

as defined in sub-section (1) of Section 3 of the Companies Act, 1956 is free to explore and exploit the mineral reserves after getting a prospecting licence or mining lease in accordance with the provisions of the Mines and Minerals (Regulation and Development) Act, 1957 and Rules framed thereunder. As per information available on foreign investment, Foreign Investment Promotion Board has cleared 51 applications for foreign investment in the mineral sector during the period September, 1992 to February, 1999. The amount of investment involved in these applications comes to Rs. 3158 crores. As many as 9 foreign multi-national companies through their Indian subsidiaries individually or in collaboration with Indian public sector and private sector companies besides an Indian public sector company have been granted 44 prospecting licences over large areas in the states of Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh for high value minerals like gold, silver, basemetals, nickel, cadmium, etc.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The National Mineral Policy, 1993 encourages foreign equity investment in joint ventures in mining promoted by Indian companies. Guidelines for aerial prospecting over large areas were issued in October, 1996, which permit grant of prospecting licence for areas upto 5000 sq. km. for a single prospecting licence and 10,000 sq. km. for a single company in the entire country subject to a scheme of relinquishment so that a licensee is left with an area of 25 sq. km. at the end of the third year. As per the guidelines issued by the Government of India on January 17, 1997, foreign equity participation of upto 50% in the mining sector would be automatic, except for gold, silver, diamond and precious stones. For these minerals approval would be given by the Foreign Investment Promotion Board, on a case to case basis. Government has also permitted automatic approval route for foreign equity participation upto 74% for services incidental to mining viz. drilling, shafting, reclamation of mines, surveys/mapping (excluding services related to gold, silver and precious/semi precious stones) and basic metals and alloys industries.

Credit to SSI

1676. SHRI T.B. BAALU : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the small scale industries are suffering from non-availability of credit from nationalised banks; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Government to rehabilitate the SSIs and providing them more credit facilities?

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 (b) As reported by Reserve Bank of India (RBI), the outstanding credit to SSI Sector as on March, 1998 is Rs. 38,109 crores as compared to Rs. 31,542 crores as on March, 1997. The outstanding credit to SSI has shown an increase of Rs. 6,567 crores as compared to Rs. 2,060 crores during the same period last year. In order to further improve the availability of credit to SSI, Finance Minister in his Budget Speech has *inter-alia* announced the increase in limit for composite loan by SIDBI from Rs. 2 lakhs to Rs. 5 lakhs and increase in ceiling of aggregate turnover from Rs. 4 crores to Rs. 5 crores for computation of working capital limit on the basis of 20% of the annual turnover.

Export from Delhi

1677. SHRI VIJAY GOEL : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the forex earnings of the National Capital Territory of Delhi as a result of exports during each of the last three years; and

(b) the steps taken to remove the infrastructural bottlenecks for exporters based in the National Capital Territory of Delhi?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) The Central Government has data about forex earnings of the country as a whole; such data is not maintained State or Union Territory-wise.

(b) The Central Government has been taking steps on a continuous basis to remove infrastructural bottlenecks for exports. Two Inland Container Depots (ICD) at Tughlakabad and Patparganj are functioning in Delhi. An ICD at Loni on the borders of NCR of Delhi and Uttar Pradesh, has recently been approved. An air cargo complex is functioning at the Indra Gandhi International airport for handling export/import of goods by air. Facilities for separate handling and storage of export cargo of perishable products has been set up at the Indra Gandhi