

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.