

Decline in Export of Diamonds

3228. DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there has been a sharp decline in the export of diamonds;

(b) whether the diamond industry has been facing crisis;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) the steps taken to identify the problem in this regard; and

(e) the possibility explored to increase the export of diamonds?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) to (c). There has been substantial growth in export of diamonds over the last three years. Recently, there has been a marginal decline in value realisation in Dollar terms in spite of higher exports in quantity during April-October 1996 compared to the corresponding period in 1995 due to low prices offered in the international markets. The export of diamonds in value and quantity terms is as follows :

Item	(Value in US\$/Million) (Quantity in Lakh Carats)		
	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96
Diamonds	3574.50	3937.00	4577.54
	139.90	158.07	192.24
	Apr-Oct'96	Apr-Oct'95	
	(Provisional)		
	2547.10	2633.05	
	109.76	106.91	

Source : DGCI & S : Exports for 1993-94, 1994-95, 1995-96.

GJEPC : Exports for Apr-Oct '96 and Caratwise Exports since 1993-94.

(d) and (e). Exporters of Gem and Jewellery had brought to the notice of the Govt. that the interest rates on post-shipment credit and routing of import documents through banks had added to their costs and consequently had affected their competitiveness in the world market. Keeping in view the present sluggish demand and low price in the world market, RBI has recently lowered the interest rates on post shipment credits and has allowed authorised dealers to receive import documents upto US\$ 25,000 by value, or its equivalent direct from the overseas seller subject of fulfilment of certain requirements.

Production of Cotton yarn

3229. DR. ASIM BALA : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the production of cotton yarn has been progressively increased; and

(b) if so, the production of cotton yarn during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA): (a) and (b). The figures of production of cotton yarn during the last three years are given below :

Year	Cotton Yarn (in million kgs.)
1993-94	1622
1994-95	1586
1995-96 (Provisional)	1738

MMTC Projects in UP

3230. SHRI BHAGWAN SHANKAR RAWAT : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Minerals and Metals Trading Corporation of India Ltd., (MMTC) has made any plan to launch some projects in Uttar Pradesh; and

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the estimated cost and the employment generation potentiality of those projects?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Coffee Board

3231. SHRI S.D.N.R. WADIYAR :
SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA :

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Coffee Board has introduced Voluntary Retirement Scheme in view of scraping of coffee pooling;

(b) if so, the total number of employees opted for the said scheme during the last three years;

(c) whether the Government propose to convert the Coffee Board into a research institution to take up research and conduct course for the development of coffee; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?