

(a) whether it is a fact that Ceylon Government have asked the Government of India to supply Indian coal;

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto and the quantity of coal proposed to be supplied;

(c) whether it is also a fact that certain other countries have also requested for the supply of coal; and

(d) if so, whether Government are in a position to supply coal to those countries ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI MOHD. SHAFI QURESHI) : (a) and (b). The Ceylon Government Railways invited global tenders for the supply of Coal to them during December, 1967 to November, 1968. The M.M.T.C. has secured this contract and will supply 1,60,000 tons of Selected 'A' Grade Steam Coal during this period.

(c) and (d). The Myanma Export Import Trading Corporation of the Government of Union of Burma also invited global tenders for supply of Coal and Coke during 1968. In this case also M.M.T.C.'s tender has been accepted for supply of about 3 lakh tons of coal/coke during that year. Besides, the possibilities of exporting some coal to Japan and Hong Kong are being explored.

REVISION OF MINERAL ROYALTY RATES

4484. SHRI MARANDI :

SHRI S. C. BESRA :

Will the Minister of STEEL, MINES AND METALS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government of Bihar have approached the Centre for the revision of the existing mineral royalty rates;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and the reaction of the Union Government thereto; and

(c) whether any decision in this regard has been taken ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL, MINES AND METALS (SHRI P. C. SETHI) :

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c). The reasons, *inter alia*, are that as the prices of minerals have gone up, the State Governments are entitled to receive their due share in the form of royalty, and augment their financial resources from the minerals which are one of their main assets, for implementing the various development programmes. In view of the importance of the subject and the representations received from other State Governments and the mineral industry, Government constituted a Study Group to examine the question of royalty on major minerals in all its aspects. The recommendations of the Study Group and proposals of the State Government in this regard are under consideration.

PURCHASE OF BOX WOOD BLANKS BY NATIONAL INSTRUMENTS LTD.

4485. SHRI PREM CHAND VERMA : Will the Minister of INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that 32,757 Boxes Wood Blanks were purchased by the National Instruments Ltd. from a London firm and that it was certified by the D.G.S.&D. that the boxes were according to order and specifications but the Company rejected them;

(b) whether it is a fact that it was declared only in 1966 that 19,192 blanks were unserviceable and only 2,795 blanks were made use of;

(c) if so, the person responsible for keeping the matter pending for 8 years and thus causing such a great loss; and

(d) whether any inquiry was instituted and responsibility fixed, and if so, the details of the action taken ?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI F. A. AHMED) : (a) to (d). It has been ascertained from the National Instruments Ltd.,