

FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M. R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) and (b) Sir, there are no reports of smuggling of drugs to India through Sri Lanka.

(c) Does not arise.

[English]

Proposal of Bottling TODDY

2654. SHRI AMAN KUMAR NAGRA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal under consideration of the Government for bottling TODDY (the low velocity country liquor extracted out of Coconut/Palm trees) through Government Agencies for exports;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) International trade in liquor is based on products either made from malt or from molasses. The demand for products based on other materials has not been established as they are not preferred by the overseas consumers.

New Patent Bill

2655. SHRI VIJAY GOEL :
SHRI MAHBOOB ZAHEDI :

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether India is likely to lose its extensive treasure of valuable creepers, plant based pharmaceuticals and qualitative zoological wealth due to ordinance of New Patent Bill;

(b) whether highly sophisticated super-structure of bio-technology of our country is likely to be transferred to the foreign countries;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) the impact on the employment of workers; and

(e) the steps being taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT) : (a) to (e) The Patents (Amendment) Ordinance, 1999 provides for receipt of product patent applications in the field of pharmaceuticals and agricultural chemicals and on fulfilment of certain conditions, for grant of exclusive marketing rights for a period of five years or till the patent is granted or rejected whichever is shorter. As such, it will have no effect on our Bio-technological structure or zoological wealth.

[Translation]

Spare Parts Purchases by BCCL

2656. PROF. RITA VERMA : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) the value of spare parts and equipments purchased locally by the BCCL during 1997-98 and 1998-99 till January, 1999;

(b) the amount spent on repairs of spare parts and equipments during the above period;

(c) whether any complaints about irregularities in repairs of spare parts and equipments and in their procurement have come to light; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI DILIP RAY) : (a) The value of spares and equipment purchased locally by BCCL during 1997-98 and 1998-99 till January 1999 is Rs. 3,700.07 lakhs and Rs. 3,037.07 lakhs respectively.

(b) The amount spent for repairs of equipments and spares during 1997-98 and 1998-99 till January 1999 is Rs. 5,360.68 Lakhs and Rs. 4,520.71 Lakhs (Provisional) respectively.

(c) and (d) Coal India Limited has reported the following cases of irregularities in repair of spare and equipments;-

(i) Superintendent of Police, CBI, Dhanbad has registered a PE vide No. PE/2(A)/98(D) against senior purchase officer, Katras project Area and M/s. Agarwal enterprises, Katras, Dhanbad (Pvt.) for purchase of spares for TATA Tippers at higher price. The case is under investigation.

(ii) Irregularity in purchase of spares for HEMM at Collieries of Charge Victoria area, BCCL was investigated by Vigilance Department vide case No. VIG/CB/13/98. Departmental action against erring officials has been initiated.

(iii) Superintendent of Police, CBI, Dhanbad had registered a PE vide No. PE1/(A)/99/(D) against the then Addl. Chief Engineer (Excvn.) and M/s. Cuprum Bagrodia Limited, Calcutta (Pvt.) and others for irregular purchase of spares for PC-300 Shovel. The case is under investigation.

[English]

Arbitration Cases in PSUs

2657. SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :