

(c) whether it is a fact that the labour on salt plants will be rendered jobless due to the new Government's policy on salt manufacturing;

(d) whether it is a fact that unhappy labour have demonstrated at the office of Inspector Salt at Bhainder in Thane district; and

(e) whether Government will permit continuance of operations, through the traditional salt pan labour?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT): (a) The total quantum of salt produced in the district of Thane in Maharashtra is about 1.7 lakh tonnes per year.

(b) The number of people employed in salt industry in the district of Thane is reported to be about 3000.

(c) No, sir. The policy of banning sale of non-iodised salt for edible purpose will not render salt labourers jobless.

(d) Yes, Sir. The salt labourers of Mira-Bhayander area in the district of Thane demonstrated opposing the nation wide ban on sale of non-iodised salt for edible purpose;

(e) Yes, Sir.

#### Recommendations of Abid Hussain Committee

1256. SHRI S. PETER ALPHONSE:  
SHRI BHAGABAN MAJHI:

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that on the recommendation of the Abid Hussain Committee, the S.S.I. exemption limit was raised to rupees three crores some time last year end;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Hon'ble Prime Minister in one of his recent statements mentioned that the above limit will be reduced to rupees one crore;

(c) if so, is it not against the developmental aspects of S.S.I. Units,

especially when the environmental regulations are strictly to be followed resulting in investment cost increase; and

(d) the action taken to restore the limit of rupees three crores?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT): (a) Perhaps the intention of the question is to seek information on SSI investment ceiling and not on SSI exemption limit. Abid Hussain Committee had recommended raising investment limit for SSI to Rs. 3 crores; based upon which the investment ceiling for SSI was raised to Rs. 3 crores in December, 97.

(b) Hon'ble Prime Minister had announced in a seminar on 29.4.98 that the investment limit for small scale industries will be reduced from Rs. 3 crores to Rs. 1 crore.

(c) No, Sir. The Industry Representatives have been pressing for lowering the investment limit for SSI from Rs. 3 crores to Rs. 1 crore with the apprehension that major portion of institutional credit will be cornered by bigger small units. Pollution Control and Research and Development equipments are not included in the list of plant and machinery for the purpose of computing value of plant and machinery to determine whether the investment of a unit falls below the limit prescribed for small scale industry.

(d) The investment limit of Rs. 3 crores has not been changed so far. However, action to reduce the same from Rs. 3 crores to Rs. 1 crore is being initiated.

#### प्रशुल्क आयोग

1257. श्री ईश दत्त यादव : क्या उद्योग मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या सरकार ने प्रशुल्क आयोग को वाणिज्य मंत्रालय के अन्तर्गत लाने के लिए कोई नीतिगत निर्णय लिया है; और