

Hunger strike by apprentices at Bokaro Steel Ltd.

4308. DR. RAMJI SINGH: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state whether there was a mass hunger strike by about four hundred apprentices at Bokaro Steel Limited, Bokaro, from 4th July, 1977?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI BIJU PATNAIK): In pursuance of their demands, the apprentices, engaged under the Apprentices Act at Bokaro Steel Limited, Bokaro started a relay fast from the 4th June, 1977. From 5th July, 1977, five of these Act Apprentices started an indefinite fast. As a result of discussions held between the management of Bokaro Steel Ltd. and representatives of the apprentices, an accord was arrived at on 10th July, 1977. The apprentices have since withdrawn their agitation and called off the hunger strike.

Lock-out by Pfizer Limited (Bombay)

4309. SHRI G. M. BANATWALLA:
DR. VASANT KUMAR
PANDIT:

Will the Minister of PARLIAMEN-
TARY AFFAIRS AND LABOUR be
pleased to state:

(a) whether Pfizer Limited (Bombay) has decided to lock-out its factory at Thana-Belapur Road (Bombay) on and from 18th July, 1977;

(b) if so, the major points of dispute between the management and the labour; and

(c) what efforts have been made or proposed to be made by Government to avert the lock-out?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMEN-
TARY AFFAIRS AND LABOUR
(SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA): (a) to
(c). The matter falls essentially in the State sphere. According to the information made available by the Govern-

ment of Maharashtra the management had given notice of lock-out from July 18, 1977 following agitation and alleged obstruction of trucks carrying raw-materials by the workers. The main disputed issue relates, it is reported, to the absorption of temporary workers on permanent basis. The State Industrial Relations Machinery are looking into the matter and have already held several discussions with the parties in an effort to resolve the matter.

Steel plants encouraging small scale industries

4310. SHRI S. D. SOMASUNDARAM: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) the precise part played by Steel Plants for encouraging small scale industries;

(b) the number of small scale industries that have grown round each Plant, the categories of their production and the value of annual production;

(c) the role proposed for the Steel Plants including old and those proposed to be set up for the projected expansion of small scale industries; and

(d) the salient features of the plants in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI BIJU PATNAIK): (a), (c) and (d). The managements of Steel Plants provide encouragement to small scale industries in a variety of ways such as by placing orders on them for items which can be manufactured by them, providing technical know-how and guidance, arranging or helping in procurement of raw materials, providing testing and laboratory facilities, carrying out a regular review and earmarking of items which can be off-loaded to the small scale units etc