

### **Wages to Workers of Tea Trading Corporation of India**

2704. SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that the workers of Tea Trading Corporation of India are not getting their wages for a long time;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps being taken by the Government to pay their wages?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) to (c) Tea Trading Corporation of India (TTCI), a wholly owned subsidiary of STC, is facing an acute financial crunch being a loss making Company and has been unable to discharge its obligations. The total liability of the Company is estimated around Rs. 36 crores as on 31/1/97. The Corporation considered the following options :

- (a) Outright sale of the shares of the Corporation;
- (b) Bifurcation of the existing Company in case (a) is not found possible; and
- (c) STC to initiate liquidation proceedings in case options (a) and (b) above are not found practicable.

TTCI has been unable to implement the options at (a) and (b) above.

### **Foreign Banks**

2705. SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE :  
SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware of the move of a number of foreign banks to reduce the number of their branches in West Bengal;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) : (a) to (c) As reported by Reserve Bank of India (RBI) ANZ Grindlays Bank has closed/merged five out of eighteen branches in Calcutta under its redistribution plan. The considerations for closure/merger of branches are as under :

1. Close proximity to another branch of the bank.
2. Past performance below expected level; and
3. Low future potential.

Citi Bank has closed one out of its two branches in Calcutta on commercial considerations.

### **Amendment to Explosive Act, 1884**

2706. SHRI BIJOY KUMAR "BIJOY":  
SHRI ANUP LAL YADAV :  
SHRI P.S. GADHAVI :

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal to amend the Indian Explosives Act, 1884 in view of the experience gained during the last ninety years;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the time by which the amendment bill is likely to be brought before Parliament; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT) : (a) to (c) There is no proposal to amend the Indian Explosives Act, 1884 at present. However, the provisions related to this act are reviewed from time to time. Last such amendments were carried out in 1983.

### **Plantation Companies**

2707. SHRI P.R. KYNDIAH : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the SEBI has recently issued regulatory directives to many plantation companies to stop collecting public deposits unless they secure a credit rating acceptable to SEBI and thereby to provide security cover to the investing public;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether despite this directives many plantation companies still accept public deposits without securing any credit rating as stipulated by SEBI;

(d) if so, the punitive measures the Government propose to take against these plantation companies;

(e) whether the Government have examined the Gangopadhyay Committee Report which emphatically contests the growth rate of trees as projected by the plantation companies just to mislead the gullible investor; and

(f) if so, the action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. SEBI has informed that based on the interim recommendation of Dr. Dave Committee set up to frame regulations for collective investment schemes, SEBI has issued directions that no plantation company shall mobilise any money from investors under the existing schemes unless the schemes carry a credit rating from any of the recognised credit rating agencies.

(c) and (d) SEBI has stated that wherever they have received complaints about plantation companies mobilising deposits without obtaining credit rating, such companies have been asked to submit Auditors' Certificates on their books of Accounts. SEBI has also been taking appropriate action including legal action wherever necessary.

(e) and (f) The Gangopadhyay Committee report has been discussed by Dr. Dave Committee on collective investment schemes. SEBI has informed that regulations for these schemes under formulation would address the concerns expressed in the Gangopadhyay report.

#### SC/ST Employees in IFCI

2708. PROF. JOGENDRA KAWADE : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the total strength of staff of the Industrial Finance Corporation of India Limited (IFCI) and strength of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe employees among them;

(b) whether there is any backlog of reserved vacancies for SCs/STs;

(c) if so, the details thereof; post-wise;

(d) whether the IFCI propose to fill up these posts through special drive; and

(e) if so, the time by which the vacant posts are likely to be filled up?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) : (a) The Industrial Finance Corporation of India Ltd. is having a total staff strength of 1049 which includes 157 Scheduled Caste employees and 13 Scheduled Tribe employees.

(b) to (e) The information is being collected and to the extent available will be laid on Table of the House.

#### Muga Silk

2709. DR. JAYANTA RONGPI : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) the total production of Muga Silk in the country during the last three years, State-wise;

(b) whether certain environmental diseases are posing threat to Muga Silk production in the North-East;

(c) if so, the steps taken by Government to solve the problem; and

(d) any proposed specific schemes of the Government to encourage Muga Silk growers?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RANA) : (a) State-wise Muga raw silk production during the

last three years is given below. The figures for 1997-98 are provisional subject to reconfirmation by the concerned State Governments.

	(in tonnes)		
	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98 (Prov.)
Assam	86.00	72.00	60.00
Arunachal Pradesh	0.10	0.14	0.16
Manipur	0.20	0.06	Negligible
Mizoram	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
Meghalaya	0.94	1.14	2.00
Nagaland	0.06	Negligible	Negligible
West Bengal	0.05	0.08	0.09
Total	87.35	73.42	62.25

(b) Muga Silk worms are reared out-doors in Som and Soalu plantations, exposed to pests & predators and climatic variations which at time causes viral, fungal and bacterial disease to appear in some rearings. There has been no unusual out-break of diseases which affects the muga silk production in the North-East.

(c) The Central Silk Board supplies disease free basic seed for further multiplication and distribution to the muga silkworm rearers. The Regional Muga Research Station has conducted studies on the incidence and management of diseases as well as pests & predators of both muga silkworm and its host plants. A package on integrated management of muga silkworm diseases, pests & predators has also improved technology of muga silkworm rearing evolved by the Regional Muga Research Station at Boko (Assam) under Central Silk Board has been recommended to State Sericulture Departments for introduction among muga silkworm rearers. In addition a Disease Monitoring Cell has been constituted, comprising of research and technical personnel from Central Silk Board and Deptt. of Sericulture in the North Eastern States to monitor the disease control by undertaking inspection of silkworm crops and suggest on-the-spot remedial measures for preventing crop losses.

(d) The Govt. of India have sanctioned six catalytic developmental schemes namely (i) Augmentation of Muga Food Plants, (ii) Providing Training & Start-up Tools to farmers to practice muga culture, (iii) Support to States for Upgradation of Seed Multiplication Infrastructure, (iv) Pilot scheme for support to private graineurs for production of quality muga seed, (v) Support to agencies (NGOs/ Cooperative Societies) for popularisation of improved reeling/spinning devices for muga and (vi) Crop Insurance Support for Muga, for development of muga sericulture in the North Eastern States.