

(b) whether Government propose to utilise the low ash non-coking coal available in Talcher coalfield to produce semi-coke by low temperature carbonisation process in order to save the acute shortage of coking coal in the country; and

(c) if so, the details thereof ?

**THE MINISTER OF STEEL, MINES AND COAL (SHRI VASANT SATHE) :** (a) No Sir. The steel plants which are the main consumers of coking coal, had 530 lakh tonnes of coking coal in stock as on 17.1985. There is, however, a small gap between the total availability of coking coal in the country vis-a-vis demand. This gap is being met through imports.

(b) and (c) The Industrial Development Corporation of Orissa Ltd has a proposal for setting up a low temperature Carbonisation plant, based on Talcher coal, to be used in electro metallurgical furnaces as reductant and fuel.

**Support price of long and extra long staple cotton**

682 **SHRI CHINTA MOHAN :** Will the Minister of SUPPLY AND TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) whether price of long and extra-long staple cotton have crashed in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka and if so, the corrective steps taken/proposed;

(b) whether export companies are thriving due to lack of machinery of support prices; and

(c) whether Government will honour its earlier commitment of announcing support prices before sowing starts for all crops and for effective machinery for purchase and implementation to avoid distress sales ?

**THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SUPPLY AND TEXTILES (SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR SINGH) :** (a) Kapas prices of long and extra-long staple varieties have declined to some extent in Andhra

Pradesh and Karnataka. The Cotton Corporation of India is making purchases at support prices in the regulated markets in these two States.

(b) The Cotton Corporation of India as support price agency is present in the market to offer support prices to the cotton growers.

(c) The support prices for different varieties of cotton during the coming 1985-86 cotton seasons will be announced by Government as and when these are finalised.

**Banks' aid to sick industrial units**

683. **SHRI KALI PRASAD PANDEY :** Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the Reserve Bank of India has prepared a stringent plan to stop banks from being converted into 'nursing homes' for the sick industrial units; and

(b) if so, the details thereof ?

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY) :** (a) and (b) Apart from guidelines/instructions issued by Reserve Bank of India (RBI) from time to time, which, inter alia, include instructions that banks should undertake viability studies in regard to sick units and only the potentially viable units should be taken up for rehabilitation, RBI has not prepared any stringent plan in regard to banks extending assistance to sick industrial units.

[Translation]

**Proposal to open steel yard in Jabalpur**

684. **SHRI MAHENDRA SINGH :** Will the Minister of STEEL, MINES AND COAL be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is a proposal to open a steel yard in Jabalpur, if so, to whom this agency will be given;

(b) Government's policy in this