

<i>Year</i>	<i>Export of silk goods</i>
1988-89	Rs. 331 crore
1989-90	Rs. 401 crore
1990-91	Rs. 441 crore

Price Rise

1486. SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES:
Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(e) whether he has called a meeting of the representatives of the industry and trade for holding the price line down; and

(b) if so, the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) and (b). Meetings have been held with the representatives of the industry and trade by the Finance Minister and the Ministry of Industrial Development for seeking meaningful cooperation in bringing down prices, particularly of essential commodities, to a reasonable level. The Finance Minister held a meeting with the representatives of trade on 25th September, 1991 to discuss the modalities of price regulation in respect of commodities where excise duty concessions had been announced by the Finance Minister in the 1991-92 budget and grant of relief to the ultimate consumer in the form of reduction in prices. Both industry and trade have been asked to share the responsibility in controlling the prices. The Finance Minister had held a meeting with the cement industry on October 7, 1991 to effect a cut in cement prices. Difficulties faced by the cement industry in getting adequate supplies of coal to cement units and railway wagons for transportation of coal and cement were taken note of and efforts are being made to remove these impediments.

Salt manufacturers have agreed to hold the ex-factory prices for the next one year. The newsprint manufacturers have also agreed to absorb the cost escalation until an indepth study of the increase in the prices of newsprint is completed by the bureau of Industrial Costs and prices.

Fiscal restructuring of Economy

1487. SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES:
Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are effecting fiscal restructuring of the economy to back up the economic reforms; and

(b) if so, details thereof?

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

(b) The major fiscal adjustment measures taken by the Government include: (i) a planned reduction in fiscal deficit by 2 percentage points of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) from about 8.4 percent of GDP in 1990-91 (RE) to 6.5 per cent in 1991-92; (ii) disinvestment of Government equity to the extent of 20 per cent in selected public sector undertakings; (iii) abolition of cash compensatory supports for exports and sugar subsidy; (iv) substantial reduction of fertiliser subsidies; (v) containing the growth of non-plan expenditure; (vi) ensuring that 50 per cent of the plan resources are invested in the agricultural and rural sectors and (vii) prioritising the projects.

Customs Duty evasion by State Trading Corporation

1488. SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES:
Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Bombay Customs authorities have issued show cause notice to the State Trading Corporation for alleged misdeclaration of glazed newsprint cargo which arrived from Canada in June this year and thereby paying less excise duty;

(b) if so, details thereof; and

(c) the action taken or proposed to be taken by the Government against the officials found guilty?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWARTHAKUR): (a) to (c). Bombay Customs has issued a show cause notice to M/s. STC in the month of June, 1991 from Canada, on the grounds that results of tests conducted in India were different from the test report furnished by the supplier in Canada.

There is no direct evidence to indicate that any official of the STC is involved.

Private Buses operating under D.T.C.

1489. SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether some years ago the private buses operating under DTC were giving a fixed amount to DTC every month as royalty besides entertaining the DTC passes and holiday tickets;

(b) if so, the reasons for reversing that practice and instead DTC paying to the private operators money in lieu of entertaining its pass holders;

(c) the total amount DTC is paying to the private operators per month;

(d) whether a Committee was appointed

in 1989 to study the system and evolve a viable scheme for running the private and DTC buses in Delhi;

(e) if so, whether the report has since been submitted;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) if not, the reasons for the delay?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The scheme was abandoned since it suffered from a number of infirmities, chief among them being parallel running of PO buses with DTU buses, harassment of commuters and difficulties in checking of mal-practices by the private operators. This system was replaced by the Kilometrage scheme, under which DTC used to pay Kilometrage charges and provide conductor, to the private buses. However, during the DTC Employees' strike in March, 1988, this system collapsed since its continuance depended upon provision of conductors by DTC. Since then the operation of private buses was brought under a scheme called 'Earn & keep', under which private buses are allowed to operate with their own crew members and retain their earnings.

(c) On an average, DTC pays about Rs. 12 lakhs per month to the private operators.

(d) to (g). A Group was constituted in July, 1989 by Delhi Transport Corporation to study various options as the existing 'Earn and Keep' scheme was said to have certain limitations and to make alternate suggestions to the Chairman-cum-Managing Director, Delhi Transport Corporation. For a variety of reasons the Group did not meet and bring out any report. It is also not in existence now.