

(c) to (e) The Government of West Bengal are understandably concerned about this decision of the Board of ECL and have urged the CIL and ECL to evolve a suitable revival strategy for the company. Various options for revival of ECL are under discussion at the bipartite level. The Government of India would extend support to ensure the success of any agreed revival package.

Over Burden in WCL

2592. SHRI ANANT KUMAR HEGDE : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) the total quantity of over burden (O.B.) removed in Western Coalfields area during each of the last three years, year-wise;

(b) whether the Government have devised any plans to utilise the dumped area in terms of eco-friendliness; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI DILIP RAY) : (a) The total quantity of overburden(OB) removed in Western Coalfields Limited during each of the last three years is given below :

	(In million Cubic tonnes) (Data Provisional)
1995-96	59.39
1996-97	70.81
1997-98	85.30

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. Year-wise Plantation Programmes the Coal Co. has undertaken Plantation of dumped area to cover all the Over Burden Dumps. Every year about 12 Lakh trees are proposed to be planted on such areas.

In addition research and development schemes have been formulated to utilise old mine sites as mentioned below :-

- (i) Biological Reclamation of Degraded Mines land of existing Ballarpur OCP.
- (ii) Biological Reclamation of Degraded Mines land of existing Dhupatala OCP (Sector A & B).
- (iii) Biological Reclamation of abandoned pit of Sethia OCP.
- (iv) Research and development projects undertaken:-
 - (a) Stabilisation of Spoil dumps using organic waste with the Technology developed by NEERI.
 - (b) Conversion of Mined out areas for agriculture purpose has been taken up by WCL

at Ballarpur Open-cast Mines in Collaboration with Department of Environmental Science, Institute of Science, Nagpur (.)

- (c) Root Trainer Technology.
- (d) Stabilisation of slopes of OB Dumps with the help of Broad Casting of grass Seeds a departmental experiment on trial basis.
- (e) Restoration of bio-diversity in Padmapur Opencast project.
- (f) Rejuvenation of mined out areas in Sasti OC project with Bio-Technological approach.

FDI in Tobacco

2593. SHRI N.R.K. REDDY :
SHRI S. SUDHAKAR REDDY :
SHRI SODE RAMAIAH :
SHRI GIRAJALA VENKAT SWAMY NAIDU :
SHRI RAMCHANDRA VEERAPPA :

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to allow M/s. Phillip Morris and other MNCs with 100% Foreign Direct Investment in Cigarette/Tobacco industry;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Government have received representation from the All India Bidi Cigar and Tobacco Workers Federation against the entry of multinationals into India;

(d) if so, the details thereof alongwith the reaction of the Government thereto;

(e) the impact of the beedi workers as a result thereof; and

(f) the steps being taken by the Government to protect the interest of the bidi workers?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT) : (a) and (b) The Government have received two separate proposals from M/s. FTR Holdings (a wholly owned subsidiary of M/s. Phillip Morris) and M/s. Rothmans of Pall Mall (International) Ltd., UK for 100% foreign direct investment in Cigarette/Tabacco industry. These proposals will be considered by Foreign Investment Promotion Board (FIPB) on the basis of comments received from Administrative Ministries concerned.

(c) to (f) Yes, Sir. The Government have received two representations from All India Bidi, Cigar and Tobacco Workers Federation against allowing 100% foreign direct investment in cigarette/Tobacco industry on the ground that it would capture the beedi market and throw the beedi workers out of employment.

Beedis and cigarettes generally cater to different market segments as is evident from the Beedi industry already co-existing with a growing domestic cigarette industry. Beedi workers are not likely to be adversely affected with the induction of 100% foreign direct investment, as it encourages competitiveness only in the cigarette sector.

Restructuring of Sick Public Sector Undertakings

2594. SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN :
SHRI AJAY CHAKRABORTY :

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Standing Conference of Public Enterprises (SCOPE) has recommended for setting up of an independent agency/the Public Sector Restructuring Authority for restructuring the sick public sector enterprises;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SUKHBIR SINGH BADAL) : (a) and (b) Centre for Industrial and Economic Research (CIER), commissioned by Standing Conference of Public Enterprises (SCOPE) have conducted a study on 'Strategies for Action on Sick Central Public Enterprises'. The report suggests that a Public Sector Restructuring Authority/Agency (PSRA) may be established with the following broad functions

Develop guidelines for monitoring incipient sickness;

Provide advise and assistance to sick enterprises;

Sponsor and deal with cases before BIFR;

Organise liquidation proceedings, where necessary;

Organise strategic sale of management of undertakings; and

Organise sale of assets, where necessary.

(c) Suggestion as contained in the report has been noted.

Revival of Jute Mills

2595. MAJ. GEN. BHUVAN CHANDRA KHANDURI AVSM : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) the details of jute Mills in the country, State-wise;

(b) the number out of these have been closed down, State-wise;

(c) the reasons for their closure, mill-wise and State-wise;

(d) whether the Government propose to revive these closed mills; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RANA) : (a) There are 73 jute mills in the country out of which 59 mills are situated in West Bengal, 4 mills in Andhra Pradesh, 3 mills each in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh and 1 mill each in Madhya Pradesh, Assam, Tripura and Orissa.

(b) Two jute mills i.e. Kanpur jute Udyog Ltd. situated in U.P. and Katihar jute mill situated in Bihar are lying closed for a considerable period.

(c) Due to poor operative result both the mills are lying closed since 1987.

(d) and (e) No representation has been received from State Govt/Management/Workers, for reopening of Kanpur Jute Udyog Ltd. For examining the proposal of vesting Katihar Jute Mill Ltd. in NJMC Government of India had constituted a study group in 1984. The study group rejected the proposal as it was not economically viable. Subsequently a meeting was held in January, 1991 and it was decided that NJMC would take lease of this unit and the State Govt., would declare KJML as a relief undertaking waive electricity dues freeze prior wage liability arrear of employers dues to be paid in instalment from sales tax and other subsidies allowed by the State Govt. However since the Govt. of Bihar have not spelt out the package of relief no further action could be taken by NJMC in the matter.

Hike in the Import Duty on Tea

2596. SHRI C.P. RADHAKRISHNAN : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the State Government of West Bengal has suggested for increase in the import duty on tea to ensure the competitiveness in terms of price; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Union 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) Yes, Sir.

(b) In the Budget for the year 1999-2000 the import duty on tea has been increased from 15% to 16.5%. In addition, tea imported in bulk attracts a countervailing duty of Rs. 2/- per kg. with effect from 28.2.1999.