

be taken of the impact of the Committee's recommendations on India's external trade.

Coal Mines of WCL

2735. SHRI ANANT KUMAR HEGDE : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) the total estimated coal available in different coal mines being operated by Western Coalfields Limited and the expected time till all the Coal reserve can be extracted; and

(b) the details of new coalfields being developed by Western Coalfields Ltd?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI DILIP RAY) : (a) It has been reported by Coal India Limited that the total extractable reserves of coal in the different coal mines of WCL as on 1.4.98 are estimated at 762.06 million tonnes. It is expected that these reserves can be extracted till 2036-37.

(b) The following new coalfields are being developed by Western Coalfields Limited:-

- (i) Kamptee
- (ii) Pathakheda
- (iii) Wardha Valley
- (iv) Pench Kanhan
- (v) Umrer

Exclusive Marketing Rights under Patent Law

2736. SHRI K.P. MUNUSAMY :
SHRI MAHBOOB ZAHEDI

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that exclusive marketing rights to be given under new Patent Law will hike the prices of drugs due to heavy imports and consequently lead to drain on foreign exchange;

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Government to solve the impending crisis arising out of patents;

(c) whether any study has been undertaken to ascertain the effect of exclusive marketing rights in case of drugs;

(d) if so, the details thereof, and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT) : (a) and (b) Exclusive Marketing Rights (EMR) under the new patent law will only be applicable to pharmaceutical based on new molecules patented after 1st January, 1995. Since substitutes based on off patent

molecules would be available in the country, it will not lead to general hike in prices of drugs.

(c) to (e) Actual effect of grant of EMR would be known only after introduction of such products in the Indian market and would be dependent upon comparative merits and demerits of these products vis-a-vis existing products.

Critical Infrastructure Balance Scheme

2737. SHRI MADHAV RAO PATIL :
SHRI D.S. AHIRE :

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to finance Mormugao Port Trust Project under Critical Infrastructure Balance Scheme;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the cost involved on the said project ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) to (c) A project of Mormugao Port Trust (MPT) pertaining to construction of a by-pass road from Mormugao Port to National Highway-17 has been sanctioned under the Critical Infrastructure Balance (C.I.B.) scheme. The approved cost of the project is Rs. 30.00 crores. The allocation under the C.I.B. scheme is Rs. 7.50 crores, out of which Rs. 4.50 crores has been released to MPT in March 1998. The project is being implemented by the Border Roads Organisation. MPT have requested the Ministry of Surface Transport for a revision of the cost of the project to Rs. 62.00 crores.

Short Supply of Food and Non-food Items

2738. SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Supply constraints fueled-price rise" appearing in the "Business Standard" dated February 8, 1999;

(b) if so, the reasons for shortfall in the supply of primary food articles and primary non-food articles; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to improve the supply level of these articles ?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) : (a) Yes Sir.

(b) Price rise recorded last year in some essential commodities, especially pulses, fruits and vegetables was due to their lower production. Production of potato was lower by 60 lakh tonnes (28 percent) and onion by 7 lakh tonnes (16.9 percent). Pulses production had declined by 11 lakh tonnes (7.7 %) and production of oilseeds declined by 24 lakh tonnes.