

by the USA, namely, that India has not complied with Article 70.8 and Article 70.9 of Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) Agreement. The panel process is under way and India is defending the case before the World Trade Organization (WTO).

Import of Cloves

2444. SHRI T. GOVINDAN : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government is taking appropriate action to ensure the implementation of the policy of Canalised import of cloves through NAFED/STCL during the next five years for giving partial relief to the producers; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) and (b) The present import policy allows import of cloves by an individual importer against surrender of freely transferable/tradeable Special Import Licence (SIL) equivalent to 5 times the CIF value of imported cloves, whereas for the Government agencies, Spices Trading Corporation Limited (STCL) and National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India (NAFED), import of cloves is allowed without surrender of SIL. However, cloves are freely importable into India if imported from SAARC countries, namely, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Maldives, Sri Lanka or Pakistan.

Vysya Bank

2445. DR. BIZAY SONKAR SHASTRI : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 580 dated November 21, 1997 and state:

(a) whether the information has since been collected;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto;

(d) whether the Bank is not expected to open Agricultural Financial Branches; and

(e) if so, the reasons for which the Bank has not yet followed the RBI guidelines/instructions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE & INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARATHANAN) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has reported that in its annual financial inspection of the bank at its Head Office, very few rural branches are taken up for inspection as test check. A perusal of the Inspection Report of two

rural branches revealed that the credit deposit ratio as on 31 March 1997 was low in Vella and Anagalle branches. Apart from instances of violation of RBI directions of opening of SB A/c. in the name of ineligible institutions, issue of demand drafts of Rs. 50,000/- and above against cash receipts and payment of incentives to staff for deposit mobilisation in these two branches, there are no other serious irregularities.

The details of number of loans and amount outstanding in respect of loans extended through rural branches during the last three years is given below:

As on	No. of Accounts	Amount outstanding (Rs. in lakhs)
31.3.95	99787	12076
31.3.96	100706	11084
31.3.97	101703	13987

The details of amount lost by the bank as bad debt during the last three years in the rural branches is given below:

Year	Amount (Rs. in lakhs)
1994-95	27.33
1995-96	18.08
1996-97	10.28

The non-recovery is mainly due to crop failure, other natural reasons and to some extent wilful default by the borrowers.

(d) and (e) According to Reserve Bank of India (they have advised scheduled commercial banks that) only Convenors of State Level Bankers Committee should open Specialised Agricultural Finance branches. Vysya Bank Ltd is not a convener of SLBC in any State.

Export of Coir Products

2446. SHRI MULLAPALLY RAMACHANDRAN : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the value of Coir products exported during 1996-97 and 1997-98;

(b) the target fixed for export during the current financial year; and

(c) the details of the countries that are mainly importing coir products from India?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT) : (a) The value of coir products exported during 1996-97 and 1997-98 is as under:

1996-97	Rs. 212.58 crores.
1997-98(P)	Rs. 226.51 crores.