

**Decline in Engineering goods Exports**

\*75. SHRI N. E. HORO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Engineering goods exports during the current year 1979-80 may fall short of the target; and

(b) if so, to what extent and the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND CIVIL SUPPLIES AND STEEL AND MINES (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) (a) Yes, sir.

(b) According to present estimates, export of engineering goods may amount to Rs. 650 crores as against the provisional figures of exports during 1978-79 amounting to Rs. 685 crores. The target fixed by Engineering Export Promotion Council for exports during 1979-80 was Rs. 850/- crores.

The reasons for the shortfall in the export of engineering goods during the current year are the shortages of critical inputs like steel, pig iron, aluminium, coal, coke, diesel oil, furnace oil, etc; acute power shortage in most parts of the country; congestion in the ports; inadequate shipping facilities; labour trouble in the units engaged in export manufacture of engineering goods for exports and general stagnation in the industrial sector.

**Export of Diamonds, precious Stones and Semi-precious Stones**

\*76. SHRI VIJAY N. PATIL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) what was the total export of diamonds, precious stones and semi-precious stones during 1978-79;

(b) how much was the total loss through under-invoicing and smuggling of these commodities; and

(c) what steps Government propose to reduce the loss?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND CIVIL SUPPLIES AND STEEL AND MINES (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) During 1978-79, exports of diamonds and precious/semi-precious stones were Rs. 692.94 crores and Rs. 24.06 crores respectively.

(b) and (c). There is no indication of loss of foreign exchange on account of any significant smuggling or under-invoicing in respect of these commodities.

**\* Expansion of Public Distribution System**

\*77. SHRI P. K. KODIYAN:  
SHRI CHANDRA PAL  
SHAILANI:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the public distribution system that exists today is quite inadequate to cope with the situation arising out of shortage and high prices of several essential articles;

(b) if so, whether Government have any plan to expand and strengthen the public distribution system; and

(c) the main details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND CIVIL SUPPLIES AND STEEL AND MINES (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) (a) to (c). The functioning of the public distribution system is under constant review by the Government in consultation with the State Governments and the Central Ministries. Inadequacies noticed in the system during such reviews are brought to the notice of the concerned State Governments, Central Ministries and other organisations. Steps are also being taken to strengthen and expand the public distribution system. The Government is also making all-round efforts to increase the production and supply of all essential commodities.