

(SHRI JAGANNATH PAHADIA):

(a) Reserve Bank of India has impressed upon banks that they should meet the genuine credit requirements of exporters and that no worthwhile proposal should suffer for want of finance. Reserve Bank of India has in this connection, reported that it has no information to show that there has been any reluctance on the part of banks in extending finance for packing credit.

(b) Eligible exporters are granted packing credit by commercial banks at a concessionary rate of interest stipulated from time to time by the Reserve Bank of India. These credits are granted against lodgement of Letters of Credit/Firm Orders and on the basis of viability of the proposal. In respect of certain commodities such as, tea, coffee, jute, diamonds, marine products etc. banks have been permitted to extend packing credit to regular exporters even without production of letters of Credit or Firms Orders.

(c) Credit and other facilities available to exporters are reviewed from time to time with the objective of assisting exports. Reserve Bank of India has also set up a Standing Committee on export credit which meets periodically to look into the various problems of exporters and recommend remedial measures whenever considered necessary.

C.B.I. cases against Birlas under FERA

893. SHRI KALYAN ROY:
SHRI JAHARLAL BANER-
JEE:
SHRI BHOLA PRASAD:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 557 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 27th February, 1979 and state:

(a) whether the report of the C.B.I. in the case against M/s. United Commercial Bank or M/s. Hindustan Motors Limited for violation of

Foreign Exchange Regulation Act has been received upto now;

(b) whether certified copy of the judgement of the Calcutta High Court has been received and its implications examined;

(c) if so, what are the results thereof and what decision has been taken thereon; and

(d) what follow up action has been taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN
THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE
(SHRI JAGANNATH PAHADIA)
(a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Certified copy of the judgement of the Calcutta High Court dated 10-7-78 was made available to the Enforcement Directorate only on 9-3-1979. The implications of the above judgement were examined in consultation with the Ministry of Law. The case was found to be a fit case for going to appeal to the Supreme Court and accordingly an application for Special Leave Petition to Supreme Court was filed before the Calcutta High Court on 12-4-79. This application was, however, turned down by the Hon'ble Calcutta High Court on 2-8-79. Against this order of the Calcutta High Court, the Enforcement Directorate have filed Special Leave Petition before the Supreme Court which is still pending.

Income tax evasion by sterling tea companies

894. SHRI KALYAN ROY:
SHRI BHOLA PRASAD:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that some letters dated the 11th January, 1978 were received by the then Prime Minister and Minister of Commerce from a member of Parliament regarding massive evasion of income tax by a group of sterling tea companies and the need for a thorough probe into the matter;

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

(c) whether any investigation took place regarding the payment of huge commission by sterling tea companies to their British Managing Agents without payment of income tax to the tune of Rs. 60 to 70 crores, if so, what are the details thereof including its findings;

(d) what is the progress in realising income tax from these companies for such payment and what are the details thereof including names of companies;

(e) whether any out-of-Court settlement has been made and if so, what are the details thereof; and

(f) what are the outstanding dues and what steps have been taken to realise them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE

(SHRI JAGANNATH PAHADIA):

(a) and (b) A letter dated 11-1-1978 was received by the then Prime Minister and the then Commerce Minister from Shri Kalyan Roy in which the following allegations had been made about the Sterling Tea Companies:—

(i) In the past few months, the Income-tax Department has been trying to collect between Rs. 60 and 70 crores of tax from the British Managing Agents of the Sterling Tea Companies attributable to the commission received by the Managing Agents for managing the tea gardens in India over the past few years.

(ii) The commission was part of the traditional profits from business in India by their British Managing Agents and remitting them to the U.K., completely evading Indian Income-tax.

(iii) The matter was referred by the Income-tax Department to the Central Board of Direct Taxes who after obtaining legal opinion

authorised the Income-tax Department to proceed in the matter.

(iv) The Sterling companies have given political colour to the whole thing and have tried to pressurise the Finance Minister to come to a settlement outside the frame-work of law.

(v) The Finance Minister personally intervened in the matter and directed his officials to levy a paltry sum of one or two crores as tax instead of the lawful dues of over Rs. 60 crores, using the urgency of implementing the Foreign Exchange Regulation Act as a pretext.

(vi) Prime Minister should institute a thorough probe and intervene in the matter.

(c) and (d) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

(e) No, Sir.

(f) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Rise in industrial accidents

895. SHRI BHOLA PRASAD: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the editorial captioned "Industrial Safety" published in the Economic Times of 1st February, 1980;

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

(c) whether it is a fact that there has been a very sharp rise in industrial accidents during the year 1975 to 1979—if so, what are the details thereof, industry-wise, fatal and non-fatal and number of workers permanently crippled in various industries; and

(d) what specific steps have been taken during the last five years to check the increase in accidents and