

[English]

privatisation of IISCO

3925. SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE: Will the MINISTER OF STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the proposal received from the private parties for takeover of IISCO has been put before the workers and officers of the company; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) and (b). M/s. SBI Capital Markets Ltd. who were commissioned by SAIL to explore the possibilities of private participation in Indian Iron & Steel Co. Ltd. (IISCO) and to advise SAIL thereon, had received preliminary offers from 3 private parties for participating in IISCO. While the final offers were yet to be submitted, Government had constituted a Committee of Experts to obtain and evaluate offers from private parties on private participation in IISCO. The recommendations of the Committee are expected to be received in November, 1992.

Since there are no "offers" as such, the question of putting the offers before the workers and officers of IISCO did not arise. The Steel Ministry is engaged in an ongoing process of consultations with the Employees' Unions and Associations as well as National trade Unions in retard to private participation in IISCO. As a part of this process, Government have reiterated their commitment to safeguarding fully the interests of employees of IISCO and to ensure this as a part of the participation process. The compulsions behind the exploration of possibilities of private participation in IISCO, like inadequate availability

of plan funds for modernising IISCO, uncertainties over generation/raising of requisite resources, etc. the intention to get IISCO modernised/ expanded in a time bound manner; the intention to select a partner with proven credentials and track record etc. were explained to the workers' Union, officers Association and National Trade Unions.

Steel Prices

3926. SHRIM.V. CHANDRASEKHARA MURTHY: Will the MINISTER OF STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Federation of Engineering Industries of India has urged the Government to direct SAIL and TISCO to withdraw the recent hike in prices;

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government in this regard;

(c) whether the price of steel is increasing in the country since its decontrol; and

(d) if so, effective steps the Government propose to take to check the rise in prices of steel?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) The Federation of Engineering Industries has represented against the increase in steel prices by the main producers including the Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) and the Tata Iron and Steel Company (TISCO).

(b) and (c). After deregulation of prices of steel w.e.f. 16.01.1992, the integrated steel plants became free to determine and announce the prices of their products. However, prices were increased by them only in May, 1992 to meet the escalations in input costs. The impact of this price in-

crease on open market prices has not been significant.

(d) Delicensing of the iron and steel sector and decontrol of steel prices will provide the requisite environment for the creation of new capacities in the private sector. Import duties on raw materials for the Steel Industry have also been reduced. As a result, there will be higher production of steel and greater competitiveness in the steel industry which will have a restraining influence on steel prices.

Indo-Denmark Agreement in Power Field of India

3927. DR. P.R. GANGWAR: Will the MINISTER OF POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether any agreement has been signed by the Union Government with Denmark for bilateral cooperation in the field of power;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether both the countries have constituted a joint task force to implement the agreement effectively; and

(d) if so, the details of the meetings of the task force held so far together with the places where these meetings were held?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI KALP NATH RAI): (a) and (b). An agreement on cooperation within the fields of power and Denmark on 3rd March, 1992 to continue and strengthen the industrial, technological, educational, economic and environmental cooperation between the two countries.

(c) The agreement on provides for the setting up of an Indian-Danish Working

Group. The Group has not yet been constituted.

(d) Does not arise.

[*Translation*]

New post Offices in Maharashtra.

3928. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the target fixed for peening of Post offices in Maharashtra during 1991-92 has been fully achieved; and

(b) if not, the details thereof and the efforts being made to achieve the same?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI P. V. RANGAYYA NAIDU): (a) and (b). Against the original target for opening 150 branch post offices and 20 departmental sub post offices in Maharashtra Circle during the year 1991-92. 102 branch post offices have already been opened as on date and the remaining post offices shall be opened during the year 1992-93 subject to availability of accommodation and suitable manpower.

[*English*]

Scrapping of Approved TV Serials.

3929. SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES
SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA:

Will the MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the organisation of film and