

ernment in this regard and to ensure the declared price for cultivators?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SHANTILALPURUSHOTTAMDASPATEL): (a) and (b). Bench mark price of RMA-4 grade of Natural rubber recommended by the Cost Accounts Study of the Ministry of Finance and fixed by the Government w.e.f. 15.1.1991 is Rs. 21,450/- per Metric Tonne.

(c) and (d). Government has advised STC to purchase RMA-5 grade of natural rubber and STC has started purchase of the same through agencies at the best price at which rubber is available in the market.

[*Translation*]

Effect of Gulf Crisis on Trade

125. PROF. YADU NATH PANDEY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the difficulties faced due to recession in Indian and foreign trade and in business as a result of present Gulf war and the extent of the total loss suffered;

(b) the names of the countries with which trade relations have been adversely affected and the details of goods exchanged with these countries; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to normalise our trade relations with these countries?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SHANTILALPURUSHOTTAMDASPATEL): (a) It is estimated that overall impact of Gulf war on the Balance of Payments position will be of the order of US \$ 2.8 billion over a 12 month period from October 1990, assuming oil prices at US \$ 25/barrel.

(b) and (c). As a result of economic sanctions imposed by the UN Security Council against Iraq and Kuwait, trade with these countries has been banned. Prior to the ban on trade, major items imported from these countries included crude oil, sulphur and chemicals. Items exported to these countries included engineering goods, rice, tea, spices, textiles, processed foods etc. Our trade relations will be normalised once the embargo on trade with Iraq and Kuwait is lifted.

Modernisation of Bokaro Steel Plant

126. SHRI JANARDAN YADAV: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal for expansion and modernisation of Bokaro Steel Plant; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI ASHOKE KUMAR SEN): (a) and (b). While the Government has already accorded approval in principle to the modernisation of Bokaro Steel Plant, SAIL has proposed to implement the scheme in two phases. Government has received the proposal on the first phase which aims primarily at introducing continuous steel casting technology and facilities. The proposal is currently under examination. It will be taken up for implementation if it is found to be techno-economically viable.

[*English*]

Suspension of IIFT Employees

127. SHRI KAMAL CHAUDHRY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of employees in his