

Is there a proposal with the Government to close the weaving section of some of the textile mills in Bombay which will further render these workers jobless?

SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR: The answer in the main Question recites one of the issues leading to low capacity utilisation, as adequate power supply. (*Interruptions.*) It can be both ways.

As regards 13 mills taken over by the Government in Bombay, they are managed mills. When the mills were opened, there were only 8,500 workers or so. Now, about 25,000 workers are working in those 13 mills. The number originally before the strike was about 40,000. Of the difference of 17,000, the number of workers who have taken the terminal benefits and left is 8,500.

SHRI MURLI DEORA: Have you not given benefits to them also?

SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR: There is a balance of 7,500 workers. the policy followed by the NTC is only to absorb such workers as can be absorbed based on the working capacity of the units taken by us. There is a court case about that in the High Court of Bombay. There was a decision by the Labour Court. The NTC has gone in appeal to the High Court and the matter is sub-judice.

(*Interruptions*)

Demand of Indian Commercial Vehicles

*483. SHRI CHINTAMANI JENA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian commercial vehicles are in great demand abroad;

(b) if so, the number of commercial

vehicles exported annually and the name of the countries to whom exported;

(c) whether Afghan Government has shown their interest to buy commercial vehicles from India and if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether any negotiations are going on in this respect; and

(e) the steps being taken to locate more market for export of commercial vehicles during the years ahead?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P.R. DAS MUNSI): (a) to (e). A Statement is given below.

STATEMENT

(a) and (b). A few countries have shown interest in importing commercial vehicles from India. Exports of commercial vehicles have mainly been to Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Malaysia, North Africa, Ghana, Afghanistan. The exports of commercial vehicles for the past three years in terms of numbers are given below:

Year	Export in numbers
1984-85	2667
1985-86	2234
1986-87	2951

(c) and (d). Government of Afghanistan has shown interest in the purchase of buses from India and discussions were held in this regard.

(e) Efforts are being made by the companies and also through bilateral discussions to increase exports of Indian commercial vehicles.

SHRI CHINTAMANI JENA: May I know from the hon. Minister, the amount of foreign exchange earnings in each of the last three years and the anticipated number of commercial vehicles to be exported in the current year to various countries.

Besides I want to know from the hon. Minister whether the manufacturers of such commercial vehicles are approaching the Government, time and again, to provide some concession in imposition of excise and custom duties on such vehicles and, if so, what is the reaction of the Government on this issue.

SHRI P.R. DAS MUNSI: In so far as foreign exchange earnings are concerned, in 1986-87 the export of commercial vehicles went to the tune of 50 crores and during 1985-86 it was 54 crores.

In so far as the suggestion to accelerate the export market by the commercial vehicle owners, it is a fact that they have been making lot of suggestions. Most of them relate to the Ministry of Industry.

So far as our Ministry are concerned, we have already increased the CCS up to 20% and we are providing a number of incentives in so far as the over-all import of machinery is concerned to enable them to update their technology and to make a break-through in the export market of commercial vehicles.

SHRI CHINTAMANI JENA: My second supplementary would be that while answering my last part of the question, the hon. Minister has stated that efforts are being made by the companies and also through bilateral discussions to increase exports of our commercial vehicles. May I know what are the countries with whom such bilateral discussions were held during this year and what is the result of it? When the discussions were held with Afghanistan to export our vehicles to them? What is the result of the

discussions and also what are the categories of vehicles they want to import from us?

SHRI P.R. DAS MUNSI: In so far as this year's prospects are concerned, it is a fact we had discussions with Afghanistan, between Tata Companies and the Afghanistan Government. Afghanistan Transport Minister visited India. He had a number of discussions with the units and technical expertise in our Ministry and it is expected that over 1,500 commercial vehicles would be exported. Tatas are supposed to have the depots, workshops. Details of the report are still under examination and final decision will be taken.

In so far as other countries are concerned, usually our commercial vehicles are preferred by Sri Lanka, Malaysia, North Africa, Ghana, Bangladesh but, as you know, the soil conditions which suit our technology of the commercial vehicles are among these countries as a result of which we could not make a major break-through in other parts of the world, though we are trying to improve the technological upgradation of these units. While the indigenous component is very high, the import component is very low. Further, we can make maximum value additions also. The question which the hon. Member raised was about the prospect of the talks between Afghanistan and the Tata Company. As I have already replied in my earlier answer the matter is still under examination but we are very happy that 1500 vehicles would be exported.

SHRI SHANTARAM NAIK: Sir, I would like to know whether it is not a fact that certain manufacturers of fuel-economy cars have obtained certain tax concessions from the Government on the ground that they would manufacture fuel-economy cars. Subsequently it has been found that they are not manufacturing such cars and they have not made any headway in manufacturing these cars whereas they have obtained tax-

concessions and they have not refunded the money to the Government. I would like to know the real position.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, it is not relevant.

(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Prof. Swell.....

SHRI G.G. SWELL: Sir, I would like to know whether it is a fact that following the recent developments there, the Sri Lankan Government has sent an SOS to us for the immediate supply of six to seven hundred commercial vehicles. If it is so, I would like to know what is the position. Are we able to cope with all the demands? Whether these vehicles have started going to Sri Lanka? What is the position?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI NARAYAN DATT TIWARI): We have been informed by the Sri Lankan Government that the Finance Minister of Sri Lanka would be visiting us with their demands including the vehicles, in the near future, within a week or so. Then, perhaps we will be having discussions with him in this regard.

Stagnation In Export of Coir

*484. SHRIMATI USHA CHOUDHARI:[†]
SHRI NARSING SURYAWANSHI:

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Coir Board is facing stagnation in coir exports and Indian coir has become uncompetitive and is losing world market;

(b) if so, what are the bottlenecks in increasing exports of this traditional item; and

(c) whether it is proposed to review the situation and remove difficulties in the way of increasing coir exports?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR): (a) to (c). A statement is given below.

STATEMENT

The exports of coir and coir products during the last three years has been as follows:-

<i>Year</i>	<i>Value (in Rs. crores)</i>
1984-85	26.4
1985-86	32.8
1986-87	31.4

Source: Coir Board

The main reasons for stagnation in coir exports over the years are high prices, scarcity of raw material and competition from cheaper synthetic and other natural substitutes.

The Government reviews the position from time to time and has taken steps to promote coir exports which include sending delegations, releasing advertisements in foreign trade magazines, distribution of publicity material, participation in fairs in major markets, quality improvement of coir products and grant of Cash Compensatory Support.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI USHA CHOUDHARI: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, in reply to this ques-