

(a) whether the employees of regional rural banks working in the pay-scales prevalent in different States are being paid the special allowance for tribal areas as is being paid to State Government employees;

(b) if not, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government propose to pay the same special allowance to employees of regional rural banks working in the tribal areas; and

(d) if so, the steps taken in that direction ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY) : (a) to (d). Government have advised the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development that on the basis of broadly accepted principle of providing facilities comparable to State Government employees to employees of Regional Rural Banks, it will have no objection if special allowance for tribal areas is paid by a Regional Rural Bank to its employees strictly in accordance with the practice followed by the respective State Governments.

#### Full Utilisation of Mineral Wealth in Bihar

2883. SHRIMATI PRABHAWATI GUPTA : Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state :

(a) whether there are reserves of mineral wealth in Bihar and they are not being utilized fully;

(b) the steps Union Government propose to take for full utilisation of this mineral wealth; and

(c) the amount being made available for this purpose in the Seventh Five Year Plan ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF MINES (SHRIMATI RAMDULARI SINHA) : (a) to (c). The information is being collected and shall be laid on the Table of the House.

[English]

#### Clearance for Manufacturing Ferritic Steel Variety

2884. SHRI V. S. KRISHNA IYER : Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have given clearance for the manufacture of ferritic steel variety by steel plants in the country;

(b) if so, the number of steel plants which have been given clearance and the quantity earmarked for each steel plant;

(c) whether Government propose to give clearance for the manufacture of more quantities of the above variety of steel; and

(d) whether there is any proposal to use this for making coins instead of nickel coins to solve the coin shortage in the country ?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI K. C. PANT) : (a) to (c). It is presumed that the reference in the Question to ferritic steel is in respect of the ferritic variety of stainless steel. Licences have been issued for manufacture of stainless steel and not specifically for ferritic or any other variety of stainless steel. Units licensed for manufacture of stainless steel can manufacture any one or more of the different varieties of stainless steel.

Electric arc furnace units are permitted to diversify into production of all grades of carbon and alloy steels including stainless/heat resisting steel upto their licensed capacity.

(d) A suggestion has been made for making coins out of ferritic stainless steel.

#### Goods Worth Crores of Rupees Seized by Customs Department Lying Idle in Godown

2885. PROF. CHANDRA BHANU DEVI : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that goods worth crores of rupees seized by the Customs Department are lying idle in the godowns in the absence of their disposal;