

More autonomy for public sector

752. SHRI NAND KISHORE BHATT:
SHRI RAM NARESH KUSHA-
WAHA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to Mr. J. R. D. Tata's observations while addressing a gathering of industrialists and public sector Managers in New Delhi, recently, in regard to lack of autonomy in the public sector and political and bureaucratic interference;

(b) whether it is also a fact that he has advised the Central Government not to interfere in the functioning of public sector industries in order to make the sector a success; and

(c) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto and what steps are being taken to give more autonomy to public sector?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SAWAI SINGH SISODIA): (a) The speech of Shri J. R. D. Tata at the National Management Convention held in New Delhi in April, 1982 as reported in the press has come to the notice of Government.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The Government have accepted that the public enterprises should be given maximum autonomy in keeping with the responsibilities entrusted to them. For this purpose, substantial powers have been delegated to the public enterprises in regard to financing and administration. The powers of the public enterprises were increased recently. In respect of capital projects the limit for approval by the Public Investment Board was increased from Rs. 5 crores to 10 crores and that of the Expenditure Finance Committee from Rs. 1 crore to 2 crores. Similarly, in the areas of administrative powers, all appointments to posts below the Board level

are now entirely within the purview of the Boards of Directors of Public Enterprises. Autonomy of public enterprises is a matter which Government constantly reviews in order to take suitable action wherever necessary.

Gold bearer bonds

753, SHRI NAND KISHORE BHATT:
Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that gold prices in India are nearly Rs. 400/-per ten gms. higher than the International price of the yellow metal;

(b) whether Government propose to introduce gold bearer bonds repayable in kind to wean people away from investing in unproductive gold hoarding; and

(c) what other measures Government contemplate to take to bring down the domestic price of gold and end its lure to smugglers?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI PRANAB KUMAR MUKHERJEE): (a) Yes, Sir. During the period December, 1981—April, 1982, the average monthly prices of gold in the Bombay market ruled Rs. 500/-to Rs. 700/- per ten gms. higher than prices in the London and New York markets.

(b) No, Sir. No such proposal is under consideration.

(c) Government do not consider gold as an essential commodity of mass consumption whose price should be regulated. As such, no steps are contemplated to interfere with the normal market mechanism.

**Santosh Benefit Chit Company,
Ahmedabad**

754. SHRI VITHALBHAI MOTIRAM PATEL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the Santosh Benefit Chit Com-