1 per cent of F.O.B value of silk fabrics exported for tassar raw silk import. The policy, therefore, substantially protects the indigenous tassar silk industry.

Third party exports by Hindustan Lever Ltd.

3069. SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 3374 on 11 December, 1981 regarding M/s. Hindustan Lever and state:

(a) whether Government are now taking action against Hindustan Lever Limited, a subsidiary of Unilever Limited U.K. for making third party exports without period permission of the Reserve Bank of India;

(b) whether the Inter-Ministrial decision in respect of the retention of foreign majority holdings in the company has been taken;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the basis on which it has been taken; and

(d) if not, the reasons for delay?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (d): The matter is still under consideration pending a decision on the representations made by the company for retention of 51 per cent non-resident equity under FERA Guidelines. While the Inter-Ministrial consultations have resulted in some delay, it is hoped that a final decision would be taken soon.

Meeting of Finance Minister with Representative of Farm sector

3070. SHRI P. K. KODIYAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether he had called a meeting of the representatives of the Farm Sector recently; and

(b) if so what are the details of the discussions took place; suggestions made by the representatives in order to help improve the production in this field and Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) (a) Yes, Sir

(b) The discussion was informal and ranged over a wide range of subjects. Among suggestions made by the representatives of farming community were removing bottlenecks in the provision of agricultural inputs, special attention to small farmers and landless agricultural labourers, more effective implementation of minimum wages legislation, realistic pricing policy for inputs and agricultural commodities, gradual elimination of middlemen who exploit the