

alia, unable to pay its debts or because disqualified to carry on business. Further the Company Law Board, constituted under the Companies Act, has been empowered to adjudicate and pass orders in case of non-repayment of deposits/interest by the NBFCs.

[English]

Smuggling of Opium

1096. SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have announced recently new opium policy;

(b) whether the decision to lower the minimum qualifying yield requirement for opium cultivators is expected to flood the market with opium;

(c) whether excess production is likely to be diverted to the black market; and

(d) if so, the remedial steps taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR) : (a) Yes, Sir. The Government's Opium Policy for the crop year 1996-97 was announced on 4th October, 1996.

(b) The Minimum Qualifying Yield for opium licence was raised from 46 kgs. per hectare to 48 kgs. per hectare for the states of Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan and it was fixed at 40 kgs. per hectare for Uttar Pradesh as the latter has a relatively lower average yield. The relaxation in the Minimum Qualifying Yield was only in respect of a small percentage of cultivators who could not achieve the above target but undertook to fulfil it during the current crop year.

The above decision to retain the traditional poppy cultivators is not likely to encourage diversion of opium into illicit channel since the cultivators would stand to lose their licences permanently in that event.

(c) No Sir, under the provisions of the N.D.P.S. Act/ Rules, 1985, cultivators are required to tender their entire opium produce to the Govt. Failure to do so invites severe punishment under the Act, besides the liability of the cultivator to lose opium licence permanently.

(d) To ensure that opium is not diverted into illicit channel, an elaborate system of control is exercised over poppy growing areas which includes 100% measurement of poppy fields, test measurement by senior officials, constant monitoring of crop conditions and daily weighment of produce of each cultivator during the period of opium cultivation. The enforcement set up of the Central Bureau of Narcotics has also been strengthened by improving transport and communication net-work and setting up preventive intelligence cells in and around poppy growing areas. Enforcement operations and general vigil are intensified during the lancing period and collection of opium. In addition to

departmental officers, other enforcement agencies and paramilitary forces are often engaged for the above purpose.

Illegal Assets of Jewellers

1097. SHRI MANGAL RAM PREMI : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Illegal assets worth Rs. 10 crore seized from jewellers" appearing in the 'Times of India' dated October 16, 1996;

(b) if so, the facts thereof;

(c) the quantity and value of illegal assets seized; and

(d) the action taken by the Government in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR) : (a) to (c) Yes sir. The Income-tax Department carried out searches at the premises of the following jewellers' group in October, 1996 :-

Name	Seizure (Rs. in lacs)
M/s. P.P. Jewellers	736.49
M/s. Sakun Chain Group	9.26
M/s. Rohtak Chains Company Group of Cases	2.90

(d) Necessary action as per provision of the Direct Tax Laws has been taken.

Spinning Mills

1098. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the World Bank funded spinning mills located at Peddor village in Sri Salla Division of Karimnagar District have become sick;

(b) if so, the reasons for their sickness; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to revive these mills?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

[Translation]

Export to Agriculture

1099. SHRI PAWAN DIWAN :

SHRI MAHESH KUMAR M. KANODIA :

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the share of the country in export of agricultural

products in the world during each of the last three years;

(b) whether the total quantum of agricultural exports is still very less;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor and details of the items exported; and

(d) the steps taken to promote agricultural exports?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) India's share in the world trade in agricultural products during the last three years was as under :-

Year	Percentage Share
1992	0.83
1993	1.00
1994	0.85

(Source : FAO Year Book, 1994)

The details for the year 1995 and 1996 are not available.

(b) and (c) India's share in the world trade of agricultural products, except for in the traditional items exported, has been low due to lack of export orientation in domestic production. The domestic production is not fully tuned to the market abroad in terms of quality and packaging. Further, as a policy, exports of items of mass consumption are only permitted in a manner which does not compromise the food security of the country. The agricultural products exported from India include tea, coffee, raw cotton, rice (basmati and non-basmati), wheat, coarse grains, tobacco, spices, cashew, sesame and niger seeds, oil meal extractions, sugar, horticulture and floriculture products, fresh fruits and vegetables, processed fruits and juices and meat and meat preparations.

(d) Steps taken to enhance export of agricultural and allied products include simplification of inspection procedures, removal of minimum export price and quantity restrictions on selected items, provision of concessional credit, product development to meet international needs, extension of benefits available under the scheme of EOUs/EPZs to agriculture sector and permitting 50% sale in the domestic tariff area, assistance to exporters for improved packaging, strengthening of quality control, air freight subsidy on export of selected horticultural, floricultural products and fresh vegetables to identified destinations, promoting export of identified products through brand promotion campaigns, arranging buyer-seller meets and participation in international fairs/exhibitions.

[English]

Bharat Leather Corporation Ltd.

1100. SHRI AJAY CHAKRABORTY : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have since rejected

the proposal for expansion of a project in respect of Bharat Leather Corporation Limited, Agra; and

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Development Scheme for Coir Workers

1101. SHRI N.K. PREMCHANDRAN : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state the development schemes proposed to be undertaken by the Government for ensuring the welfare of coir workers, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : The Coir Board has been implementing various welfare programmes for the benefit of the workers in coir producing States namely : (i) Model Coir Village Scheme; and (ii) Assistance for implementing Coir Workers' Welfare Fund, (A scheme formulated and implemented by Government of Kerala exclusively for Kerala).

Welfare measures under the Model Coir Village Scheme include construction of houses for SC/ST workers, electrification of houses of SC workers, provision of sanitary laterines, smokeless choolas and drinking water, provision of beating sheds and ratt sheds etc.

Government of Kerala is implementing a scheme through the Kerala Coir Workers Welfare Fund Board which provides assistance towards payment of pension, family pension, financial assistance for permanent or temporary disability, maternity benefit, medical facilities etc. The Government of India has released an amount of Rs. 160 lakhs to the Coir Board from 1991-92 to 1995-96 under the head "Welfare Scheme". The Coir Board has provided financial assistance under the Model Coir Village Scheme to Karnataka, Orissa, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh to the extent of Rs. 20.06 lakhs from 1992-93 to 1995-96.

Economic Reforms

1102. SHRI NARAYAN ATHAWALAY : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned, "States left out to reform process" appearing in the Financial Express dated January 31, 1997;

(b) if so, the details of the important observations/shortcomings pointed out in the report and reaction of the Government thereto;

(c) the details of action plan worked out/proposed to cover up deficiencies; and