

Sadhan Kuthir areas of the town are shrinking and about one lakh people have been affected; and

(b) if so, the steps the Government propose to take to stop subsidence and to compensate the affected people?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH) : (a) As per information received from Coal India Limited (CIL), Katras More, Chouthai Kulhi, Hosanabad areas including the house named 'Sadhan Kutir', in and around the Jharia town which have unauthorised building constructed over land vested with Bharat Coking Coal Limited (BCCL) are vulnerable to subsidence. BCCL has been publishing appeals in local newspapers informing the residents about the situation and requesting them to vacate.

Subsequent to appearance of tension cracks on surface buildings at Katras More on 27.10.1996, district Administration after site investigation have estimated 219 houses in these localities to have developed cracks. According to an 'Expert Committee' cracks affecting the houses have developed due to movements in the old goaves triggered by underground fire.

(b) Dy Commissioner, Dhanbad after inspecting the affected sites is of the opinion that shifting of inhabitants in houses over non-coal bearing areas is the only solution. District Administration has requested the State Government of Bihar for financial assistance for initiating action to shift the affected persons. Deputy Commissioner, Dhanbad requested BCCL to pay Rs.15 lakhs purely on compassionate and humanitarian grounds for helping such affected families who are poor. This request of Deputy Commissioner, Dhanbad has been acceded to by the BCCL management.

Export Quota for Powerloom Sector

501. SHRI R. SAMBASIVA RAO : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to increase the textiles export quota for powerloom sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(c) the likely impact of such increase on powerloom sector and country's economy?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA) : (a) to (c) In the new Textile Export Entitlement Policy (Quota Policy) 1997-99 announced on 14.10.96, the percentage level of Powerloom Exporters' Entitlement (PEE) System has been increased from 5% to 10%.

It is too early to make an accurate assessment on the likely impact of such increase on powerloom sector and country's economy.

Backlog of SCs/STs in Banks

502. SHRI K.D. SULTANPURI : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the details of backlog of SC/ST posts in the nationalised banks during the last one year which still remaining unfilled;

(b) the steps taken to clear the backlog;

(c) whether Government propose to fix some target date for clearance of this backlog; and

(d) if so, the probable date thereof?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) As per available information, the total backlog in respect of 19 nationalised banks is as under :-

(Data Provisional)

Cadre	Backlog as on 1.7.1996	
	SC	ST
Officers	108	62
Clerks	553	445
Sub-staff	297	613

(b) the steps taken by the Government from time to time to fill up the reserved vacancies for SCs and STs in nationalised banks have been as under :-

- (1) Special recruitment drives have been carried out during the years 1989, 1990, 1992, 1993-94 and 1995-96.
- (2) The recruitment and representation position of the SCs and STs in the nationalised banks is reviewed through a comprehensive proforma by the Boards of Directors of each of the nationalised banks every six months and the position is being reported to the Government;
- (3) Pre-recruitment training is being imparted by all banks to the candidates appearing for the BSRB examinations;
- (4) Establishment of Centres for examination nearest to the areas of concentration of the ST population; and
- (5) Banks have been advised to hold training workshops for the personnel working in their SC/ST cells to make them fully aware of the need for implementation of the reservation policy.

(c) and (d). No cut off date can be fixed for clearance of backlog as many nationalised banks have signed Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with Reserve Bank of India which inter-alia prohibit fresh

recruitment for certain period. The backlog in these banks can be cleared after they are permitted to make fresh recruitment. Some of the banks are however participating in special Recruitment drive for SCs and STs which is ending on 31.3.1997.

Manufacture of Cigarettes

503. SHRI SOMJIBHAI DAMOR : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have granted approval to manufacture cigarettes by Phillip Morris Overseas Investment Corporation, USA and other Multinational companies;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government are aware of reports appeared in Business World dated 16-29th October, 1996, regarding manufacturing and launching of Marlboro cigarettes in the domestic market by multinational companies and its effectes;

(d) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto;

(e) whether manufacturing of cigarettes has been brought outside the purview of licensing even under foreign collaboration; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) and (b). No foreign collaboration approval has been granted to M/s. Phillip Morris Overseas Investment Corporation, USA for the manufacture of cigarettes. During the last four years only M/s. R.J. Reynolds Tobacco International SA, Switzerland have been granted approval for setting up a joint venture in India with 50% foreign equity participation for the manufacture of Cigarettes.

(c) and (d). Yes, Sir. No proposal has, however, been received so far for the manufacture and launching of Marlboro cigarettes from any foreign company.

(e) No, Sir. Manufacture of cigarettes attracts compulsory licensing under the industries (Development & Regulation) Act, 1951.

(f) Does not arise.

Gross Domestic Products

504. SHRI RAM NAIK : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the estimates of gross domestic product (GDP) during 1995-96, which were announced during July 1996, are likely to be revised downwards; and

(b) if so, the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) and (b). The advance estimates for the gross domestic product (GDP) announced by the

Central Statistical Organisation in July 1996 have been revised incorporating latest estimates of agricultural production and industrial production. The GDP for the year 1995-96 at factor cost at constant (1980-81) prices is now estimated at Rs. 2,67,461 crore (as against Rs. 2,68,671 crore estimated earlier. This adjustment has been necessitated due to lower growth estimate of GDP at factor cost at constant prices for agriculture, forestry and fishing sector. This is now placed at 0.9 per cent compared with 2.4 per cent estimated earlier.

Import Duty on Rubber and Edible Oil

505. SHRI P.C. THOMAS : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is a heavy demand to withdraw the reduction of import duty on natural rubber and edible oils; and

(b) if so, the response of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) and (b). Government has examined the representations seeking restoration of pre-budget rates of import duty on natural rubber and edible oils. It has not been found possible to accede to such request.

Amendment in Patent Law

506. SHRI BHAKTA CHARAN DAS :
SHRI JAGAT VIR SINGH DRONA :

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news appearing in the Indian Express dated August 10, 1996 captioned "India to face retaliation if Patent Laws do not toe global lines";

(b) whether the Government propose to amend the Patent Law in Line with the international laws;

(c) if so, the details of the proposed amendments; and

(d) by when a final decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) to (d). The World Trade Organisation (WTO) Agreement, inter-alia, contains an agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs) in respect of provisions concerning Intellectual Property Rights. Apart from the obligations which arose from January 1, 1995, India has time till January 1, 2000 to implement its obligations under the TRIPs Agreement and till January 1, 2005 to introduce product patents in the areas of technology not protected so far. For this purpose we have embarked on wider consultations.