

coal production has not been able to keep pace with the increase in demand from the steel sector.

Import of coking coal required for metallurgical purpose cannot be totally stopped, since these are blended with indigenous coal to improve its quality. India has limited reserves of coking coal as well as superior grades of non-coking coal. However, steps are being taken to augment indigenous production of these grades of coal to the extent practicable. These include opening of new mines and increasing productivity and improvement of infrastructural facilities. Private Sector companies engaged in production of iron and steel, cement and generation of power have been permitted to take up coal mining for captive consumption. These put together are expected to increase domestic coking coal and coal production.

[English]

#### Shortage of Small Denomination Currency Notes

1506. COL. SONA RAM CHOUDHARY :

SHRI SATNAM SINGH KAINTH :

SHRI JANG BAHADUR SINGH PATEL :

DR. Y.S. RAJASEKARA REDDY :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is an acute shortage of small denomination currency notes (especially Rupees one, two and five) in the country consequent to which torn/soiled notes are in circulations;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the measures being adopted by the Government to overcome this shortage; and

(d) the action proposed to be taken to stop circulation of torn/soiled currency notes?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) : (a) to (c) The lower denomination notes of Re. 1, Rs. 2 and Rs. 5 have been coined and the capacity so released has been diverted for production of higher denomination notes. Therefore, printing of these notes has been stopped (Re. 1 from September, 1994; Rs. 2 from January, 1995; and Rs. 5 from November, 1995).

With a view to improving supply of currency notes/coins, Government has taken various steps like (i)

modernisation of the existing two note printing presses at Nasik and Dewas; (ii) setting up of two more note printing presses under the direct control of Reserve Bank of India (i.e., one at Mysore in Karnataka and the other at Salboni in West Bengal); (iii) Modernisation of India Government Mints at Calcutta, Hyderabad and Mumbai; (iv) complete coinisation of Re. 1, Rs. 2 and Rs. 5 and diversion of the capacity for printing of higher denomination notes; and (v) import of printed notes to the extent of 3600 million pieces (of a total face value of Rs. 1,00,000 crores) and 2000 million pieces of coins (of a total face value of Rs. 260 crores) as a one time measure.

(d) Under the RBI Note Refund Rules, 1975, RBI has delegated full powers to all the public sector banks maintaining currency chests to provide facilities to the members of public for exchanging mutilated, torn and soiled notes. All other branches of public sector banks have also been authorised by RBI to exchange soiled and slightly mutilated notes. These instructions are also reiterated to the Chairmen of all the public sector banks from time to time by RBI in order to ensure that such powers are exercised by them in letter and spirit. All complaints regarding banks' failure to act according to the above rules, are promptly taken up by RBI with the concerned banks for remedial action.

#### Excise Duty Evasion

1507. SHRI MOHAN RAWALE: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have conducted a special audit of around 100 large and medium corporate houses spread across the country to check evasion of excise duties;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the outcome 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) to (c) Upto date information is not readily available. The same is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

#### Flood of Bhutan Notes and Coins in North Bengal

1508. SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Bhutan notes and coins are being