

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA): (a) and (c). The National Mineral Policy, 1993 encourages foreign investment and technology in the exploration of high value and scarce minerals. The Policy also deserves minerals earlier reserved for exclusive exploitation by the private sector, so allowing exploration and exploitation of all minerals including gold, by the private sector, both domestic and foreign. Any company registered in India can apply to the State Governments for grant of prospecting licence/mining lease.

(b) No, Sir.

(d) to (g). The Govt. of Karnataka has informed that it had invited applications from private companies, both domestic and foreign, to submit proposals for mineral exploration especially that of gold, subject to multinational companies entering into a joint venture with Indian companies. In response, they have received proposals from 281 companies. The Government of Karnataka has stated that it has yet to take any view on these applications.

(h) The question, of this stage, does not arise. However, it may be added that the Mines and Minerals (Regulation & Development) Act, 1957 and the rules made thereunder, provide that prospecting/mining operations can only be carried out with the written consent of the land owner.

Unmilled Paddy

* 389. SHRI CHHATAR SINGH DARBAR:
SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN:

Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) the quantity of paddy lying unmilled in the Food Corporation of India godowns, State-wise;

(b) whether the millers have refused to mill this paddy; and

(c) if so, the steps taken by the Government to get this paddy milled before the same is declared unfit for human consumption?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV): (a) A statement giving the requisite information is attached.

(b) A few problems in milling of paddy of 1994-95 crop have been experienced mainly in Punjab. A record quantity of 73.76 lakh tonnes of paddy was procured in Punjab by FCI and State Government agencies, which was 33% higher than the previous season. Uncooperative attitude of rice millers of Punjab by raising demand for relaxation in the percentage of brokens far beyond the prescribed limits further compounded the problem. Even then except for a balance of 4.68 lakh tonnes of paddy, the entire stocks have been either milled or disposed of through sale. The entire stocks of unmilled paddy in Punjab, except a small quantity of 1.03 lakh tonnes, are contracted under which the millers are under obligation to complete milling of the contracted quantity of paddy.

The milling of 1995-96 crop paddy is in progress.

(c) The following special steps were taken to expedite milling of paddy:—

- (i) Some quantity of Paddy was moved from Punjab to other regions like Haryana, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh during 1994-95 and 1995-96 seasons to the extent of spare milling capacity available in these regions.
- (ii) Brokens percentage of rice was relaxed upto 30% for 1994-95 crop paddy;
- (iii) Relaxations in certain parameters of specifications have been allowed during 1995-96 season.
- (iv) Driage allowance for production of raw rice was allowed at 2% during 1995-96 season.
- (v) A memorandum of understanding was signed with Government of Punjab on 21.12.95 which provides for completion of milling of the paddy procured by Government of Punjab/agencies in the year 1995-96 by 31st May, 1996. This period has now been extended upto 31st August, 1996.
- (vi) Additional incentive of Rs. 5/- per quintal over the normal milling charges for production of parboiled rice during 1995-96 season with effect from 27.5.96.
- (vii) A total quantity of 21.66 lakh tonnes of 1994-95 crop paddy in Punjab was sold under tender or through open sale. The disposal of paddy through tender is in progress.

STATEMENT*Statement Showing the Yearwise Stocks of Paddy Awaiting Milling in FCI Godowns*

(Lakh MTs.)

Sl. No.	Regions	Qty. of Paddy Lying Unmilled			Total	Position as on	Remarks
		1993-94 Crop	1994-95 Crop	1995-96 Crop			
1.	Punjab	-	1.03	0.59	1.62	19.8.96	Besides above the State Govt./ Agencies of Punjab are having the following quantities of unmilled paddy procured for Central Pool:
2.	Haryana	-	0.46	0.52	0.98	10.8.96	
3.	U.P.	-	Neg. (181 MT)	0.07	0.07	31.7.96	
4.	Bihar	0.015	0.013	0.002	0.03	26.7.96	1994-95 Crop—3.65 lakh MT
5.	Orissa	-	-	-	-	31.7.96	1995-96 Crop—5.17 lakh MT
6.	A.P. (Prov.)	0.19	0.10	0.09	0.38	31.7.96	<u>8.82</u>
7.	Rajasthan	-	0.24	0.005	0.246	-do-	
8.	Tamil Nadu	-	-	-	-	-do-	
Total :		0.205	1.843	1.278	3.326		

*[Translation]***Facilities for Handicapped Employees**

*390. DR. BALIRAM: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the facilities being provided to the handicapped employees in various departments under the Ministry;

(b) whether they are also provided reservation at the time of promotion;

(c) if so, the details and percentage thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA): (a) The following facilities are being provided as per the instructions of Department of Personnel and Training:

1. Provision for reservation in Group C and D posts subject to conditions stipulated in OM No. 36035/8/89/Estt. dated 20.11.89 for promotion.
2. Relaxation of upper age limit.
3. Conveyance allowance upto a maximum of Rs. 100 per month.

4. Exemption from payment of application and examination fee.

5. Financial assistance from welfare fund for purchase of artificial limp/wheel chair/tricycles etc.

(b) The reservation in promotion is provided as per DOP & T instruction as indicated in (1) above.

(c) One percent each for visually handicapped, hearing handicapped and orthopedically handicapped in identified Group 'C' and 'D' posts.

(d) Does not arise.

*[English]***Investment by EPF Organisation**

*391. SHRI MOHAN RAWALE: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether cases of violation of procedures for investment by the Employees Provident Fund Organisations have come to the notice of the Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether an inquiry was instituted in this regard;