

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY) : (a) to (c) Reserve Bank of India has been issuing instructions to the nationalised banks from time to time for providing bank credit to the beneficiaries under the Integrated Rural Development Programme. All the branches of scheduled commercial banks operating in a State are expected to provide financial assistance to identified eligible borrowers under IRDP. The number of branches of scheduled commercial banks operating in Orissa was 1561 as at the end of December '84. The Government have been receiving monthly progress reports relating to the number of beneficiaries, bank loan and subsidy disbursed in each State under Integrated Rural Development Programme.

Modernisation of Bhilai Steel Plant

*518. KUMARI PUSHPA DEVI : Will the Minister of STEEL, MINES AND COAL be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have a proposal to modernise and improve the performance of Bhilai Steel Plant during the Seventh Five Year Plan period ;

(b) if so, the amount proposed to be spent therefor ; and

(c) the details of the modernisation programme taken up in the Sixth Five Year Plan in the above Steel Plant ?

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

(a) to (c) : Modernisation and technological improvement of a steel plant is a continuous process. Every year, the steel plants are allocated funds for additions, modifications and replacements to effect improvements in their performance. During the VI Plan, the Bhilai Steel Plant spent about Rs. 69.42 crores for additions, modifications and replacements. The major schemes that were under implementation at Bhilai during the VI Plan were :

- (i) Coal dust injection in blast furnace ;
- (ii) Conversion of open hearth furnace into twin hearth furnace ;
- (iii) Adoption of throat armour for better charge distribution in blast furnace ;

(iv) Expansion of the steel plant from 2.5 to 4.0 MT capacity per year which envisages incorporation of modern technologies as given below :—

- (a) Adoption of basic oxygen furnaces for steel making ;
- (b) Continuous casting of steel ;
- (c) Bell-less charging in blast furnace ;
- (d) Cast-house slag granulation ;
- (e) Adoption of secondary ladle refining in the steel melting shop ;
- (f) 7 m. tall coke oven battery as compared to conventional height of 4.3/4.5/5/5.0 m ; and
- (g) Thyristor control in the mills ;

SAIL are formulating a comprehensive proposal for de-bottlenecking and technological upgradation of the Bhilai Steel Plant during the VII Plan. The cost estimates and technical details of this scheme will be finalised after the scheme is approved by Government.

During 1985-86, an amount of Rs. 20 crores will be spent by the Bhilai Steel Plant for additions, modifications and replacements.

[*Translation*]

Availability of Janata Cloth

*519. SHRI MOOL CHAND DAGA : Will the Minister of SUPPLY AND TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) the present demand of controlled cloth, sarees and dhotis in the country and the percentage of demand thereof which is met ;

(b) whether Janata Cloth, instead of being made available to the poor people, is generally being sold out by unfair means ;

(c) if so, the remedial steps taken by Government in this regard ; and

(d) the number of persons found guilty and the details of the punishment awarded to them ?

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

(a) The total quantum of production of controlled cloth both by the N.T.C. and the Handloom sector has been fixed at 650 million square metres in the Textiles Policy of March, 1981. The target for production of 'Janata' cloth for 1984-85 was 360 million square metres and for 1985-86 it has been fixed at 370 million square metres.

(b) No such specific complaint has been brought to the notice of the Government.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

[English]

Revamping of Tea Gardens in Darjeeling

*520. SHRI ANANDA PATHAK : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether any progress has been made so far in regard to revamping of tea gardens in Darjeeling ;

(b) if so, the details thereof ;

(c) if not, the reasons for the delay ; and

(d) the steps to be taken for revamping the tea gardens ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. A. SANGMA) : (a) to (d) The Tea Industry in the Darjeeling has been facing problems on account of higher cost of production mainly because of low productivity due to old age of bushes, most of which are well past their prime.

In order to help the tea gardens in Darjeeling, higher subsidy for replanting and higher development allowance for extension planting is being allowed. The Government has also sanctioned a scheme to subsidize interest payable to banks in order to make projects for revitalisation of Darjeeling gardens by replanting, rejuvenation and extension planting viable. Further NABARD has also relaxed various conditions relating to margin money, moratorium and the loan repayment period with the same end in view. The excise duty on Darjeeling tea has also been reduced from Rs. 1.25 per kg. to Rs. 0.20 per kg.

However, the major improvement in the prospects of Darjeeling gardens has come as a result of the considerable improvement in prices of Darjeeling tea in the recent past. Productivity has also registered an increase. While this may have acted as a temporary disincentive in terms of uprooting and replanting in the longer term perspective, the capacity of the industry for making use of the various incentives available for revitalisation of the tea gardens has improved.

Guidelines to States for Reduction of Government Expenditure

*521, SHRI SURESH KUMAR : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether any guidelines have been issued by the Union Government to State Governments regarding reduction of Government expenditure;

(b) if so, the details of the guidelines issued; and

(c) whether Government of Kerala is following those guidelines ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY) :

(a) and (b) Government of India have not issued any specific guidelines recently to State Governments regarding reduction of Government expenditure. However, since the overdrafts of States were on the increase, Government of India have informed the States that their overdrafts with the Reserve Bank of India should not exceed the level reached on 28-1-1985.

(c) The overdraft of Government of Kerala has not exceeded the overdraft level reached as on 28-1-1985 for more than seven continuous working days since the instructions were issued.

Proposal for New Tea Gardens in Tripura

*522. SHRI AJOY BISWAS ; Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal of the Tea Board to start new tea gardens in Tripura;