

Task Force on Project Exports

*1130. SHRI CHINTAMANJ JENA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have recently taken a decision to appoint a task force on project exports;

(b) if so, the details regarding its composition and functions; and

(c) the time by which its report is likely to be submitted to Government?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND STEEL AND MINES (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) The Ministry of Commerce have decided to set up a Task Force under the Chairmanship of the Secretary, Department of Commerce to review India's performance in the field of project exports. The Task Force will include senior representatives of various concerned Ministries and Organisations. Orders setting up the Task Force are expected to be issued shortly. The functions of the above Task Force will include review of the performance of project exports, consideration of the strategy for expanding project exports and recommending suitable measures towards this objective.

(c) The Task Force is expected to submit its report within a period of three to four months from the date it is set up.

News-item captioned 'Jewels vanish from Excise Custody'

*1131. SHRI BAPUSAHEB PARULEKAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of Government has been drawn to the news-item in 'Blitz' dated 11th April, 1981

at page 5 under the heading 'Jewels vanish from excise custody'; and

(b) reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI R. VENKATARAMAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A Departmental enquiry has been got conducted in the matter. The Government have also ordered CBI inquiry and the officer concerned has been placed under suspension.

Cardamom Prices

*1132. SHRI D. M. PUTTE GOWDA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it has come to his notice that Cardamom prices have not improved for the last ten years;

(b) whether Government are thinking of setting up of a Cardamom Corporation of India to deal with marketing of cardamom;

(c) if so, when; and

(d) whether it is going to handle 1981-82 crop which will start arriving from June, 1981?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KHURSHED ALAM KHAN): (a) Since 1970-71 the price of cardamom has been generally improving except during the last two years when a decline in price has been noticed as compared to the peak level reached in 1978-79.

(b) to (d). A proposal for setting up an Agency for marketing Karnataka cardamom is under consideration. Efforts are being made to set up this Agency as early as possible. The handling of the 1981-82 crop by this Agency will depend upon when it actually starts functioning.