

(b) Based on the investigations carried out by the Directorate General of Anti-Evasion, a show-cause notice has been issued in August '96 to M/s Shree Chandra Tobacco Ltd. and M/s G.T.C. Ltd. for alleged evasion of Central Excise duty of Rs. 18.76 crores. In addition, cases of evasion have been detected against M/s G.T.C. and their franchise units during 1995 and show-cause notices demanding Central Excise duty of Rs. 364.86 crores were issued to these units. Evasion is a clandestine activity and the assessee indulges in such activities for unlawful gains.

(c) The Government is committed to take stern action against the evaders and any official who are found to have colluded. The evaders are liable for paying the duty, mandatory penalty and interest on the quantum of duty found to be evaded in terms of the provisions of Central Excise Act, 1944 and they are also liable for prosecution. In all, one Assistant Commissioner, 19 Superintendents and 25 Inspectors have been placed under suspension. Regarding recovery, proceedings can be initiated only after the show-cause notices are adjudicated.

Banks Strike

1625. SHRI SUBRAHMANYAM NELAVALA : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the strikes in Banks all over the country have been increasing for the last two years;

(b) whether these bank strikes put heavy loss to the exchequer;

(c) whether frequent strikes by the Banks have thrown banking operations out of gear;

(d) if so, whether the Government propose to ban bank strikes in future;

(e) if so, whether any such legislation is being considered by the Government; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) to (f) Information is being collected from the banks and will be laid on the Table of the house.

Tea Estate Under TTCl in Jalpaiguri

1626. PROF. JITENDRA NATH DAS : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Looksan Tea Estate under TTCl in Jalpaiguri, West Bengal has not been provided capital grant since handing over it to TTCl in order to improve the condition of the garden and increase the productivity;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (DR. BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) and (b) Government has not disbursed capital grants to Tea Trading Corporation of India for development of any of the tea gardens owned by the Corporation. These gardens are however, eligible for assistance under various developmental schemes of the Tea Board and these have been availed of by TTCl for Looksan Tea Estate.

(c) In view of persistent losses suffered by TTCl's Garden Division, the Government had decided to dispose of all the five tea gardens under TTCl. The sale process could not be finalised due to legal constraints and financial difficulties of the prospective buyers. The Government is seized of the position and is exploring various options.

Janata Cloth Scheme

1627. SHRI RANJIB BISWAL : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) the names of the States where centrally sponsored hank yarn and Janata Cloth Schemes are being launched;

(b) the amount of allocation made to those States and the amount of subsidy granted/provided under those schemes during the last three years;

(c) the extent to which the main objectives of those schemes have been achieved in those States; and

(d) the steps taken to effectively implement those schemes?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R. L. JALAPPA) : (a) and (b) Hank Yarn Price Subsidy Scheme was in operation during the period 1995-96.

the Janata Cloth Scheme is in operation during the year 1997-98 in eight States namely, Assam, Bihar, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.

Under these schemes, statewide financial targets are not allocated. Statement of releases made under these schemes during the last three year is attached.

(c) Janata Cloth Scheme has provided sustained employment to handloom weavers and also switched over some of the weavers from production of Janata Cloth to Non-Janata Cloth.

Hank Yarn Price Subsidy Scheme helped in mitigating the hardship caused due to steep hike in cotton yarn prices.

(d) Implementation of these Schemes has been reviewed, from time to time, in the meeting held with the officials of the State Governments and by the State Governments at its level.