

mineral products and other items during the last decade after the nationalisation of coal mines. During the last ten years upto 1996-97, the annualised increase in coal prices has been 8.63% whereas the Wholesale Price Index has increased by 8.99% during the corresponding period. The Wholesale Price Index is based on the prices of various items including the mineral products.

(b) Does not arise in view of the answer given to Part (a) of the question.

(c) and (d) As per the latest information, the cost of production of coal in the mines of CIL is much lower than the per tonne production cost of coal in a number of other countries like Germany, United Kingdom, France and Australia. The steps taken to reduce the cost of production of coal in India are:

- (i) Rationalisation of manpower;
- (ii) Increasing the capacity utilisation;
- (iii) Phasing out uneconomic operations.

#### Royalty on Coal

2724. SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR SINGH:

DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI:

Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Coal India Ltd. propose to pay royalty to coal producing States on the basis of its price instead of weight;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether royalty paid to State Governments is likely to increase if it is paid on the basis of price of coal; and

(d) if so, the percentage of increase as a result thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH): (a) to (d) Under Section 9 (3) of the Mines and Minerals (Regulation and Development) Act, 1957, the Central Government is empowered to fix the royalty rates on coal. Under the proviso to this Section it can enhance the royalty rate on coal not more than once during any period of three years. As the royalty rates on coal were revised last on 11.10.94, the next upward revision falls due only after 10.10.97. In order to go into the details of the question of revision of royalty rates on coal, a Study Group has been constituted in Ministry of Coal on 28.1.97 to consider all aspects of coal

royalty including the mode of fixation of royalty, that is on the basis of price or weight. The Study group is required to submit its report by 31.8.97 where after a decision will be taken.

[English]

#### Foreign Debt

2725. DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI:

SHRI RAMESHWAR PATIDAR:

SHRI HARIN PATHAK:

JUSTICE GUMAN MAL LODHA:

SHRI NITISH KUMAR:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have repaid the instalment of loan along with interest thereon within the stipulated time as per the terms of foreign loan during the last three years;

(b) if so, the amount paid to each foreign financial institution as instalment of loan together with interest during 1994-95, 1995-96 and 1996-97;

(c) the foreign debt in rupee as well as in dollars, in March, 1995, March, 1996 and March, 1997 and the extent to which it is likely to increase by March, 1998;

(d) the reasons for increase in foreign debt, if any; and

(e) the measures taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to repay all foreign debt in a reasonable time frame and to reduce the burden of foreign debt on the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A Statement is attached.

(c) to (e) According to the latest available estimates, the total foreign debt outstanding was Rs. 311,685 crore (US\$ 99,008 million) as on March 31, 1995 and Rs. 315,435 crore (US\$ 92,199 million) as on March 31, 1996.

The main features of the debt management strategy followed by the Government includes sustaining a high growth rate of exports, encouraging non-debt creating inflows and keeping the maturity structure as well as the total amount of commercial debt under control.

**Statement***Source-wise Repayment of Principal and Interest Payment From 1994-95 to 1996-97 (Govt. Account)*

(Rs. crore)

Sl. No.	Name of the Country/Institution	Repayment of Principal			Interest Payment*		
		1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.	A.D.B.	54.05	143.78	209.34	247.66	345.49	409.61
2.	I.B.R.D.	2369.53	2718.26	2648.77	2020.96	2124.20	1950.36
3.	I.D.A.	608.47	759.29	834.04	382.64	437.08	465.21
4.	I.F.A.D.	16.24	18.30	16.80	6.37	7.22	8.60
5.	O.P.E.C.	38.01	40.41	43.51	3.16	2.72	2.20
<b>Total</b>		<b>3086.30</b>	<b>3680.44</b>	<b>3752.46</b>	<b>2660.79</b>	<b>2916.71</b>	<b>2835.98</b>
6.	Abu Dhabi Fund	3.89	4.11	0.00	0.27	0.12	0.00
7.	Austria	10.40	11.58	12.57	3.90	4.48	4.02
8.	Belgium	19.98	26.54	24.93	1.54	1.67	1.37
9.	Canada	45.20	49.52	51.31	0.02	0.02	0.02
10.	Reps. of Czech & Slovak	4.28	4.28	4.28	0.59	1.55	0.91
11.	Denmark	13.65	21.90	24.60	0.00	0.24	0.03
12.	E.E.C.(SAC)	1.94	1.60	1.66	0.50	1.17	1.17
13.	France	249.98	287.67	290.62	161.98	168.75	152.41
14.	Germany	436.78	523.69	549.14	207.25	228.96	206.71
15.	Hungary	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
16.	IMF Trust Fund	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
17.	Iran	0.00	0.00	0.00	9.03	0.02	0.00
18.	Iraq	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
19.	Italy	20.21	21.37	22.78	11.86	12.63	12.51
20.	Japan	564.28	725.83	731.24	627.01	733.69	703.09
21.	kuwait Fund	46.04	48.90	51.40	16.97	16.23	16.11
22.	Netherlands	143.76	246.12	193.80	67.36	71.43	67.47
23.	Poland	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
24.	Saudi Fund	46.94	36.37	55.83	6.62	4.68	4.11
25.	Spain	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.90	3.02	3.23
26.	Sweden	0.00	0.00	0.00	19.08	2.18	2.08
27.	Switzerland	17.29	24.90	27.18	13.11	16.62	14.45

