

Role of Banks in implementation of 20-Point Economic Programme

3899. PROF. NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any comprehensive scheme has been drawn up by Government for the effective role of banks in the implementation of 20-Point Economic Programme; and

(b) if so, a brief outline of this scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN-CHARGE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE AND BANKING (SHRI PRANAB KUMAR MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b). Effective canalisation of the efforts of the public sector banks to assist weaker sections of the society under the 20-Point Economic Programme and their integration with the various legislative and administrative measures being taken by the State and Central Governments is receiving full attention of Government. Public Sector Banks have been advised, at the highest level, to evolve schemes for providing credit assistance to all categories of beneficiaries of the Programme, particularly the weaker sections of the society comprising the landless labourers, freed bonded labour, allottees of surplus land and other small and marginal farmers, handloom weavers and village artisans. Banks have evolved schemes to provide, on liberal and concessional terms, assistance for various productive endeavours of the different categories of people covered under the Programme.

Import of Drugs by Soviet Union

3900. SHRI RAM BHAGAT PASHWAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Soviet Union has offered to import drugs from our country; and

(b) if so, the facts thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI VISHWANATH PRATAP SINGH):

(a) Yes, Sir.

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(b) USSR is one of the biggest importers of drugs and pharmaceuticals from India; India's exports during 1975 were of the order of Rs. 5.5 crores. The 1976 trade protocol with USSR envisages larger exports of medicines and pharmaceuticals and raw materials thereof from India to USSR during 1976. The Indo-Soviet trade plan signed on 15th April 1976, for the period 1976-80 also provides for increased exports of those items from India.

Agreement for Import of Fish from Bangladesh

3901. SHRI R. N. BARMAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether an agreement has been reached for the import of fish from Bangladesh;

(b) if so, the terms of the agreement; and

(c) whether the imports will help to bring down high prevailing prices in the market?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI VISHWANATH PRATAP SINGH): (a) and (b). Yes Sir, During the Indo-Bangladesh Trade talks held in New Delhi in January, 1976, it was agreed that:—

(i) India would import fish worth Rs. 3.5 crores during 1976.

(ii) The price and the quantity to be purchased would be negotiated by the contracting agencies of the two countries.

(c) The import is expected to stabilise the fish prices in the local market.

Setting up of Pepper Authority

3902. SHRI VARKEY GEORGE: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the international seminar on pepper has recommended the