

SEWAK): (a) Yes, sales tax is leviable on Ayurvedic preparations in Tamil Nadu.

(b) Yes, a request has been received from Arya Vaidya Sala, Head-quarters Kottakkal, Kerala, for reduction in the sales tax

(c) The State Government are examining the request

Super Tanker Oil Terminal Project at Cochin Port

1759 **SHRI N SREEKANTAN NAIR** Will the Minister of SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT be pleased to state

(a) whether expenditure sanction has been accorded for the construction of Super Tanker Oil Terminal Project at Cochin Port,

(b) if so, the facts thereof, and

(c) the total amount so far spent by way of advance action for this Project?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT (DR G S DHILION)

(a) No

(b) Does not arise

(c) Till February 1976 an amount of Rs 234 00 lakhs was spent by way of advance action on the Project

Loss due to pilferage in Itarsi R M S.

1760 **SHRI NITIRAJ SINGH CHAUDHARY** Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state

(a) whether Itarsi Railways Mail Service caused a loss of over 13 lakhs by pilferage during the last three years; and

(b) if so, the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (DR SHANKER DAYAL SHARMA) (a) During the last three

years two cases of losses from two insured parcels amounting to Rs. 7,000/- were detected.

(b) Both the cases were immediately reported to the Police. Fifteen officials, who were arrested, were immediately suspended. Eight of these officials are facing trial in the court of Law. Police investigations are still in progress in respect of the remaining seven officials,

Loans to bonded labourers

1761 **SHRI MOHAMMAD ISMAIL.** Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state

(a) whether Government have provided loans to bonded labourers,

(b) the total amount given to them, State-wise; and

(c) the number of labourers benefited, State-wise?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI BAL-

GOVIND VERMA) (a) The Central Government have laid down broad guidelines for the economic rehabilitation of bonded labour. The State Governments and other concerned Agencies are taking necessary action accordingly

Most of the Nationalised banks have also formulated and are implementing schemes for providing financial assistance to released bonded labourers to take up some gainful occupation like agriculture, dairying, poultry, cottage industry, small business etc. Under these schemes 100 per cent finance is generally provided without insisting on any margin or security on the basis of group guarantees. Wherever, borrowers are eligible for finance under the DIR Scheme loan is provided at 4 per cent interest and in other cases concessional interest rate varying between 10 per cent to 12 per cent is charged