

markets. The IMF have advised its member countries to undertake appropriate energy policy actions^ This is understood to mean a movement of domestic energy prices toward international levels.

Economic Pact between India, Vietnam and U.S.S.R.

75. SHRI MURLIDHAR CHANDRA-KANT BHANDARE;
SHRI MAHENDRA PRASAD:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state;

(a) whether he made a three day official visit to Vietnam;

(b) if so, whether this paved the way to a tripartite economic pact between India, Vietnam and USSR; and

(c) what follow-up action if any, has since been taken in this regard?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SHANTILAL PURUSHOTTAMDAS PATEL): (a) The former Commerce Minister made an official visit to Vietnam in September, 1990.

(b) and (c) The question of tripartite economic co-operation between India, Vietnam and USSR will be decided on a case-to-case basis keeping in view the overall financial implications and other aspects. No such detailed proposals have, however, been received so far.

Debt Relief Scheme for Farmers

76. SHRI MURLIDHAR CHANDRA KANT BHANDARE; Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have, in response to requests from State Governments, liberalised further the debt relief scheme for farmers;

(b) if so, what is the revised scheme and what additional concession or relief is sought to be given thereunder; and

(c) how many farmers have so far been given debt relief, State-wise?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) and (b) Since the announcement of the original debt relief scheme on 15th May, 1990, relaxations have been made in respect of the following:—

(i) The eligibility criterion for providing debt relief was made applicable to all the borrowers irrespective of the size of their loans.

(ii) Fishermen are eligible for debt relief irrespective of the location of their activity. Fishing both marine and inland have been included in the scheme.

(iii) Where the Annewari certificates have not been issued by states, certificates issued in the past for the year of calamity by the State Government may be accepted.

(c) The State-wise progress of debt relief scheme as on 17-12-1990 in respect of public Sector banks and Cooperatives and Regional Rural Banks is given in Annexure. (See Appendix CLVI, Annexure No. 1)

Iron ore Reserves in Bastar District of Madhya Pradesh

77. SHRI AJIT P. K. JOGI;
KUMARI ALIA:

Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state;

(a) the period upto which the iron ore reserves of Bailadila mines in Bastar district of Madhya Pradesh are likely to last;

(b) the quantity of iron ore extracted therefrom upto 30th November, 1990;

(c) whether Government propose to set up the seventy steel plant in Bastar district on the principle of locating production centres nearest to places where raw material is available; and

(d) if so, what are the details thereof and if not, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI BASAVARAJ PATIL): (a) The reserves of Bailadila mines are expected to last for about 40 to 50 years.

(b) Approximately 156 million tonnes of iron ore have already been extracted till 30-11-1990.

(c) and (d) There is at present no proposal to set up a steel plant in Bastar District. The decision on totting up an integrated steel plant is based on various considerations such as availability of resources, raw material, market demand for finished product, etc. Proximity to the location of raw material is only one of the factors, among the various factors, among the various factors to be considered.

Establishing Export Oriented Units in the Free Zones in United Arab Emirates

78. SHRI GHUFRAN AZAM: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the United Arab Emirates (UAE) has invited India to establish export oriented small and medium scale units in the free trade zones in UAE;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) whether Government have since taken any final decision to set up such units in UAE?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SHANTILAL PURUSHOTTAMDAS PATIL): (a) and (b) A high level delegation from UAE that visited India recently in connection with the meeting of the Indo-UAE Joint Commission had meeting with the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry. During the discussions members of the UAE delegation invited Indian businessmen to establish export oriented small and medium scale units in Free Trade Zones in the UAE. Possible areas of joint ventures identified by the

delegation are telecommunications, computers, electronics and a variety of consumer items.

(c) Requests from individual entrepreneurs for setting up of units in UAE and other countries are considered by the Government on merits as and when received.

IMF Loan for meeting Critical Position of Balance of Payments

79. SHRI GHUFRAN AZAM: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state;

(a) whether Government have since taken any decision to go for a fresh loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to tide over the critical balance of payment position.

(b) if so, what are the details of the present balance of payment position; and

(c) what steps Government propose to take to maintain favourable balance of payment position?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) Discussions are being held with the IMF to explore the possibilities of drawing resources available to member countries, in particular from the Compensatory and Contingency Financing Facility (CCFF).

(b) The foreign exchange reserves level mainly reflect the balance of payment position. The reserves at the end of October, 1990 were Rs. 3820 crores compared to Rs. 5158 crores during the corresponding period in 1989.

(c) In order to maintain favourable balance of payments position, the Government is continuing to implement a package of measures like, improving the disbursement of external assistance, promotion of exports, containment of inessential