

*[Translation]***Utility of Coal in Fertilizer Sector**

813. SHRI SUSHIL CHANDRA VARMA: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the utility of coal is being felt in the production of chemical fertilisers;

(b) if so, whether a proposal to this effect has been received from the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers to ensure the maximum use of coal in the production of urea;

(c) if so, the broad outlines of the said proposal; and

(d) the efforts being made to increase the production of coal so that production capacity of urea could be increased?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI DILIP RAY): (a) Two coal based fertilizer units are functioning at Ramagundam and Talcher. The details of coal supplies from MCL and SCCL to these units during the last three years are given below:—

(In lakh tonnes)
(Data Provisional)

	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98
MCL	7.10	6.98	6.55
SCCL	5.17	4.69	5.99

As production of fertilizers from other feed stocks such as Neptha is more economical, there does not seem to be much interest for increasing production of fertilizers from coal based units, even though the coal companies are in a position to meet the full requirement of these fertilizer units.

(b) and (c) No, Sir. A proposal has been received from a private company which has sought a captive mine for sourcing supplies for producing coal based fertilizers. The proposal is in a preliminary stage.

(d) The country has abundant stock of low grade coal and such coal could be made available for any coal based fertilizer unit if they so desire.

*[English]***Vigilance Inquiries**

814. SHRI NRIPEN GOSWAMI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Vigilance Inquiries were conducted against some Chief Commissioners of Income tax during the last three years;

(b) if so, the names and other details thereof;

(c) the names of Chief Commissioners of Income tax exonerated;

(d) whether the inquiry has been hushed up in any particular case;

(e) if so, the facts and reasons therefor; and

(f) the action taken against those found guilty?

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) Yes, Sir.

(b) During the last three years:

(i) In the case of 2 (two) Chief Commissioners disciplinary proceedings under CCS/CCA Rules have been initiated after completion of preliminary verification.

(ii) Complaints were received against 12 (twelve) more Chief Commissioners of Income tax which were taken up for preliminary verification. Out of these 6 (six) complaints were filed as the allegations could not be substantiated. In the remaining cases inquiries are in progress.

(c) (i) None of the officers at (b) (i) above has been exonerated as yet.

(ii) In respect of cases included at (b) (ii) above, question of exoneration does not arise as no disciplinary proceedings under CCS/CCA rules have yet been initiated.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Not applicable in view of answer to part (d) above.

(f) Not applicable.

Export of Processed Food

815. SHRI SANDIPAN THORAT: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have established Agricultural Processed Food Product Export Development Authority to boost up export of processed food;

(b) if so, the details thereof along with major achievements of the organisation;

(c) whether out of the total production of food and fruits, hardly 2 to 3 per cent of the total agricultural produce is processed leaving tremendous scope for development of food processing industry; and

(d) if so, the details of fresh initiatives taken by the Government to restructure the existing policies governing the Industry and offer a package of incentives to the food processing industry and supporting packaging industry to harness huge potential?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE): (a) Yes, Sir. The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority was established by an Act of Parliament in the year 1986 with the objective of development and promotion of exports of certain agricultural and processed food products.

(b) Some of the major promotional activities undertaken by the organisation to enhance exports, *inter-alia*, include market development and product promotion in the international markets, quality upgradation or export products, improvement of export packaging, provision of export market information to exporters, provision of financial assistance to growers and exporters for achievement of the above and for creation of infrastructure such as precooling and cold storages purchase of specialised transport units (reefer containers, etc.).

APEDA has also been strengthening infrastructure facilities for export. The infrastructural facilities created by APEDA include establishment of walk-in-type cold storages and integrated cargo handling and cold storage facilities at various International Airports for handling export of perishable items such as floriculture and horticulture products; walk-in-type cold storage facilities have been set up at Guwahati and Calcutta Airports. Integrated cold

storage and cargo handling facilities have been established at the Indira Gandhi International Airport at New Delhi and at Bangalore Airport. Similar facilities are being established at Chennai, Hyderabad and Thiruvananthapuram Airports.

(c) and (d) The present level of processing of fruits and vegetables and other agricultural products in the country is negligible compared to their production. In order to promote the development of processed food industry, the Government has accorded it the status of "sunrise industry" and has identified it as a thrust area for export promotion. The following policy changes have been introduced in this regard:—

- Food processing industry declared a priority area.
- Almost entire sector has been delicensed.
- Automatic approvals for foreign investment.
- Foreign equity upto 51% allowed in high priority industries.
- Foreign technology transfer agreements within norms made automatic.
- 100% agro EOUs allowed 50% sale in domestic tariff area.
- Threshold for EPCG scheme applicability to the sector lowered to Rs. 1 crore.

Ways and Means Advances

816. DR. ULHAS VASUDEO PATIL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have decided to review the system of Ways and Means Advances (WMA) to States for financing their temporary mismatches in receipts and payments;

(b) if so, the details of regulatory steps taken so far and proposals under consideration to deal with the problem of some States continuously remaining in overdraft;

(c) the status of WMA over the past three years, State-wise and the steps taken/proposed to be taken to deal with the problem alongwith remedial action plan; and