

merce and industry and from the salt producers of Kutch requesting that a separate jetty at Kandla for export of salt and minerals from Kutch be constructed;

(b) if so, whether the Government have taken any decision thereon; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI M. RAJASEKARA MURTHY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c). No decision has yet been taken by the Government in this regard.

Production Cost of Steel

99. SHRI GUMAN MAL LODHA :
SHRI BRISHIN PATEL :

Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state :

(a) whether the production cost of steel in the country is less in comparison to that of in the other steel manufacturing countries of the world;

(b) if so, the facts in this regard:

(c) whether there is any possibility to curtail the existing production-cost of steel in the country;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) the possible measures through which the production-cost of steel could be reduced; and

(f) the estimated production cost of steel in India, South Korea, Japan, China, America etc. at present?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV) : (a) and (b). There is no authentic data about the cost of production of steel in other countries. However, Bureau of Industrial Cost & Price (BICP) has recently submitted a tour report on cost study of steel industry. According to this report, the cost of production of saleable steel in Bokaro and Bhilai Steel Plants of Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) during 1994-95 was less than the cost of production in Korea (Pohang Plant of Posco) and Japan (Kimitsu Plant of Nippon). The cost of production of saleable steel of SAIL during 1994 was less than the cost of production in USA, UK, France and Germany.

The international cost competitiveness of individual products will, however, depend upon factors such as quality, freight, levies and taxes, etc.

(c) to (e). Some of the measures by which the existing production cost can be reduced are as under :-

- Increasing capacity utilisation;
- Improving productivity;
- Introducing energy conservation measures;
- Improving availability of equipment through effective maintenance;
- Improving product-mix, making value added items and meeting customer's requirements;
- Reduction in consumption of inputs such as coke, energy stores and spares etc.

(f) According to the BICP report the production cost of saleable steel in India, South Korea, Japan, America and U.K. was as under :-

<i>Country</i>	<i>Year (1994-95)</i> <i>(Cost per tonne in US\$)</i>
India (SAIL : Bokaro)	411.65
Korea (POHANG, POSCO)	569.77
Japan (KIMITSU, NIPPON)	591.13
USA	503*
U.K.	423*

*For the year 1994.

The BICP did not study the cost of production in China.

Private Sector in Surface Transport

100. SHRI JITENDRA NATH DAS : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are considering to engage