

(a) the total number of patent applicants based on research and technology in Indian laboratories and universities preferred by Indian scientists and technologists during the last two years; and

(b) the number and the details/break up of patents granted in these cases?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT) : (a) and (b) During last 2 years, 1225 applications for Patents have been filed by Indian laboratories and universities. At present these applications are at different stages of examination as per the provisions of the Patents Act, 1970.

#### **Amendment in Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Act**

1025. SHRI SUBRATA MUKHERJEE : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are moving for amendment to the Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Act, in the direction of privatisation of coal mines;

(b) if so, whether the Government held any discussion with the trade unions which are against the Government's move;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI DILIP RAY) : (a) The Government had accepted a recommendation of the Committee on Integrated Coal Policy that any Indian company should be permitted to mine coal. This will require an amendment to the Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Act, 1973 to allow coal mining by Indian companies without existing restriction of captive consumption. Such amendment will not involve privatisation of any of the existing coal mines of Coal India Limited (CIL) or of Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL).

(b) and (c) The proposal was discussed with the Trade Unions on several occasions. While the unions recognised that a demand supply gap will remain at the end of the IX Plan, they insisted that increased production by the nationalised coal companies should be made possible by increasing budgetary support to them. It was explained to them that provision of budgetary support to CIL has been stopped since 1995-96 and it is not possible to restore the support.

(d) Does not arise in view of the answer given to paras (b) and (c) of the Question.

#### **Agro Export from Andhra Pradesh**

1026. SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether some thrust areas have been identified in Andhra Pradesh for exports during 1996-97, 1997-98 and 1998-99;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of the steps proposed to concentrate on agro-exports from Andhra Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMA-KRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) and (b) Ministry of Commerce has not specifically identified any thrust areas for exports from Andhra Pradesh in 1996-97; 1997-98 and 1998-99. The Ministry evolves plans and policies to boost exports of various commodities including agri products.

(c) The major agri products exported from Andhra Pradesh are Fresh mangoes and grapes, Processed fruits and vegetables. Poultry products, Fresh eggs and egg powder. Rice and meat. Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) have taken following steps for promoting exports of agri products from Andhra Pradesh.

(i) Organising integrated training programme for mangoes and grapes for the benefit of farmers in the major growing centres.

(ii) A study is being conducted to explore the potential for export of poultry products from the State and to suggest infrastructure requirement for development of export.

(iii) Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) has granted financial assistance for modernisation and upgradation of one of the sophisticated abattoir in private sector in the State.

(iv) Individual exporters have received Rs. 34.67 lakhs under the various developmental schemes of APEDA for promotion of product in the export market.

(v) A dedicated facility for handling perishable cargo is being set up at Hyderabad Airport.

(vi) Tobacco Board has taken several measures for export of tobacco because of which 32% growth in tobacco exports in value terms was noticed in 1997-98. Exports in 1997-98 were of the order of Rs. 972.83 crores.

(vii) Spices Board has regional offices in Hyderabad and Guntur which implement and monitor programmes in the areas of post harvest handling and quality management of spices.

[Translation]

#### **Toy Industry**

1027. SHRI RAMPAL SINGH : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to set up a Toy City in the country shortly with a view to strengthen the position of domestic industry in the international toy market;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and