

(e) the steps taken or proposed to be taken by the Government to deal with the problems of sickness of SSI?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT) : (a) and (b) Recommendations of the Abid Hussain committee including the issue of dereservation were discussed in detail at the meeting of SSI Board held on 30th August, 1997 and as a follow up on the decision taken thereat, State Governments and several SSI associations were asked to express their opinion specifically on dereservation of certain identified items. While some of the SSI associations have opposed dereservation in general, some of them have also supported the recommendation for dereservation.

(c) On the advice of the Advisory Committee on Reservation, Government has decided to go in for dereservation only in a phased manner after careful consideration and keeping in view the overall interest of small scale sector.

(d) Government is not aware of any Committee in the name and style of Nagar Committee to safeguard the interests and growth of the small scale sector.

In order to promote healthy growth of the SSI sector, Government implements several policies and programmes specifically designed for the benefit of the Sector. These include policy measures for reservation of items for exclusive manufacture in the Small Scale Sector, price and purchase preference for SSI products in Government procurement, fiscal concessions in the form of excise relief and Government assisted schemes for infrastructure development, technology upgradation and modernisation and promotion of the entrepreneurship.

(e) Reserve Bank of India had appointed the Nayak Committee to examine the adequacy of institutional credit and allied issues in SSI sector. The Committee looked into, *inter-alia*, the aspects of sickness in the SSI sector and identified various factors, internal as well as external, responsible for sickness. Based on the recommendations of this Committee, Reserve Bank of India has advised banks on modified definition of sick SSI units, reduced rate of interest for rehabilitation, prompt viability studies/nursing programme of identified sick units, setting up of cells at important regional centres and Head Office to deal with sick industrial units and provision of expert staff, including technical personnel to look into technical aspects. State Level Inter-Institutional Committee exist under the Chairmanship of Secretary (Industries) of the State Government for revival of sick units.

#### Free Ports

533. SHRI MANIKRAO HODLYA GAVIT : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to set up some free ports in India;

(b) if so, details thereof alongwith the sites selected;

(c) the funds allocated for the purpose;

(d) the time by which the free ports are likely to be set-up; and

(e) the manner in which it is likely to help the Indian Economy?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) to (e) The Advisory Committee set up under the Chairmanship of Shri Raunaq Singh, Industrialist, to examine the desirability and feasibility of establishing a Free Port in India had submitted its report on the subject. The report has been examined and the Government has asked Indian Institute of Foreign Trade to draw up an implementation model including likely changes in laws & rules, administrative framework and also various fiscal measures to enable the Government to take a policy decision.

[Translation]

#### Items Purchased for Coal Companies

534 SHRI RAM TAHAL CHOUDHARY Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) the items purchased from H.E.C. for various coal companies during the last three years and value thereof, item-wise.

(b) whether the Government are aware that the items manufactured by the H.E.C. are being purchased from the private sector instead of H.E.C. directly; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI DILIP RAY) : (a) The items purchased from M/s. H.E.C. by Coal India Limited and Singareni Collieries Company Limited during the last three years are as under

#### Coal India Limited

Year	Equipment	Nos.	Total Value (Rs. in lakhs)
1	2	3	4
1995-96	Others items	-	2554.45
1996-97	5 M3 Rope shovel	17	4505.00
	250 mm Drill	3	370.50
	Others	-	6965.25
1997-98	5 M3 Rope shovel	13	3445.00
	Others	-	2308.55