

The following steps have been taken/ are being taken to improve the performance of this mill :

- (i) arrangements are being made for timely procurement of cotton from different available channels;
 - (ii) working capital has been replenished to the extent of cash losses incurred ;
 - (iii) effecting modernisation of plant and machinery ; and
 - (iv) effecting rationalisation of workload and labour force.
- (d) No, Sir. All permanent workers have been paid their wages regularly.

(e) and (f) : Do not arise.

Setting up of Silk and Tussor Cotton Industries in Birbhum in West Bengal.

5977. SHRI GADADHAR SAHA : Will the Minister of SUPPLY AND TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) the utilisation of raw material for silk and tussor industry in Birbhum in West Bengal ?

(b) in view of the sufficient cultivation of tut plantation and rearing of cocoons in some areas of Birbhum, West Bengal, which is considered essential raw materials for growth of silk and tussor industry, what are the schemes in Central sector for setting up of silk and tasar cottage industry in Birbhum ;

(c) the financial and institutional assistance provided so far for setting up of this industry ;

(d) whether any survey has been conducted by Central agency for proper study of the prospects of this industry ;

(e) if so, the details thereof ; and

(f) if not, the reasons thereof ;

THE MINISTER OF SUPPLY AND TEXTILES (SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR SINGH) : (a) In West Bengal 700 tonnes of mulberry raw silk and eleven tonnes of Tasar raw silk was produced during 1983-84. The silk produced is utilised by the Handloom weavers and Khadi Institutions in West Bengal but specific information about consumption of mulberry and tasar raw silk in Birbhum district is not available.

(b) and (c). Inter State Tasar project being implemented by Central Silk Board in West Bengal under Indo-Swiss Technical Cooperation programme covers development of Tasar Silk Industry in Birbhum District also. Under the project a sum of Rs. 78.32 lakhs has been released so far the Tasar Sector, a Basic Seed Multiplication-cum-Training Centre is functioning at Mohammed Bazaar for arranging production and supply of Tasar Basic Silkworm Seed to State level pilot project Centres for further multiplication and supply of quality silkworm seed to the Tasar rearers. Similarly under the Mulberry Sector, CSB has established a Regional Research Station at Bolpur in Birbhum District for tackling the problem of sericulturists in the area. Further an extension Centre for Mulberry has also been established in Birbhum District for dissemination of improved techniques of mulberry cultivation and silk-worm rearing among the farmers.

(d) to (f). A survey was organised by Central silk Board to study the prospects of Mulberry Sericulture Development in Birbhum district and the intensive sericulture development project envisaged for Birbhum district to cover 1000 acres mulberry plantation is a result of this survey.

Minerals in Srikakulam District of Andhra Pradesh

5978. SHRI H. A. DORA : Will

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

(a) the minerals available in Srikakulam District of Andhra Pradesh ;

(b) whether any survey has ever been conducted there ; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to establish industry based on minerals available there ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF STEEL (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH) (a). The Minerals available in Srikakulam District of Andhra Pradesh are clay, manganese, sillimanite, graphite, quartz and building materials.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Steel Authority of India Limited has taken mining leases for manganese, while quartz is being exploited by a private company. Of the other minerals, only clay and building materials are at present of economic significance.

Abolition of Freight Equalisation Scheme in Respect of Steel.

5979. PROF. P. J. KURIEN : Will the Minister of STEEL, MINES AND COAL be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have decided to abolish the freight equalisation scheme in respect of steel ;

(b) if so, whether States like Kerala will have to pay much higher price for this commodity now ;

(c) whether Kerala has represented against the abolition of this scheme ; and

(d) if so, whether Government propose to consider any other scheme for compensating the States which will be hit hard by the abolition of the freight equalisation scheme ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF STEEL (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH) : (a) and (b). The decision to phase out the Freight Equalisation Scheme in respect of iron and steel has been taken on the basis of the National Transport Policy Committee recommendation which in its report to Government had observed that "freight equalisation has had little effect on generating employment activity in backward regions. Freight equalisation in industrial commodities does not meet the desirable objective of dispersal of economic activity but can lead to non-optimal location of industries. We, therefore, recommend that it should be phased out."

The modalities and time phasing of the withdrawal of the freight equalisation scheme in respect of iron and steel are being worked out in consultation with the Ministries/Departments concerned. While working out the modalities abolition, care is being taken to ensure that the industries/consumers located away from the integrated steel plants are required to bear only the minimum extra cost as and when this scheme is phased out.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) No, Sir.

SC/ST Officers in N.T.C.

5980. SHRI GANGA RAM : Will the Minister of SUPPLY AND TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) the number of posts in the pay scales of Rs. 1500 and above in the National Textiles Corporation (Delhi, Punjab and Rajasthan) and its mills ;

(b) the number and percentage of officers working in the above grades belonging to the Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes in the said organisation ;

(c) whether efforts have been made to appoint the Scheduled Castes/Scheduled