

### Tea Companies

4551. SHRI A.F. GOLAM OSMANI : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) the number of Public and Private Sector tea companies in the country;

(b) the details of the tea gardens owned by these companies; and

(c) the tea produced and exported by them during the last three years ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) and (b) There are 6 companies in public sector and around 554 companies in the private sector who own tea gardens in India. At present 49 tea gardens are owned by the public sector companies and the private sector own 1,569 gardens.

(c) Production and export of tea during the last three years has been as follows :

Year	Production (Qty. in M.Kgs)	
	Public Sector	Private Sector
1995-96	25.00	686.31
1996-97	25.50	698.26
1997-98	26.00	758.29

  

Year	Exports (Qty. In M.Kgs)	
	Public Sector	Private Sector
1995-96	7.81	159.66
1996-97	5.56	163.48
1997-98	5.92	205.84

[Translation]

### Undisbursed Foreign Loan/Assistance

4552. SHRI SURESH CHANDEL :  
SHRI BHERU LAL MEENA :  
SHRI NARENDRA BUDANIA :  
SHRI RAMA CHANDRA MALLICK :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the foreign assistance/loan is put to optimum use in the country;

(b) if so, the quantum of financial assistance/loan received from all external sources during each of the last three years, till date;

(c) the quantum of funds out of such loan/assistance lying unutilised or undisbursed in Central and State sector as on March 31, 1998; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government for early disbursement of undisbursed loans so that the country could be benefited therefrom and the burden of commitment charges and interest is not unnecessarily borne by India ?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The financial assistance/loan received from all the external sources during 1995-96, 1996-97 and 1997-98 were Rs. 11,022.12 crore, Rs. 11,978.49 crore and Rs. 11,706.19 crore, respectively. In 1998-99, external assistance of Rs. 965.80 crore has been received upto May, 1998.

(c) The quantum of funds lying unutilized as 31st March, 1998 in the Central and State Sector were Rs. 31,953.57 crore and Rs. 33,548.64 crore, respectively.

(d) The Government has taken several steps to improve utilization of foreign aid, such as release of 100% external assistance as Additional Central Assistance (ACA) to the States in all sectors, release of advance ACA in the beginning of financial year, intensified monitoring of projects through quarterly reviews by the Department of Economic Affairs, setting up of a Project Management Unit in the Department of Economic Affairs well as appointment of Nodal Officers for various States. An external assistance monitoring information system to strengthen external portfolio management is also being implemented in the Department of Economic Affairs and select States/Central Ministries.

### Computerisation of Rural Branches of Banks

4553. SHRI RAVINDRA KUMAR PANDEY : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to Computerise Rural branches of nationalised Banks in various States including Bihar;

(b) if so, the State-wise number of branches which have been computerised and the number of bank branches which have not yet been computerised; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to computerise all the bank branches?

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) and (c) Computerisation of bank branches including rural branches is taken up by Nationalised banks in a phased manner

depending upon various factors e.g. volume of business handled by the branch, needs of clients, availability of funds etc. In view of this it is not possible to indicate a time frame by which all the branches of nationalised bank will be computerised.

(b) A statement indicating the state-wise number of computerised rural branches of nationalised banks is given below .

Sl. No.	Name of the State	Number of Computerised Rural Branches
1.	Andhra Pradesh	4
2.	Bihar	2
3.	Delhi	4
4.	Goa	3
5.	Gujarat	35
6.	Haryana	8
7.	Karnataka	8
8.	Kerala	2
9.	Madhya Pradesh	2
10.	Maharashtra	7
11.	Orissa	1
12.	Punjab	2
13.	Rajasthan	1
14.	Tamilnadu	19
15.	Uttar Pradesh	6
16.	West Bengal	2
17.	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	1
<b>Total No. of Rural Branches</b>		<b>107</b>

[English]

### **Paper and Newspaper Industry**

4554. SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE :  
SHRI KAMALNATH :  
SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA :

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the cost of production of paper and newsprint in India is higher as compared with the cost of imported finished products;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is attributable to higher levy of customs duty on import of raw material like pulp and waste paper than on finished products;

(d) if so, the details of import duty on the raw material and finished products and the difference between the two;

(e) whether manufacturers of newspaper has urged the Government for withdrawal of 10% customs duty imposed during 1996;

(f) if so, the details thereof and reaction of the Government thereof; and

(g) the steps being taken by the Government to help indigenous manufacturers to meet the competition ?

**THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT) :** (a) and (b) Cost of production of paper and newsprint in India varies depending upon the type of raw material used. The cost of production of paper in India, on an average, is lower than the cost of import of finished products. However cost of production of newsprint in India on an average is higher than the cost of import of finished products.

(c) Higher levy of customs duty on import of raw material like wastepaper is one of the factors responsible for higher cost of production of newsprint in India.

(d) The details of import duty on the raw material and on finished products are given in the Statement attached.

(e) and (f) The Indian Newspaper Society which represents the newspaper publishers has been demanding withdrawal of the customs duty on newsprint. In the current years budget the duty has been reduced from 10% to 5% and there is no special additional duty of 4% on newsprint.

(g) The Government has taken the following steps to help indigenous manufacturers to meet the competition :-

(i) Concessional excise duty has been extended for paper & paper board manufactured out of 75% and above non-conventional raw material.

(ii) No customs duty is levied on import of wood pulp for manufacture of newsprint.

(iii) The basic customs duty on import of Paper & Paper board has been increased from 20% to 30%.

(iv) There is no excise duty on newsprint manufactured by a manufacturer of newsprint registered under Schedule I of the Newsprint Control Order, 1962 and supplied against a purchase order placed upon such manufacturer by a newspaper registered by the Registrar of Newspapers for India under the provisions of the Press and Registration of Books Act, 1867.