

Smuggling of Timber

4232. SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI NAVINCHANDRA MEHTA : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the punitive steps proposed to prevent smuggling of timber along the Myanmar border;

(b) the number of smuggling cases detected during the last six months and awaiting adjudication;

(c) whether the Government propose for absolute confiscation of goods to curb the smuggling activities; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) Field formations are alert to detect and prevent smuggling of timber into India from Myanmar. Seized timber is confiscated under the provision of customs Act, 1962 and redemption fine as well as personal penalty is imposed in adjudication proceedings in respect of such cases.

(b) 12 cases have been detected during last six months which are waiting adjudication.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does to arise in view of (c) above.

Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd.

4233. SHRI SUSHIL CHANDRA : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the BHEL is properly utilising the land given by the Government of Madhya Pradesh for setting up of its plant;

(b) if so, the purpose for which the land is being utilising;

(c) whether the vacant land is likely to be utilised for extension of the plant; and

(d) if so, the detail thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) and (b). The land given by the Madhya Pradesh Government has been properly utilised by BHEL for setting up the Factory, Administrative Office buildings, Residential Quarters, Hospital and other infrastructural facilities.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) It is proposed to utilise the vacant land for the future growth and diversification phase of the Unit, the dwelling units for employees and required infrastructural facilities.

[Translation]

Dacoity in Punjab National Bank, Delhi

4234. KUMARI UMA BHARATI : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether any dacoity took place recently in the

Punjab National Bank located at South Extension, New Delhi;

(b) if so, the estimated value of items taken away in the dacoity;

(c) whether the Bank Authorities proposes to pay any compensation to the locker owners;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) to (e). Punjab National Bank (PNB) have reported that a case of burglary took place at its branch in South Extension, New Delhi after close of the banking hours on 30.11.1996 and before the bank was opened after weekly holiday on 2.12.1996. The burglars had broken open 13 lockers and emptied them of all their valuables. The police have registered an FIR relating to this case.

Taking into account the facts of the case and the provisions of the lease agreement entered into by the Bank with the locker holders, the Bank has been advised to deal with the claims lodged by the Concerned locker holders. RBI has also been requested by the Government to examine the matter and to advise the bank suitably in accordance with law and equity.

[English]

Committee on Public Investment

4235. SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Cochin Refineries Ltd., Kerala, has sought stage I clearances by the Committee on Public Investment Board;

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto, and

(c) the time by which the proposal is likely to be cleared?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c). Committee of P.I.B. has not yet considered it pending the receipt of appraisals of the concerned Ministries and Planning Commission and hence no final decision regarding clearance has been taken.

[Translation]

Sales Tax on Marital Items

4236. PROF. OMPAL SINGH 'NIDAR' : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to abolish or to reduce the Sales Tax on marital items such as bangles, bichua, bindi, sindur etc. in Uttar Pradesh; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (Shri P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) and (b). The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[English]

Medical Facilities to Retired Employees of ITPO

4237. DR. CHHATRAPAL SINGH : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether India Trade Promotion Organisation has constituted a committee to consider and extend the medical facilities to their retired employees;

(b) whether the report of committee has since been received by the Government;

(c) if so, the detail of recommendations made; and

(d) the action taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULI RAMAIAH) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d). Does not arise.

Bharat Heavy Electrical Limited

4238. SHRI B. DHARMA BIKSHAM : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government are placing work orders to the BHEL;

(b) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the number of work orders awarded to the private companies during the last two years?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) to (c). BHEL has been receiving orders from Government for Defence and Railway equipments.

In respect of other areas like Power Sector and Industry Sector, BHEL being a commercial organisation secures orders in competition with other manufacturers under domestic as well as Inter-national Competitive Bidding procedures. BHEL has demonstrated a success rate of 86% in multilaterally funded Power Projects in India.

Foreign Collaboration Policy

4239. SHRI JAYSINH CHAUHAN : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any slackness in the foreign collaboration policy;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the steps taken or proposed to be taken by the Government to encourage Joint Ventures during the current financial year?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) to (c). No, Sir. Foreign Direct Investment amounting to Rs.17026.77 crores has been approved during the period July, 1996 to October, 1996 which is 3.1/2 times more than Rs.4689.34 crores approved during the same period last year. Actual inflow during the same period in 1996 has increased to Rs.2402.05 crores as against Rs.2189.18 crore during the corresponding period last years.

From the above it is evident that the foreign investors confidence had increase substantially and they see India as a destination for their investment. It is thus apparent that there is no slackness in the foreign collaboration approvals.

Disbursement through SIDBI

4240. SHRI MUKHTAR ANIS : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the total disbursement made by SIDBI since its inception upto March 31, 1996, Scheme-wise and State-wise;

(b) the reasons for wide disparities in disbursement of funds to States; and

(c) the steps taken to ensure equal disbursement to all States?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) The Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) have reported that since its inception in April 1990 upto March 31, 1996 SIDBI have disbursed assistance aggregating Rs 16864.4 crore to units in SSI sector under this various schemes. State-wise and scheme-wise assistance disbursed by SIDBI during the above period is given in the statement - I, II and III enclosed.

(b) SIDBI have reported that the disparity in the flow of assistance to various States is due to differences in credit absorption capacity, emerging industrial climate in various States, Provision of supporting facilities such as infrastructure and state government's policies. In industrially backward states, their lesser share of credit is also on account of weakness of some of the State Financial Corporations (SFCs)/Twin function Industrial Development Corporations.

(c) SIDBI has reported that it has taken various initiatives to accelerate the flow of assistance to SSI sector in the industrially backward states. For loans to SSI by banks and SFCs 100% refinance is provided by SIDBI in various States in North Eastern Region, J&K and Sikkim. Ceiling of project cost and minimum loan amount qualifying for SIDBI's direct assistance has been lowered for hilly and most backward regions. Rural