

Benefits of Nationalised Banks to vulnerable section in society

974. SHRI ARJUN SETHI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it was conceded in the Conference of Directors for the Nationalised Banks (Eastern Region) recently held at Bhubaneshwar that the benefits of Nationalised Banks especially to the vulnerable section in society have not been satisfactory on the whole; and

(b) if so, what concrete steps are envisaged to improve their functioning in future?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI MATI SUSHILA ROHTAGI): (a) and (b). It is presumed that the honourable Member is referring to the meeting of the Regional Consultative Committee on Nationalised Banks (Eastern Region) held in Bhubaneshwar on 24th May, 1973, presided over by the Union Finance Minister and attended amongst others by Ministers from the State Governments of Bihar and West Bengal. The Committee while noting the significant progress achieved in this region since nationalisation of banks, in opening bank offices in rural and unbanked areas and in extending credit to priority sectors benefiting mostly the small borrowers, considered the further steps to be taken for augmenting the availability of banking facilities in that region, particularly to the weaker sections of the society.

Request from Orissa Government for development of various Tourists Centres

975. SHRI ARJUN SETHI: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Orissa have recently requested the Central Government to develop (i)

Chilka Lake, (ii) Marine Drive between Puri and Konark, (iii) Hot Spring at Attri, and (iv) Swarn Chuda Hill and Khirachora Gopinath at Nilgiri in Balasore District as tourist centres; and

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (DR. KARAN SINGH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Evolution of Export Strategy to cover East European Countries

977. DR. H. P. SHARMA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether an integrated export strategy has been evolved to cover East European countries in view of the changing trade pattern in Europe;

(b) if so, the broad features thereof; and

(c) the contemplated extent of increase in export of each item annually under this strategy, and the present annual exports of these items to these countries?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI A. C. GEORGE): (a) and (b). Trade between India and East European countries is conducted on the basis of bilateral Trade and Payments Agreements entered into with them. Imports and Exports generally balance each other.

Within the framework of these agreements, every effort is made to increase and diversify our exports to East European countries.

(c) It is not possible to precisely forecast the expected increase in export of each item annually. However,

exports to East European countries are likely to increase in future. Export statistics of these items to this region are published by DGCI&S monthly as well as annually.

Token Strike by General Insurance Workers

978. DR. H. P. SHARMA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the General Insurance workers went on a token strike for a day on the 27th June, 1973 to press their demands; and

(b) the gist of the demands and Government's decision thereon?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRIMATI SUSHILA ROHTAGI): (a) A section of the employees went on a token strike on 27th June, 1973.

(b) The demand is for immediate standardisation of pay scales and service conditions independent of the report of the Mathrani Committee.

Discussions will be held by the GIC with the concerned unions from 16th August, 1973.

Loan from IDA for Telecommunication Project in India

979. DR. RANEN SEN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the International Development Association (IDA), an affiliate of World Bank has announced an 80 million Dollar loan to India for telecommunication project;

(b) if so, whether the loan is tied with any specific telecommunication project; and

(c) if so, the name of the project?

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THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YESHWANTRAO CHAVAN):

(a) An Agreement has been signed with the International Development Association for the Fifth credit of \$ 80 million to India for Telecommunications.

(b) and (c). This Credit would meet the foreign exchange requirements of the telecommunication development programme in the first two years of the Fifth Five Year Plan.

Circulation of Soiled Notes

980. DR. RANEN SEN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of soiled notes of different denomination are in circulation in India;

(b) if so, whether such circulation of notes has created a racket and a source of black money; and

(c) if so, the steps taken by Government to put a stop to the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI K. R. GANESH): (a) The notes in circulation comprise of fresh notes, re-issuable notes and soiled notes which are capable of withstanding further handling. Separate figures relating to amount of soiled notes of different denominations in circulation are not maintained. However, the amount of soiled notes in circulation is not large compared to the total amount of notes in circulation.

(b) Circulation of soiled notes which are capable of withstanding fresh handling has not created a racket and is not a source of black money.

(c) Soiled notes which are unfit for re-issue and are received back at Reserve Bank of India Offices are not put into circulation again, but are destroyed by the Bank in due course.