

troller. However, on the basis of the recommendations already received by him, he considered the applications received on merit and issued appointment orders. The present position is as under:

Proposal made by Bihar Government for appointment of Registered Stockists—21.

Names of parties not indicated by State Governments—5.

Names of parties recommended by State Government—16.

Applications and other documents received—13.

Appointed—8.

Rejected—1.

Incomplete documents—4.

Number of applications not received so far—3.

Office of Indian Oil Company

1701. Shri R. P. Singh: Will the Minister of Mines and Fuel be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have shifted the Branch Office of the Indian Oil Company Ltd., from Patna to Calcutta when it was easier to keep regular contacts with the Barauni Oil Refinery Project from Patna than Calcutta; and

(b) if so, the reasons for shifting the above-said office?

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Mines and Fuel (Shri Hajar-navis): (a) Indian Oil Company shifted the headquarters of their Eastern Branch from Patna to Calcutta in May, 1962, but for liaison with Barauni Refinery project, a divisional office of the Company is retained at Patna.

(b) The reasons for shifting the Branch Headquarters from Patna to Calcutta were as follows:

- (i) The jurisdiction of the Eastern Branch of the Indian Oil Company extends to the States of Assam, West Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. Calcutta

being the chief communication centre, all the 4 states within the Eastern Branch are easily accessible from Calcutta rather than from Patna.

- (ii) Calcutta is a big market.

- (iii) Calcutta is the most convenient place for dealings with the other oil companies with whom Indian Oil Company has product exchange arrangements for the sale of Gauhati Refinery Products.

Heavy Steel Industry

1702. Dr. P. Srinivasan: Will the Minister of Steel and Heavy Industries be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to start a heavy steel industry in the Madras State; and

(b) if so, whether the site has been selected and how much time Government will take to commence the industry?

The Minister of Steel and Heavy Industries (Shri C. Subramaniam): (a) and (b). The Government of India appointed a Technical Committee to consider the question of setting up a steel plant in Southern region based on Neyveli Lignite and Salem and other iron ores. The Committee felt that the production of iron from these raw materials appeared to be technically feasible, and recommended that a more detailed assessment of the technical and economic factors should be made on an industrial or pilot plant scale. As a result, certain tests were carried out in Norway and East Germany of which the preliminary results hold out promise. Government have at the same time, accepted another recommendation of the Committee to appoint a firm of Consulting Engineers to prepare a detailed Feasibility Report. The Consultants will study all the relevant aspects of the proposed plant, including the factors which affect its location. A decision about the location of the plant as well as date of commencement of the plant