

for 100 per cent capital investment but it is routed through FIP Board and then we take a decision on it. But it is not 100 percent, I do not have full details about it.

[English]

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV : Mr. Speaker, Sir, part (d) of the answer says :

"Foreign equity participation in the private sector coal companies seeking to mine coal for captive consumption for power generation, iron and steel production and cement production is allowed subject to prior approval of FIPB on a case to case basis."

I would like to know from the Minister how many such cases have been sanctioned under the new economic policy.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH : In the private sector only Nippon Denro has been given approval.

SHRI HARADHAN ROY : Former Coal Minister, present Speaker, Shri Sangma, Shri Ajit Panja and Shri Jagdish Tytler have assured this House several times that the present coal mines would not be privatised. Has only amendment been made in this policy? Moreover, I would also like to know as to whether any public sector coal mine has been handed over to private sector, joint sector or any sector of the State? So far as I know about iron steel, the same tagging policy is being implemented in all mines. If tagging system is there then what is the logic behind privatisation?

SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH : The Government has so far not formulated any policy to hand over public sector coal mines to the private sector. Only captive mines and installation washeries have been entrusted to the private sector. There is no provision for privatisation.

SHRI RAMENDRA KUMAR : Earlier, coal industry was in the private sector. Then late Indira Gandhi Government nationalised this industry in two phases—coking coal and non-coking coal. Now the policy of the Government is that private party would be given a coal patch only be it in the name of captive mines, iron steel, cement or power. It has just been said on behalf of the Government that a coal mine has been handed over to a company. Whether any change has been carried out in the earlier policy of the Government in regard to coal industry? Whether private Party which has been given coal mine for captive power plant has started production? If so, whether power has been generated by that plant or not?

SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH : Power is being generated in the captive power plant. We have not formulated any new policy.

[English]

Collaboration with Indonesia

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*133. SHRI AJMEERA CHANDULAL :
SHRI S. RAMACHANDRA REDDY :

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Andhra Pradesh Government has submitted a detailed Project Proposal for technology upgradation of small scale industries functioning in that State in collaboration with Indonesia;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the other steps to be taken for promotion of technology upgradation among small scale industries through international co-operation?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) to (c). A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A Project Proposal prepared by the Andhra Pradesh Industrial and Technical Consultancy Organisation for promoting technology transfer from the Indonesian small and medium enterprises to the Indian Small Scale Industries and vice-versa was submitted to the Office of the Development Commissioner, Small Scale Industries, New Delhi for assistance under the Scheme "International Co-operation - Modernisation and Technology Upgradation".

(c) In order to promote technology upgradation and modernisation in the SSI sector, the Department of Small Scale Industries and Agro and Rural Industries is implementing the scheme of International Cooperation - Modernisation and Technology Upgradation under the "Plan" from the year 1995-96. Under this scheme, financial assistance is provided to National Small Industries Corporation, State agencies, Industries Associations and Export Promotion Councils for promoting modernisation and technology upgradation in the SSI sector.

SHRI AJMEERA CHANDULAL : Mr. Speaker, Sir, women in Andhra Pradesh are coming forward to start small scale industries. They need assistance for upgradation of their technology as well as a central place for selling their product.

May I, therefore, ask the following supplementaries?

What are the programmes designed to help backward women in rural and semi-urban areas through the development of entrepreneurial skills and when will they be implemented?

What are the steps taken to provide a suitable market place, which can also function as an information centre, for women entrepreneurs in a prime location for selling their product without having to take the help of middlemen?

SHRI MURASOLI MARAN : I appreciate the anxiety of the hon. Member that the SSI should work for the upliftment of women.

Sir, this Ministry has a programme for encouraging entrepreneurship of one lakh women for this year through NGOs. Recently, this programme has been initiated in Ahmedabad through a famous organisation called SEWA. This programme will continue.

[Translation]

SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT : Mr. Speaker, Sir, due to time constraint I would like to put up my point in brief. I would like to give an example about the anomalies. There are hundreds of units of refined oil and hydrogenated oil as well. The Government has withdrawn duty on hydrogenated oil. Oil is also helpful in making soap.

[English]

Excise Duty Structure

*134. SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have noticed any bottle-necks in the existing excise duty structure;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of the steps proposed to be taken to revamp the excise duty structure in the country?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) to (c). A statement is laid on the table of the House.

STATEMENT

(a) and (b). The present central excise duty structure is still characterised by multiplicity of tax rates, including ad-valorem and specific rates of duty; existence of a number of exemptions which are based on different criteria and; multiple nature of commodity taxes collected as basic excise duty, additional excise duty levied on specified products and various cesses also collected as additional excise duty under different enactments.

(c) Reform of the tax structure is a continuous and on-going process. A number of measures have been taken in the recent past to rationalise and simplify the excise duty structure and make it more transparent. These include reduction in the dispersal of rates, replacement of specific rates of duty with ad valorem rates on a number of commodities, withdrawal of a large number of enduse based exemptions, extension

of modvat scheme to petroleum products, capital goods, and processed textile fabrics and simplification of procedures. The Government is committed to further push forward this process of reform.

[Translation]

SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT : In case of hydrogenated oil production, refined oil of the same quality has been exempted from duty but you have imposed heavy duty on the soap stock which is made in the hydrogenated oil Unit simultaneously. There are so many anomalies of this type. If you have received such representations, will you remove these anomalies? Secondly, there are so many complications in excise duty that decisions of all collectors are different.

[English]

This is at the stage of production of refining the oil.

[Translation]

What will you do to simplify it?

MR. SPEAKER : Please ask the question.

SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT : There are two questions (a) and (b). There are two rates of taxes on the same product.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM : Shri Banwari Lal is a good friend of mine.

Now, how can I answer when a question is related to excise duty? The question is on Excise Duty Structure...(Interruptions) Yes, there are thousands of products including hydrogenated oil and refined oil. I will look into it and come back to you...(Interruptions)

SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT : I have quoted an example, Sir...(Interruptions) I can quote hundreds of examples. This is only one of them...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Listen to the answer, Shri Banwariji.

(Interruptions)

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM : If there are two rates of duties, what according to you, is on the same product, certainly that is an anomaly and it has to be removed. But I will have to look into the matter whether the products you are mentioning are one and the same or two different products and come back to you and tell you why there are two rates of duties and taxes.

MR. SPEAKER : Do you have any supplementary?

(Interruptions)

SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT : My second question is that there are various difficulties. What steps is the Government going to take to simplify the Excise Act duties? This is the main question. It is a very complicated Act. We do not understand.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM : In my Budget Speech, I have said that reforms on excise is high on our agenda.