

deterioration in asset quality in a year when several major segments of industry passed through difficult conditions.

[English]

FERA Cases Against T.V. Channels

*158. SHRI ASHOK NAMDEORAO MOHOL :

SHRI S. S. OWASI :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large amount of foreign exchange is going abroad through advertisements by Indian exporters on foreign T.V. Channels;

(b) if so, the number of cases booked under FERA in this regard;

(c) whether the Government propose to formulate a comprehensive policy on advertisements by Indian exporters on foreign T.V. Channels; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

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) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has initiated investigations against seven foreign TV Channels for suspected violations of the provisions of the Foreign Exchange Regulation Act, 1973 (FERA).

(c) and (d) At present, the exporters having export earnings of Rs. 10.00 lakhs or more during the previous two years or those maintaining Export Earners Foreign Currency (EEFC) accounts are eligible to advertise on overseas TV Channels.

Export of Rubber Based Products

*159. SHRI P.C. THOMAS : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the export of Rubber based products has increased;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Rubberwood products are being exported;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps being taken by the Government to boost the export of these items?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAM-KRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The export of rubber based products has increased from Rs. 1225.2 crores in 1996-97 to Rs. 1338 crores in 1997-98.

(Source : Chemicals & Allied Products Export Promotion Council, Calcutta)

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. Rubberwood products are being exported in the form of chairs, brush blocks, kitchen cabinet shutters, parquet floorings, lumber blocks, etc.

(e) The following steps have been taken as part of the ongoing efforts to boost exports. Continuing interaction with the trade and industry to identify and deal with problems related to exports; extension of Market Development Assistance to the exporting community through the Export Promotion Council for participation in trade fairs/exhibitions; organisation of buyer-seller meets and other market promotion activities.

[Translation]

External Commercial Borrowings

*160. SHRI MANIBHAI RAMJIBHAI CHAUDHARI:

SHRI JANARDAN PRASAD MISRA :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to amend the existing external commercial borrowings policy;

(b) if so, the details of the amendment likely to be made; and

(c) the reasons for amending the existing policy?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

[English]

Foreign Equity Capital in Coal Sector

*161. SHRI NARENDRA BUDANIA :

SHRI SURESH CHANDEL :

Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have decided to permit hundred per cent foreign equity capital in coal mining sector;

(b) if so, whether the Government propose to amend the Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Act, 1973 in order to issue more licences for the purpose in future;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the time by which the approval for foreign equity capital in Coal mining sector is likely to be accorded?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI DILIP RAY) : (a) No separate policy to allow 100% foreign equity in the coal mining sector has been laid down by the Government. All downstream investments by foreign holding companies through joint ventures and subsidiaries, including 100% subsidiaries, require prior Government approval from the Foreign Investment Promotion Board.

(b) No amendment to the Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Act, 1973 is necessary for permitting hundred per cent foreign equity capital in captive coal mining projects in the private sector.

(c) and (d) Do not arise in view of the answer to part (b) of the question.

[Translation]

Trade Treaties

1463. SHRIMATI SURYAKANTA PATIL : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the names of the countries with whom Government have signed the trade treaties till March 30, 1998 alongwith the areas thereof;

(b) the names of the items likely to be expected or imported under these treaties;

(c) the period for which these treaties would last; and

(d) the items which have been included in the restricted list of items and is likely effects on the Indian economy?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) and (c) A Statement is attached.

(b) and (d) The items which are agreed for Export and Import in the Trade Agreements change from time to time when the bilateral issues are reviewed in the Joint Commission/Joint Trade Committee Meeting. Restrictions of any kind of Import and Export of any items is guided by the EXIM Policy.

Statement

Sl. No.	Name of the Country	Nature of the Agreement	Date of Signing	Validity period	Remarks
1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (former)	Trade and Economic Cooperation	4.11.72	1.1.73	Automatic renewal for a period of one year at a time.
2.	Hungary	Trade and Economic Cooperation	15.12.77	1.1.78 to 31.12.80	Automatic renewal for a period of one year at a time.
3.	Poland	Trade and Economic Cooperation	26.11.90	Indefinite period	May be terminated upon written notice by either party.
4.	Romania	Trade and Economic Cooperation	23.2.93	Indefinite period	May be terminated upon written notice by either party.
5.	Czech Republic	Trade and Economic Cooperation	15.3.93	14.3.98	Automatic renewal for a further period of one year at a time
6.	Slovak Republic	Trade and Economic Cooperation	14.5.93	13.5.98	Automatic renewal for a period of five years at a time.