

(a) the total number of licences issued so far for setting up mini steel plants in the country;

(b) the total production capacity of these licences;

(c) the amount advanced by the nationalised banks, and other financial institutions to these mini steel plants; and

(d) the extent of production in these mini steel plants?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI BIJU PATNAIK): (a), (b) and (d). As on 1-1-1977 there were 206 licensed/registered electric arc furnace units in the country with a total production capacity of 43.64 lakh tonnes of mild steel ingots/billets per annum. Cases of the units which had not implemented their projects, have been under review and so far 28 licences with a total capacity of 4.22 lakh tonnes and 3 Letters of Intent with a total capacity of 2.00 lakh tonnes have been revoked/cancelled. The total capacity of the remaining 175 units is 37.42 lakh tonnes per annum. The total production of ingot steel by the electric arc furnace units during the last three years was as under:—

1974-75	6.7 lakh tonnes
1975-76	6.1 lakh tonnes.
1976-77	11.6 lakh tonnes.

(c) The information is being collected.

Hijacking of Indian Airlines Boeing 737 bound for Jaipur

4333. SHRI ANANT DAVE;
SHRI SHANKERSINHJI
VAGHELA;

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state the reaction of Pakistan Government on the protest lodged by India on the release of six Urdu speaking hijackers who hijacked the Jaipur bound Indian

Airlines Boeing 737 to Lahore with 77 passengers and seven crew on the board?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE): An Indian Airlines Boeing 737 bound for Jaipur from Delhi was hijacked to Lahore on September 10, 1976, by a group of six persons who were taken into custody by the Pakistan authorities. On October 9, 1976, an official spokesman of the Government of Pakistan stated that the preliminary investigation against the hijackers had been complete and that they would be tried for violating the laws of Pakistan. On learning subsequently of the Government of Pakistan's decision to release the hijackers, the Government of India expressed its regret and deplored the action of the Government of Pakistan and the official spokesman of the Ministry of External Affairs issued a statement to this effect on January 6, 1977. There have been no developments since then.

Direct Dialling system within a radius of 40 Kilometers

4334. SHRI ANANT DAVE;
SHRI SHANKERSINHJI
VAGHELA;

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the particulars of the proposal under consideration of the Government to have direct dialling system with rural areas where still there is trunk call system within a radius of 40 kilometers from Delhi;

(b) when a decision is likely to be implemented in this regard; and

(c) in case no such proposal is under consideration of the Government the particular steps being taken to remove the difficulties and inconvenience of the callers from Delhi