

sq. ft. is also under active consideration; formalities regarding taking over of land are under way and the construction of the building is expected to be taken up shortly.

Abolition of sales tax

•416. SHRI IBRAHIM KAYANIYA: SHRI DHARMACHAND JAIN; SHRI DAYANAND SAHAYA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to refer to the answer Unstarred Question 116 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 18th July, 1978 and state the progress so far made in getting concurrence of the States for the abolition of the sales tax?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI H. M. PATEL): Discussions on the proposal to replace sales tax (both State and Central) by excise duties have been held with all the State Governments. The State Governments are generally reluctant to accept the proposal. This is a matter which calls for patience and perseverance.

Export of Frog legs

♦417. SHRI ABDUL REHMAN SHEIKH:

SHRI PILOO MODY:

SHRI RAMESHWAR SINGH:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE, CIVIL SUPPLIES AND COOPERATION be pleased to state:

(a) the quantity, in terms of tonnage, of frog legs exported during the last three years and so far during the current financial year;

(b) the number of frogs required to be killed for every ton of frog legs;

(c) the known ecological impact of such killings;

(d) the details of other wild life and domesticated animals and birds exported during each of the last three years and the foreign exchange earned therefrom;

(e) whether various animal welfare agencies have objected to any such exports; and

(f) what are Government's future plans for export of animals?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE, CIVIL SUPPLIES AND COOPERATION (SHRI ARIF BEG): (a) to (f) A statement is laid on the Table of the House. [See Appendix CVII, Annexure No. 88]

Fall in profits of the Central Public Sector Undertakings

*418. SHRI SANKAR GHOSE;

SHRI INDRADEEP SINHA; SHRI S. KUMARAN:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there was a sharp decline in the profitability of the Central Public Sector Undertakings during 1977-78;

(b) what is the reason for the fall in the profitability; and

(c) what steps Government have taken to bring about an improvement in their performance?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI H. M. PATEL): (a) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) The final audited figures for 1977-78 in respect of some of the public enterprises have not yet been received. However, the provisional figures in the case of those where the audited figures have not yet become available and the audited figures in the case of other enterprises, indicate that there has been a significant decline in the profitability of the central public enterprises during 1977-78 as compared to the previous year.

(b) The decline in profitability is due to the higher losses made by a few major public enterprises like Coa)

India Limited (including its sub-diaries) Fertilizer Corporation of India Ltd. etc.

(c) Various steps have been taken and are being taken from time to time to improve the profitability of the public undertakings as detailed below:

- (i) Improvement of capacity utilisation,
- (ii) Debottlenecking various phases of operation,
- (iii) Provision of balancing facilities for better utilisation of existing equipment,
- (iv) Provision of captive power to ensure smooth energy supply in selected industries,
- (v) Improvement in industrial relations,
- (vi) Improved production planning and control techniques,
- (vii) Introduction of incentive schemes,
- (viii) Periodical review of performance against budget targets at the level of administrative Ministries,
- (ix) Improvement of inventory control practice, and
- (x) Modernisation and diversification etc.

*419. [Transferred to the 20th December, 1978]

LLC. Housing Projects

*420. SHRI INDRADEEP SINHA:
SHRIMATI AMARJIT KAUR:
SHRI JAGJIT SINGH ANAND:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of housing projects undertaken by the Life Insurance Corporation of India during the last three years;
- (b) the expenditure incurred by the Corporation on the purchase of land and construction including the expen-

diture on the staff pertaining to these projects;

(c) the amount received by the Corporation from the sale of the houses built under these projects; and

(d) the amount of profit earned or loss incurred by the Corporation in these projects?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI H. M. PATEL): (a) Two.

(b) Kanpur Project—Rs. 31.72 lakhs; Hyderabad Project—Rs. 51.75 lakhs.

(c) No sales have taken place. JS construction is still under way.

(d) Does not arise.

Shortage of Rubber

*420-A. SHRI SITARAM KESRI:

SHRI BHISHMA NARAIN SINGH;

SHRI T ANJIAH.

Will the Minister of COMMERCE, CIVIL SUPPLIES AND COOPERATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any shortage of rubber in the country; if so, since when;

(b) whether Government are aware that their indecision to import rubber has led to nearly 40 per cent increase in the prices of imported rubber; and

(c) if so, what are the reasons for the delay in arriving at a decision to import rubber?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE, CIVIL SUPPLIES AND COOPERATION (SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR GOYAL): (a) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

†Previously Starred Question 452 transferred from the 21st December, 1978.