

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[English]

Video Cassettes of 'Ramayan'

*388. SHRIMATI D.K. BHANDARI : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have received a suggestion to ensure the availability of the video cassettes of the Doordarshan serial 'Ramayan' at subsidised rates to the general public in view of its popularity at home and abroad;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken to implement the suggestion ?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI H.K.L. BHAGAT) : (a) to (c). Suggestions to this effect have sometimes been received. However, since the serial is produced by a Private Producer, the rights for sale of its Cassettes vest with him and Government cannot act on these suggestions.

Open Cast Coal Mines under Ib Valley Coalfield, Orissa

*394. DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI : Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state :

(a) the number of open cast coal mines that are under operation in the Ib Valley Coalfield in Orissa;

(b) whether Government have any proposal to start the operation of some new open cast coal mines in that valley;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) the time by which mining operation is expected to be started on these open cast coal mines; and

(e) the steps taken in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COAL IN THE MINISTRY OF ENERGY (SHRI C.K. JAFFAR SHARIEF) : (a) Two opencast coal mines, Lajkura and Belpahar together produced about 0.87 million tonnes of coal in 1986-87. These mines which are under

development will together produce 3.0 mty of coal when completed.

(b) to (e). Leelari opencast project (0.80 mty) has been sanctioned recently. The following four projects are planned for coal production in the Eighth Plan period :

	Proposed capacity
(i) Samleshwari	3.00 mty
(ii) Lakhanpur (Belpahar III)	5.00 mty
(iii) Belpahar II	3.00 mty
(iv) Gopalpur	5.00 mty

Import Policy of Foreign Film

*395. SHRI VAKKOM PURUSHOTHAMAN : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) the number of foreign films imported by Non-Resident Indians since the announcement of the NRI film import policy in 1984;

(b) the date from which changes made recently in the import policy will become effective;

(c) whether there are some applications, given by Non-Resident Indians prior to the date of announcement of the change in import policy, for import of foreign films which have been bought or for which advance payments have been made by them, still pending with Government; and

(d) if so, the number of pending applications and the manner in which Government propose to dispose them of ?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI H.K.L. BHAGAT) : (a) 176 foreign feature films have been imported by non-resident Indians under the Import Policy of October, 1984.

(b) The new policy for import of feature films and video rights of feature films announced vide Ministry of I and B's Public Notice No. 105/3/86-F(I) became effective from the date of its announcement i.e. 21.1.1988.

(c) and (d). A statement is given below.

Statement

No application is pending with Government. However, on 21.1.1988, the date on which the new policy became effective, ten applications were pending with NFDC. Under Clause 29 (c) of the new policy, the eligibility criteria. (Clause 4) of the new policy will not be applicable to these cases. The films are, however, subject to clearance by the Film Import Selection Committee appointed by the Government under the new policy.

Besides, NFDC has received 134 applications after 21.1.1988 for import by NRIs under the old policy. The applicants are being advised by NFDC to apply afresh in case their films are eligible for import under the new policy.

[Translation]

Production of Watches

*396. PROF. CHANDRA BHANU DEVI :
SHRI H.B. PATIL :

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the production of watches in the country falls short of the requirements;

(b) if so, whether this has resulted in the large scale smuggling of watches in the country; and

(c) the steps taken or proposed to be taken to curb these activities ?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI J. VENGAL RAO) : (a) to (c). The demand for watches in the country is estimated to be around 12 to 15 million. Though there has been incidence of smuggling of watches into the country, it cannot be attributed solely to non-availability of indigenous watches. It is also due to the low prices, better design, quality and features of the imported watches etc.

* With a view to increase indigenous production of watches, reduce the cost of indigenous watches and to discourage

smuggling of watches into the country, Government has taken the following steps :

- (i) A capacity of about 18 million numbers has been approved in the organised sector. The production of indigenous watches in the organised sector has increased from 6.7 millions in 1986 to 7.7 millions in 1987. The Government would consider approval of more units on the merits of the proposals. In addition, the installed capacity in the Small Scale Sector is 5 million watches.
- (ii) The current Import Policy provides for liberal import of watch components.
- (iii) A number of foreign collaboration proposals with internationally reputed watches manufacturers have been approved.
- (iv) In February 1985, Government announced a package of concessions to the watch industry including reduction in excise duty and concessional rate of customs duty on the import of raw materials, components and machinery used in the manufacture of wrist watches.
- (v) As a part of the budget proposals for the financial year 1988-89, the following concessions have been extended to the horological machines and testing equipments from 55% to 35% ad valorem :
 - (a) reduction in the rate of import duty on horological machines and testing equipments from 55% to 35% ad valorem.
 - (b) reduction in import duty on electronic parts of quartz watches from the existing rates to a uniform rate of 55% ad valorem.
 - (c) fixation of import duty (basic and auxiliary) at the rate of 80% ad valorem on stepper motors for clocks/alarm clocks and parts thereof.
 - (d) extension of the existing concessional rate of import duty