

Production of Saleable Steel and Ingot Steel at Public Sector Steel Plants

2541. SHRI RAJDEO SINGH: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the saleable steel production of 281,500 tonnes in the three public sector steel plants in January was the highest so far in any previous months;

(b) whether the total production of ingot steel was the highest during the current financial year; and

(c) if so, whether these highest productions are the outcome of any special programme or routine production?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI SUBODH HANSDA): (a) The actual total production of saleable steel from the three integrated public sector Steel Plants under Hindustan Steel Limited during the month of January, 1973, was 2,82,200 tonnes. This is the highest so far in any one month.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The management of Hindustan Steel Limited have taken and are taking a number of measures to step up production progressively and the rising trends in production can be said to be the result thereof.

Suppression of Civil Engineer Assistants in H.E.C., Ranchi

2542. SHRI BHOGENDRA JHA: Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of Civil Engineer Assistants affected through suppression in the H.E.C., Ranchi up to now;

(b) whether the affected Engineer Assistants have been representing against this suppression; and

(c) if so, Government's reaction thereon, and whether it is proposed to undo these if not, reasons therefor?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRY (SHRI SIDDHESHWAR PRASAD):

(a) In 1966, some Engineer Assistants (Civil) of the Construction Division of Heavy Engineering Corporation were declared surplus. About 130 of them were absorbed in the Production Divisions of the HEC Plants after obtaining their options. Subsequently, some of these Engineer Assistants were promoted to the posts of Junior Engineers. As many of them were junior to their colleagues in the Construction Division before their transfer, the Engineer Assistant (Civil) of the Construction Division felt that they had been superseded by their juniors. The number of Engineer Assistants falling in this category in 1969.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The Heavy Engineering Corporation Management on 6th July, 1972 constituted two cadres of Civil Engineering personnel viz., Civil Construction and Maintenance Cadre and Civil Structural Design Cadre. All the Civil Engineering personnel were asked to exercise options for allotment to either cadre. Their suitability for allocation to these cadres has been assessed by a Committee. Action to promote them in the respective cadres is being taken by the Heavy Engineering Corporation, subject to availability of vacancies.

Transfer of civilian staff of Armed Forces Headquarters

2543. SHRI BANAMALI PATNAIK: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of civilian staff in the Armed Forces Headquarters offices who are working in the same Branch for more than twenty years;

(b) the reasons for not effecting periodical transfers as is being done in the civil Ministries; and

(c) whether existing system of over-retention is not resulting against the morale and efficiency of the service?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI J B PATNAIK): (a) to (c). The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Raising of in rate of interest on Employees Provident Fund

2544 **SHRI VASANT SATHE:** Will the Minister of LABOUR AND REHABILITATION be pleased to state

(a) the reaction of Government to the recommendation of the Central Board of Trustees of the Provident Fund for raising the rate of interest on the subscribers accounts to 6 per cent;

(b) the extent of provident fund dues outstanding against defaulting employees and their number for the last three years; and

(c) the measures proposed to effect improvement in recovery performance?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND REHABILITATION (SHRI RAGHUNATHA REDDY): (a) The rate of interest on the accounts of the subscribers to the EPF was raised to 6 per cent per annum for the year 1972-73. The Central Board of Trustees, Employees' Provident Fund, has recommended for the year 1973-74 the same rate of interest i.e. 6 per cent per annum in their last meeting. A proposal in this regard has been received recently and is under consideration.

(b) Arrears of Provident Fund contributions in respect of the un-exempted establishments together with the number of defaulting un-exempted

establishments during the last three years as reported by the Provident Fund authorities are given below:—

As on	Arrears of contributions	No. of defaulting un-exempted establishments
(in lakhs of rupees)		
31-3-1970.	1468 71	8,400
31-3-1971	1649 40	7,842
31-3-1972	2065 57	8,000

(c) Besides amendments to the Employees' Provident Funds and Family Pension Fund Act, 1952 providing for more deterrent penalties against the defaulting employers under consideration of the Government, the following steps are taken against the un-exempted establishments which default in payment of dues and/or submission of returns:—

- (i) Prosecution is launched under Section 14 of the Employees' Provident Funds & Family Pension Fund Act, 1952.
- (ii) Revenue Recovery proceedings are initiated under Section 8 of the Employees' Provident Funds and Family Pension Fund Act, 1952.
- (iii) In suitable cases, complaints are filed with the Police Courts under Section 406/409 of the Indian Penal Code.
- (iv) The default is brought to the notice of the Employers' and Workers Organisations including the Trade Unions.
- (v) Penal damages are levied under Section 14-B of the Employees' Provident Funds and Family Pension Fund Act, 1952.
- (vi) In some cases, the establishments are afforded a chance