

[Translation]

Export of Gold Jewellery

2675. SHRI SOHANVEER SINGH :
SHRI V. K. KHANDELWAL :

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have taken any concrete steps to promote export of gold jewellery;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the target fixed for export of gold jewellery during 1999-2000; and

(d) the names of countries to which gold jewellery exported during each of the last three years ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) and (b) Yes Sir. The Government have taken several steps to boost the exports of gold jewellery from the country. Some of the more important steps taken recently include : (i) Permission to Export Oriented Units (EOUs)/Export Processing Zone units (EPZs) to cell 10 % of the value of the exports of the preceding year in Domestic Tariff Area (DTA) on payment of a concessional rate of duty of Rs. 400/-per 10 grams of plain gold jewellery and a duty of 5 % in respect of studded jewellery, (ii) The threshold limit for zero duty imports under Export Promotion Capital Goods Scheme (EPCG) has been reduced from the earlier level of Rs. 20 crores to Rs. 1 crore only (iii) Rationalisation of Value Addition and Wastage Norms, (iv) Extension of Replenishment Licence Scheme to Platinum/Silver jewellery (v) Permission for Personal Carriage of samples of jewellery etc. upto US 1,00,000 for Export Promotion Tours (vi) Permission for export of branded jewellery for display/sale in foreign outlets subject to getting them returned within 45 days if not sold within 180 days (vii) Export Oriental Units/Export Processing Zone units have been permitted to get machine made gold/silver/platinum jewellery from Domestic Tariff Area (DTA) units on sub-contract basis against exchange of gold /silver/ platinum (viii) Authorisation to the Reserve Bank of India to nominate banks for trade in precious metals. Accordingly, RBI has nominated thirteen banks till date (ix) Procedure for import and supply of precious metals by the Government nominated agencies and the banks authorised by the Reserve Bank of India has been simplified (x) Pursuant to the initiative taken by the

has removed sales tax on supply of bullion by the banks authorised by the Reserve Bank of India and a few other State Governments have drastically reduced the value of sales tax being levied on supply of bullion by the Government nominated agencies/RBI authorised banks.

(c) Target of export of gold jewellery for the year 1999-2000 is under finalisation.

(d) The names of the major countries to which gold jewellery was exported during each of the last three years are : (i) United State of America (ii) United Kingdom (iii) United Arab Emirates (iv) Japan (v) Kuwait (vi) Germany (vii) Singapore (viii) Hongkong (ix) Australia (x) Belgium (xi) Bahrain (xii) Canada (xiii) Netherland (xiv) Newzealand (xv) Oman (xvi) Qatar (xvii) Russia (xviii) Switzerland (xix) South Africa (xx) Spain (xxi) France.

Tannery and Footwear Corporation of India

2676. SHRI JAGAT VIR SINGH DRONA : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether employees of Tannery and Footwear Corporation of India, Kanpur in Uttar Pradesh have launched a widespread agitation for not getting salaries for the last four months;

(b) if so, whether the Government have taken any action to make payment of their salaries;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SUKHBIR SINGH BADAL) : (a) Consequent to Allahabad High Court's order for winding up to Tannery and Footwear Corporation of India (TAFCO) and appointment of the Official Liquidator, the company management has not been able to ensure timely payment of salary to the employees and there has been some agitation.

(b) and (c) Government has released non-plan funds to the Company and ad-hoc payment equivalent to 60 days' wages has already been paid to the employees.

(d) Does not arise.

[English]

Technology Development and Modernisation Fund for SSI Units

2677. SHRI R. S. GAVAI : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Small Industries Development Bank of India has created a Technology and Development and Modernisation Fund for SSI units; and

(b) if so, the details thereof ?

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