

Support Price for Tobacco

3191. SHRI A. SIDDARAJU: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that the cost of cultivation of tobacco has gone up abnormally in Karnataka;

(b) if so, the support price being given per kg. of tobacco to tobacco growers in Karnataka;

(c) whether there is any proposal to revise the support price being given to the tobacco growers of Karnataka; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE): (a) The cost of cultivation of FCV tobacco in nominal terms, has shown an increase.

(b) The Minimum Support Price (MSP) for L2 grade of tobacco for 1998-99 crop, announced on 21.10.98 on the basis of recommendations of the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP), is Rs. 25.50 per kg.

(c) and (d) Minimum Support Price for L2 & F2 grade of tobacco is announced each year on the basis of recommendation of CACP.

[Translation]

Foreign Assistance to Bihar

3192. SHRI RAJO SINGH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Bihar has sent any proposal seeking financial assistance from international agencies for some development oriented projects in the State;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken/being taken or proposed to be taken by the Union Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA): (a) to (c) The details of proposals received from the Government of Bihar for seeking financial assistance

from international agencies which are under consideration are as follows:

- (i) Participatory on-farm Development Project with an estimated cost of Rs. 431.28 crore.
- (ii) Dumraon Branch Canal Command Area Development Project with an estimated cost of Rs. 84.74 crore.
- (iii) Chandil Dam Left Bank Canal (Reduced Package) Project with an estimated cost of Rs. 473.15 crore.

All the above proposals received from Government of Bihar are pending with the World Bank.

Another proposal on 'Granite Mining and processing by Bihar State Development Corporation' for French Credit was received directly from the Government of Bihar. The proposal has been sent to the Administrative Ministry for their comments.

Sanctioning of Loans by State Bank of India

3193. SHRI MITRASEN YADAV: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of branches of the State Bank of India in Delhi that have violated the rules by mortgaging the credit letter issued by the Government and sanctioned loan to factories, companies, and businessmen by giving guarantee during the last two years, branch-wise;

(b) whether a number of shortcomings have been detected in sanctioning the loan;

(c) if so, the details thereof alongwith the number of times the CBI has inquired the official in this regard; and

(d) the action taken by the Department/CBI against the guilty officers?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA): (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House to the extent available.

Equal Pay for Equal Work Policy

3194. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the policy of 'equal pay for equal work' had been given priority at the time of nationalisation of