

the rate of 20 per cent, restoration of provident fund cut, restoration of sick leave rules and security of employment and ensuring minimum wage level to development employees. The discussions held from 5th to 11th October, 1977 on their various demands, between the management of the General Insurance Corporation and the representatives of unions/associations of employees remained inconclusive. However, the demands of the employees in the light of the discussions held are being looked into by the General Insurance Corporation in consultation with the Government keeping in view the existing wage-structure and other conditions of service etc. of employees in similarly placed public sector undertakings.

Use of 'Dharamsalas' as Tourist Housing Facility

*254. SHRI SUKHDEO PRASAD VERMA:
SHRI AHMED M. PATEL:

Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether at the recently held conference in Delhi of the State Tourism Ministers, the question of using 'Dharamsalas' as tourist housing facility was discussed; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and the necessary action likely to be taken to improve the condition of the 'Dharamsalas'?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PURUSHOTAM KAUSHIK): (a) and (b). Yes, Sir. Discussions were held during the conference of State Ministers of Tourism in August, 1977 in Delhi regarding utilisation by tourists of the accommodation provided by Dharamshalas and Sarais constructed in the country by different agencies. Since the subject required more detailed consideration the State Chief Ministers have been requested to conduct a comprehensive survey of Dharamshalas in their States and based on the findings,

make planned efforts for their improvement. It has also been suggested that the religious trusts/institutions concerned may be requested to utilise their funds in constructing new Dharamshalas where necessary. To achieve this objective, the State Governments have been requested to consider: (a) amending/enacting appropriate laws; (b) extending financial assistance; (c) constituting region-wise committees to programme the construction of new Dharamshalas and improvements to the existing ones.

Fish catch from Coastal areas of Tamil Nadu and Kerala

*255. SHRI K. T. KOSALRAM: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND CIVIL SUPPLIES AND COOPERATION be pleased to state:

(a) how much of catch of prawn fish was obtained from the coastal areas of Tamil Nadu and Kerala and how much foreign exchange was earned therefrom during the three previous operations, separately;

(b) whether Government are aware that most of prawn from Tamil Nadu is exported from Cochin; and

(c) if so, whether Government propose to consider giving necessary facilities for exporting prawn fish through Tuticorin or Negapatam Port?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND CIVIL SUPPLIES AND COOPERATION (SHRI ARIF BAIG): (a) A statement is laid on the table of the House.

(b) At present, most of the prawns from the coastal areas of Tamil Nadu are exported from ports in Tamil Nadu itself. However, depending upon the availability of sailings and refer soace frozen prawns etc. processed in Tamil Nadu are occasionally exported from Cochin.

(c) At present Madras is the major location for export of frozen prawns from Tamil Nadu. There is very lit-

the scope for developing Tuticorin and Nagapattinam ports for export of prawns as the volume offered for export at these places is not adequate

for reefer vessels to call at these ports. A self contained fishing harbour at a cost of Rs. 210 lakhs has already been constructed at Tuticorin.

Statement

Year	Catch of Prawn		Foreign exchange earnings from export of prawn through ports	
	in Tamil Nadu	in Kerala	in Tamil Nadu	in Kerala
	(in tonnes)		(Rs. in crores)	
1974	8,106	60,829	7.62	40.96
1975	12,033	77,962	11.49	55.96
1976 (Provisional)	10,350	34,533	21.76	81.44

Representative Office of American Bank in India

*256. SHRI M. N. GOVINDAN NAIR:
Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have allowed an American bank to convert its representative office in the capital into a fullfledged branch; and

(b) if so, the name of the said bank and other details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND REVENUE AND BANKING (SHRI H. M. PATEL): (a) and (b). The Bank of America was originally permitted by the Reserve Bank of India to open a branch in New Delhi in June 1969. Instead of a branch, it opened a Representative Office in New Delhi in February, 1970. In June, 1977, the Bank of America was permitted to convert its Representative Office at New Delhi into a branch.

Reduction in the Price of Coffee Powder

*257. SHRI S. S. SOMANI:
SHRI D. B. CHANDRE
GOWDA:

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

(a) whether there has been some reduction in the price of coffee powder; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by Government to reduce the price of coffee particularly the price per cup to make it easily available to the common people?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND CIVIL SUPPLIES AND COOPERATION (SHRI ARIF BAIG): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

The Coffee Board has taken the following steps to ensure the supply