

continuously undertaken programmes of soil conservation, command Area Development and fertility improvement as plan programmes. Though the unit cost of cultivation has increased, but at the same time the value of farm produce has also increased over the years.

(b) and (c). In view of the above the question of appointing any Expert Committee has not arisen.

Setting up Sponge Iron Projects in A.P.

524. SHRI BHATTAM
SRIRAMAMURTHY:
SHRI PALAKONDRAYUDU:

Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether National Mineral Development Corporation Limited and Sponge Iron India Limited, are planning to set up three new projects in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details of these projects;

(c) whether Sponge Iron India Limited has planned to establish a Rs. 400 crore gas based sponge iron plant near Kakinada and Rs. 200 crore coal based plant at Vijayanagar; and

(d) whether the NDMC is planning to set up a 400 crore pellet plant in Vishakhapatnam?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES
(SHRI M.L. FOTEDAR): (a) No, Sir

(b) Does not arise.

(c) SAIL has not plan for setting up a gas-based sponge iron plant near Kakinada. Proposal for a Sponge Iron Plant at Vijayanagar is under consideration.

(d) No, Sir.

Alleged Arms Aid to Chakmas by India

525. SHRI MAHENDRA SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Bangladesh Government is reported to have alleged that India is providing arms aid to Chakmas of Bangladesh who are fleeing that country and crossing into India in thousands; and

(b) if so, the Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI
K. NATWAR SINGH): (a) Government are not aware of any specific allegation by the Bangladesh Government about Bangladeshi Chakmas receiving arms from India.

(b) Any such allegation would be completely baseless.

Reports of Kharif Sowings

526. SHRIMATI KISHORI SINHA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Union Government have received reports from the States regarding Kharif sowing;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any new high yielding seeds have been used during this season; and

(d) if so, the expected impact on the Kharif output?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND
COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF