

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[English]

Exploitation of Mines and Mineral Resources in Birbhum (West Bengal)

*692. SHRI GADADHAR SAHA : Will the Minister of STEEL, MINES AND COAL be pleased to state :

(a) whether the work and survey has been undertaken for exploration and exploitation of mines and mineral resources in Birbhum in West Bengal and if so, the results thereof;

(b) whether there is any proposal under consideration of Government for setting up industries based on coal and other mineral resources available in many areas of Birbhum;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL, MINES AND COAL (SHRI VASANT SATHE) :

(a) Yes, Sir. As a result of the surveys for minerals carried out in Birbhum district (West Bengal) a total reserve of about 533 million tonnes of coal, 127.55 million tonnes of China clay and 4.5 million tonnes of fire clay resources have been estimated.

(b) to (d). Detailed investigation for coal in Birbhum district has been taken up jointly by the State Directorate of Mines and Minerals, West Bengal and the Geological Survey of India, and the work is in progress.

West Bengal Projects Limited, a subsidiary of West Bengal Small Industries Corporation is going to have their china clay mine and Washery at Makdum Nagar in Md. Bazar, West Bengal. West Bengal Mineral Development and Trading Corporation Ltd. has already set up a stone-crushing unit for building stone at Pachmi and Hatgacha, Md. Bazar. Exploitation of hot spring water of Barkeshwar as natural mineral water is under active consideration of the State Government.

However, setting up of industries based on coal would take longer and the techno-economic viability needs to be studied.

Decision Regarding Splitting L.I.C.

*698. PROF. MADHU DANDAVALE : SHRI SHANTARAM POTDUKHE :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have taken a decision in regard to splitting the Life Insurance Corporation; and

(b) if so, the reasons on which the decision is based ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY) : (a) and (b). A Bill to reorganise the Life Insurance Corporation into five independent units, as reported by the Joint Committee of Parliament, was introduced in the 7th Lok Sabha on 25-8-1984. The Bill later lapsed with the dissolution of the Lok Sabha. It has since been decided by the Government not to proceed with the introduction of the Bill pending further examination.

Opening of Income Tax Office in Every District

*699. SHRI HUSSAIN DALWAI : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Income Tax Department has its offices in every district of the country;

(b) if not, the number of districts where there is no Income Tax Office at present;

(c) whether Government propose to establish Income Tax Offices in every district for the convenience of the administration as well as the assesseees and practitioners; and

(d) the target date fixed by the Income Tax Department for the same ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY) : (a) and (b). According to information readily available, the stations at which Income-tax Offices are located are about 372. There may be Income-tax Offices at more than one place in a particular district whereas none in several others.

(c) and (d). It is not the policy of Government to have Income-tax Offices in every district. Opening of and maintaining

Income-tax Offices depends upon several factors taken together like (i) number of assessments available, (ii) budget collections, (iii) economic viability, (iv) administrative convenience, and (v) convenience of tax-paying public.

Export to U.S.A.

*700. PROF. RAMKRISHNA MORE : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Indian exports to United States of America have decreased in the recent past while exports to USA from the developing countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America have increased considerably;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to increase Indian exports to USA.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. A. SANGMA) : (a) No, Sir.

The Indian exports to the U.S.A. have increased during the period 1981-84.

According to the Statistics published by the US Commerce Department imports from Asia and Latin America also increased during the years 1980-83 whereas from Africa they declined.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Continuous steps are being taken to promote Indian exports to U.S.A. like exchange of delegations, participation in Fairs/Exhibitions, organising Buyer-Seller Meets, sponsoring of Sales-cum-study Teams and holding negotiations both at Governmental and non-Governmental levels with a view to removing constraints impeding the growth of Indo-US Trade.

Restrictions on Powerlooms

*701. SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT : Will the Minister of SUPPLY AND TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have imposed several restrictions on powerlooms;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government are aware that due to restrictions on powerlooms, the large

textile mills are taking undue advantage over the powerlooms;

(d) whether Government propose to remove the restrictions on the powerlooms; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SUPPLY AND TEXTILES (SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR SINGH) :

(a) and (b). Acquisition, installation sale or disposal of powerlooms can be undertaken only with prior permission of Textile Commissioner Powerlooms may not undertake production of fabrics exclusively reserved for production in the handloom sector. These restrictions apply equally to the powerlooms in the decentralised and the organised mill sector.

(c) No, Sir. Production figures over the last 4 years indicate that production of cloth by powerlooms has increased whereas production by the mill sector has languished.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) It is essential that adequate protection is provided to the handloom sector and a balanced and disciplined growth takes place in the power operated sector the powerlooms and mill.

[Translation]

Gold Prices

*702. SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR TRIPATHI :
SHRI R. M. BHOYE :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware that the prices of gold are increasing day by day;

(b) if so, the annual proportionate increase in the prices of gold during the past three years;

(c) whether Government are taking any concrete steps to control gold prices; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY) : (a) and (b). The annual average price of standard gold increased in the Bombay market by 0.2 per cent in 1982-83, 7.9 per cent in 1983-84 and 6.7 per cent in 1984-85.