

Banks in "Essential Services"

627. SHRI RAM NAIK :
SHRI MOHAN RAWALE :
PROF. P.J. KURIEN :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that there is a general demand to declare the banking industry as "essential service" to check the increasing threats of strike;

(b) if so, whether the Government propose to declare the banking industry as "essential service"; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) to (c) The banking industry is notified as a "Public Utility Service" under the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947 from time to time.

Vacant Post in KVIC, Ahmedabad

628. SHRI SANAT MEHTA : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the post of Deputy Director of Khadi and Village Industries Commission at Ahmedabad has been vacant since last five years;

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

(c) the steps taken by the Government to fill up the said post?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

Smuggling of Cardamom and Clove

629. SHRI P.C. THOMAS :
PROF. P.J. KURIEN :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that cardamom and cloves are being smuggled to India in large scale;

(b) whether the Government has booked any such case during the last one year;

(c) if so, the details of cases booked, persons or companies involved, quantity and items seized;

(d) the action taken in each case;

(e) whether the Government are aware that Nepal is importing more than ten times of their domestic need of Cardamom;

(f) if so, the quantity of import and through which port this import takes place; and

(g) the steps taken by the Government to check smuggling of cardamom and cloves?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) Available reports indicate that cardamom and cloves are being smuggled into India.

(b) to (d) Information is being collected.

(e) Available reports suggest that Nepal is importing cardamom in excess of its domestic needs. However, it is difficult to estimate whether the imports of cardamom made by Nepal are ten times more than their domestic need.

(f) Imports of cardamom by Nepal from third countries through the port of Calcutta is furnished below;

Year	Qty (in tonnes)
1995-96	33.975
1996-97	3609.986
1997-98 (Upto July 97)	809.240

(g) Anti Smuggling agencies are alert to detect & prevent smuggling including smuggling of cardamom and cloves. Specific measures taken include intensified surveillance and targetting of intelligence on the areas sensitive to smuggling especially on the Indo-Nepal border. Matter is also being taken up under the existing provision of the Indo-nepal treaty with HMG Nepal to put an end to the abuse of privileges by the unscrupulous Nepalese importers indulging in smuggling of these third country goods into India.

NABARD Help for Orissa

630. SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the NABARD has taken any step to help the farmers in the drought hit areas of Orissa during the current financial year;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the regional rural banks and the co-operative banks in the rural as well as urban areas in the State are also helping the farmers of the drought hit areas; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) and (b) National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) has reported that it has provided necessary