

[Translation]

Competency of Indian Industry

3483. SHRI RAM NARAIN MEENA : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether Indian industries are not proving to be viable in the international industrial competitions;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by the Government in this regard?

(c) whether the Government have formulated any plan to revive the closed industries and to increase the industrial production, particularly in Rajasthan; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) Government has taken a number of steps for revival of sick industrial units, including those in Rajasthan, which, inter alia, include guidelines of Reserve Bank of India, amalgamation of sick units with healthy units, setting up of Board for Industrial & Financial Reconstruction under Sick Industrial Companies (Special Provision) Act, National Renewal Fund, National Equity Fund, etc.

[English]

Scam in Coal Mines

3484. PROF. AJIT KUMAR MEHTA :
SHRI SURENDRA PRASAD YADAV
(JHANJIHARPUR) :

Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) whether the ex-servicemen employed in the mining of coal in Bihar have been alleged in scam involving crores of rupees;

(b) if so, whether the Government have set up any Enquiry Committee to look into this affairs;

(c) if so, the details thereof indicating its findings; and

(d) the action taken or proposed to be taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI DILIP RAY) : (a) As per information received from the Coal India Limited (CIL), in none of the coal mines of the three subsidiary companies of CIL operating in the State of Bihar namely the Central Coalfields Limited, Bharat Coking Coal Limited and Eastern Coalfields Limited, the ex-servicemen are deployed in coal mining.

(b) to (d) Do not arise in view of the answer to par (a) of the question.

Reduction in Excise Duty

3485. SHRI RAVI SITARAM NAIK : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have reduced the excise duty by 4% in the budget on a large number of items of mass consumption including soft drink;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have taken any steps to ensure that the benefit of excise duty reduction is passed on to the consumers;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the Government have received any complaints against several companies including MNC's engaged in production of soft drinks and which have not passed on the concessions to consumers; and

(f) if, so the action taken by the Government against these companies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) The Government have not reduced excise duty by 4% on a large number of items of mass consumption in the Budget for 1998-99. There has also been no change in this year's budget in the excise duty applicable to aerated waters popularly known as soft drinks.

(b) to (f) Do not arise in view of (a) above.

Import of Textile Products From China etc.

3486. SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) whether there has been a steep rise in the imports of textile products from China, Nepal and some other countries;

(b) if so, the reasons therefore and its impact on handloom and powerloom sectors of the country;

(c) the textile items which are being increasingly imported from China, Nepal, Bangladesh and other countries and since which year; and

(d) the steps taken to reduce the import of these items from those countries to safeguard the interests of the handloom/powerloom sectors?

THE MINISTER FOR TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RANA) : (a) to (d) The imports of textiles yarn, fabrics and