

(c) The Bharat Leather Corporation have finalised the procedure and have commenced taking over the skins lying with Customs for processing and export.

(d) The matter is under examination.

Financial Assistance to I.T. Employees

974. SHRI P. RAJAGOPAL NAIDU: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the amount allotted this year to give advances to Income Tax employees for the construction of their houses; and

(b) whether there is any ceiling in the financial assistance given for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PATTABHI RAMA RAO): (a) The total amount allotted so far during the current financial year is Rs. 150.72 lakhs.

(b) Yes, Sir. The house building advance admissible to a Government servant is limited to a ceiling of Rs. 70,000/- or 75 months' basic pay of the applicant or cost of construction/flat or the repaying capacity of the applicant, whichever is the least.

U.K.'s Cooperation in Sophisticated areas of Defence-Oriented Research and Development

975. SHRI DAULAT RAM SARAN:

DR. A. U. AZMI:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether U.K. has agreed to enhance its cooperation in sophisticated areas of Defence-oriented research and development; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI R. VENKATARAMAN): (a) and (b). India and U.K. are now exploring the possibility of establishing cooperation in research and development related to defence.

As these discussions are still in a preliminary stage and as no definite agreement or programme have been finalised, it is premature to provide any details at the present juncture.

Import of Aluminium Despite Slack Demand

977. SHRI B. D. SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that despite slack demand there has been massive import of aluminium, seriously affecting the capacity utilisation and production by the indigenous industry and there is a heavy accumulation of stock;

(b) if so, the details thereof stating the reasons for resorting to imports, despite its slack demand; and

(c) the manner in which the accumulated stock is proposed to be disposed of?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. A. SANGMA): (a) and (b). Import of aluminium is canalised through Minerals and Metals Trading Corporation of India Ltd. The canalising agency has not made any imports so far during 1982-83. There is, however, a provision for limited imports of aluminium under the import policy for Registered Exporters, Capacity utilisation of indigenous producers of aluminium was 66 per cent during 1982-83 (upto August, 1982) as against 64 per cent in 1981-82. The stocks held by the producers and canalising