

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL) : (a) It is not a fact that the export of Iron ore from Paradip Port has been suspended.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Government have already approved the scheme for improvement in loading facilities, including installation of wagon tippler, replacement of reclaimer etc.

OPENING OF BRANCHES OF COMMERCIAL BANKS IN RAJASTHAN

*323. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR GOYAL : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware of the vast scope to open more branches by the commercial banks in Rajasthan;

(b) whether the State Government had urged the Reserve Bank of India to allow more branches to be opened in the State;

(c) what is the programme for opening new branches in the State and for which the Reserve Bank of India had agreed to give licences; and

(d) whether it is also a fact that several districts of State had no banks in rural areas so far and the steps taken to improve the situation ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY) : (a) to (d) The branch expansion efforts of the public sector banks in Rajasthan, as elsewhere, have been devoted towards extending their network in rural areas. As a result of these efforts the rural branches of commercial banks in Rajasthan increased from 147 in July 1969 to 1015 in December 1981. There is no district in the State which does not have a rural branch of a commercial bank.

The thrust of the Reserve Bank of India's branch licensing policy for the three years 1982-83 to 1984-85 will be on improving the availability of banking facilities in rural areas with greater emphasis on ensuring proper spatial distribution of bank branch network. It aims to achieve a coverage of one bank branch, on an average, for a population of 17,000 in the

rural and semi-urban areas (on the basis of 1981 Census) by the end of March 1985. While accent will be on branch expansion in the rural areas of the districts identified as underbanked in relation to the population coverage norm of 17,000 people per bank office, provision for branch expansion in other districts will also be made to a limited extent keeping in view growth in economic activity, need for banking facilities in the area and other special features, if any, warranting establishment of additional bank offices.

To achieve the above objective, in addition to the licences already issued and pending implementation with the banks, 379 offices are expected to be opened during the Policy Period in rural and semi-urban areas of 24 districts in Rajasthan where the average population per bank office is higher than 17,000 (1981 Census). In addition 13 rural/semi-urban offices are expected to be opened in other districts of Rajasthan having better banking coverage.

The State Government of Rajasthan have been requested by the Reserve Bank of India to recommend, in consultation with District Consultative Committees, rural and semi-urban centres for opening branches. Branch expansion programme for Rajasthan will be finalised by the Reserve Bank of India on receipt of the recommendations of the State Government in this regard.

PRODUCTION AND EXPORT OF CASTOR OIL

*324. SHRI R. N. RAKESH : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) the total quantity of castor oil produced in the country during the year 1981-82;

(b) how much castor oil was exported during 1981 and its estimated value;

(c) whether the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade has recently recommended certain measures to boost the export of castor oil; and

(d) if so, the details of recommendations and the reaction of Government thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL) : (a) Authentic