

evation. The Director General, (Investigation) supervises, controls and coordinates the working of the Directorate of Inspection (Intelligence) Directorate of Inspection (Survey) and the four units of the Directorate of Inspection (Investigation) which are engaged in the work of combating tax evasion. He also plays a vital role in search and seizure matters and super vises investigations wherever necessary.

(d) Yes, Sir.

Legislation to curb drug peddling

343. SHRI K. VASUDEVA PANICKER: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to enact a legislation to curb peddling drug by providing for severe penalty for this offence; if so, what are the details thereof; and

(b) if not, what other steps Government are taking to curb drug peddling and make it an offence like murder?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHAN POOJARI): (a) and (b) A Comprehensive Legislation on narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, *inter alia*, providing for stringent penalties for drug trafficking, was passed by the Parliament in its last Session and has since been enacted as the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985 (61 of 1985).

Recommendations of Abid Hussain Committee

344. SHRI K. VASUDEVA PANICKER: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) what are the details of the recommendations of the Abid Hussain Committee which have been accepted and implemented; and

(b) what are the details of the recommendations which have not been implemented and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) and (b) The details of the recommendations are available in the Report of the Committee on Trade Policies, copies of which have been placed in the Parliament library on 28th August, 1985; on the same day, copies of the Report were also provided to the Publication Counters of the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha Secretariat for distribution among Members of Parliament.

The recommendations of the Committee on Trade Policies have, by and large, been accepted by the Government. Its general macro-economic recommendations have been accepted in principle by the Government as guide lines for policy formulation. The recommendations are in various stages of implementation.

Export of iron ore from Paradeep Port

345. SHRI ADINARAYANA REDDY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) what fresh steps Government have taken to increase the export of iron ore through Paradeep Port in Orissa; and

(b) what is the quantum of iron ore exported from the above Port during the last three years, year-wise?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) Following steps have been taken to increase the exports of iron ore through Paradeep Port in Orissa:—

(i) Procurement of more ore by removing all quota limitations,

(ii) Providing incentives by way of reduced prices to compensate for additional freight;

(iii) Initiating action to improve iron ore handling facilities in the port and deepening of the port to accommodate

vessels upto 2 lakhs tonnes. As a result of the above steps the quantum of iron ore exports during 1984-85 and the first seven months of 1985-86 has increased over the corresponding period of the prior years.

(b) The quantum of iron ore exported from Paradweep Port during the last three years was as under:—

Year	Qty. (in lakh tonnes)
1982-83	9.84
1983-84	9.27
1984-85	16.07
1984-85	9.40
(April-Oct., 84)	
1985-86	11.30
(April-Oct.' 85)	(Prov.)

Opening of branches of Nationalised Banks in the backward areas of Andhra Pradesh

346. SHRI ADINARAYANA REDDY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of branches of nationalised banks proposed to be opened in the backward areas of Andhra Pradesh during the year 1986; and

(b) what was the target for the year 1985 and how many branches of nationalised banks were opened in backward areas of Andhra Pradesh upto 31st October, 1985?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHAN POOJARI): (a) and (b) The Branch licensing Policy for 1985-90 finalised recently by the Reserve Bank of India in consultation with the Government aims at achieving a coverage of 17,000 population per bank office in rural and semi-urban areas of each development

block as also eliminating large spatial gaps in the availability of banking facilities. As the process of identification of centres under the new Branch Expansion Policy has not yet commenced, no targets have been so far fixed in regard to the number of branches of banks to be opened in the backward districts of Andhra Pradesh during the years 1985 and 1986. According to the latest information available, as on 30-6-1985; there were 1685 branches of commercial banks located in the districts of Vizianagram, Visakhapatnam, Prakasam, Karimnagar, Khammam, Mahabubnagar, Medak, Nizamabad, Anantpur, Cuddapah and Karnool in Andhra Pradesh which are considered to be backward.

Raising of interest rate on deposits by banks

347. SHRI ADINARAYANA REDDY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to raise the rate of interest at present paid by the banks on deposits; and

(b) if so, what are the details of the proposals and by when a decision is likely to be taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHAN POOJARI): (a) and (b) Interest rates payable by banks on deposits are kept under continual review and changes are made as and when necessary. The prevailing structure of deposit rate is considered to be adequate at present.

U.S. Trade cooperation with India

348. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the US Government have decided to increase the trade and technical cooperation with India;

(b) whether any agreement in this regard has been signed between the two countries; and