

(c) and (d) During 1961-1968 Geological Survey of India (GSI) had carried out exploration of coal reserves in Jammu & Kashmir. However, on account of highly disturbed coal seams in the State, it has not been possible for the GSI to assess the coal reserves there with any degree of accuracy. No other agency has so far carried out any exploration of coal reserves in Jammu & Kashmir.

Bilateral Trade with Croatia

612. SHRI MOHAN RAWALE: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a memorandum of understanding was signed on November 16, 1998 at New Delhi between Confederation of Indian Industry and Chamber of Economy of Croatia to promote bilateral trade; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) & Croatian Chamber of Economy (HGK) states that CII and HGK, *inter alia*, would endeavour to undertake study to determine the support for the benefit of their respective members. Both sides agree to exchange professional experience for the benefit of their members as also to exchange information about product and industrial processes, industrial training, source of financing, offers and requests for joint ventures and licensing and identification of possible partners. Both sides also agreed to exchange information on economic and commercial matters with regard to their respective countries. CII and HGK further agreed to support activities like seminars, courses and conferences in both the countries and to provide full cooperation to each other in the promotion of Trade Fairs and Exhibitions in both the countries.

Hike in Duty for Import

613. SHRI RAMESH C. JIGAJINAGI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have imposed high duty charges on import of agricultural products, particularly from Pakistan, Afghanistan and other neighbouring countries;

(b) if so, whether the Government have made any assessment regarding the loss of revenue as our Indian agricultural products cost cheaper as compared to other countries; and

(c) if so, the details alongwith reasons regarding the policy of the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN): (a) In general, agricultural products imported from Pakistan, Afghanistan and other neighbouring countries attract the same rate of import duty as is applicable to the import of these products from other countries. In a few cases, preferential rates lower than the general effective rates have also been prescribed for imports from SAARC countries.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

Technical Education in Coal Sector

614. SHRI PUNNU LAL MOHALE: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the adequate arrangements have been made for the technical education keeping in view the increasing number of coal mines;

(b) whether any proposal of assistance from Coal India Limited for establishing any educational institute like 'Indian School of Mines' in Bilaspur, Madhya Pradesh is under consideration;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(e) whether there is any plan to avoid the non-obtainment of the locals of high level employment in lack of any such educational institute?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI DILIP RAY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise in view of reply given to (b) above.

(d) A number of Institutes exist in Madhya Pradesh which offer higher technical education.

(e) As reported by Coal India Limited, any person who has obtained requisite qualifications as prescribed for the job becomes eligible for high level employment.