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
28.	U.A.E.	21.03	0.00	0.00	0.79	0.00	0.00
29.	U.S.A.	398.90	434.15	458.76	181.56	174.42	176.53
30.	Russian Federation	247.05	214.00	218.13	41.59	55.19	20.60
31.	United Kingdom	91.47	78.07	75.71	0.00	0.00	0.00
32.	Australia	0.00	0.00	1.11	0.21	0.45	0.63
Total		2383.07	2760.60	2794.85	1373.93	1497.52	1387.43
Grand Total		5469.37	6441.04	6547.31	4034.72	4414.23	4223.41

\*This includes commitment charges.

#### Bank Branches Run by Women

2726. SHRIMATI BHAVNA BEN DEVRAJ BHAI CHIKHALIA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Reserve Bank of India has instructed all the commercial banks in the country to open the branches of banks run only by women;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of such banks opened in the country and the details of branches of various banks run only by the women in the country; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government to open more such branches in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) and (b) Reserve Bank of India have reported that they have not issued any instructions to commercial banks for opening of branches to be run exclusively by women.

(c) According to information available with Reserve Bank of India upto September 1996, the following bank branches were managed only by women.

Name of Bank	Location of branch
1. State Bank of Travancore	(i) Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala.
2. Syndicate Bank	(i) Karol Bagh, New Delhi.
	(ii) Seshadripuram, Bangalore.
3. Karur Vysya Bank Ltd.	(i) Anna Nagar, Chennai.

(d) It is for the banks concerned and not for the Government to take decisions regarding opening such branches.

#### Income Tax Exemption to Tribal Population

2727. SHRI. P. NAMGYAL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 3192 dated March, 14, 1997 and state:

(a) whether the 95% of the population of Ladakh has been declared scheduled tribe in the year 1989;

(b) if so, whether Clause (26) Section 10 of the Income Tax Act 1961 as defined in Clause (25) of Article 366 of the Constitution of India is proposed to be made applicable to the tribal population of Ladakh;

(c) if so, whether the Government propose to grant exemption in income tax to the tribal population of Ladakh; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) Sir, there was no Scheduled Tribe in Jammu and Kashmir including Ladakh region prior to 1989. The Scheduled Tribes were declared as such for the first time in Jammu and Kashmir by the Constitution (Jammu and Kashmir) Scheduled Tribes Order, 1989. The 1991 Census was not conducted in Jammu and Kashmir and, therefore, the figures of Scheduled Tribes for Jammu and Kashmir including Ladakh region are not available as per this Census.

(b) and (c) No, Sir.

(d) The increase in the income tax exemption limit to Rs. 40,000 along with other tax benefits, i.e. (i) raising the ceiling of standard deduction in case of salaried taxpayers to Rs. 20,000 (ii) deduction upto Rs.15,000 under section 80L in respect of savings; and (iii) tax rebate under section 88 to the extent of Rs. 14,000, takes most of the persons in the lower and middle income groups residing anywhere in India out of the purview of the Income tax. Due to this, as also due to sharp reduction in tax rates in the last budget, the Government is of the view that the large number of tax exemptions contained in Income tax Act, 1961 require to be phased out. Moreover, the experience with the income tax exemption contained in