

Flood in Brahmaputra River

1343. SHRI V.S. KRISHNA IYER : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) the total loss due to recent floods in Brahmaputra river in Assam;

(b) the number of persons affected due to the floods; and

(c) the financial assistance released by Union Government for flood relief ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHYAM LAL YADAV : (a) and (b). The loss (provisional) due to recent floods as reported by the State Government is given below :-

1. Districts affected	15
2. Area affected (lakh ha.)	3.82
3. Population affected (lakh)	17.29
4. Human lives lost	56
5. Cattle heads lost	1172
6. Cropped area damaged (lakh ha.)	1.18

(c) The Central share of margin money amounting to Rs. 3.625 crores has been released.

Setting up Sponge Iron Plant in Orissa

1344. SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK : Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have a proposal to set up a major sponge Iron plant at Daitari in Orissa ;

(b) whether the Steel Authority of India wants to participate in the establishment of that Sponge Iron Plant ;

(c) the estimated cost of the plant ;

(d) whether the plant is likely to be set up in 1988-89 financial year ; and

(e) if so, the steps taken in this direction ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF STEEL IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA) : (a) to (e). SAIL is at present examining the feasibility of setting up of a sponge iron Plant based on natural gas at different locations including Daitari in Orissa.

Use of Aluminium in Place of Wood

1345. SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK : Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state :

(a) whether stress has been given by his Ministry on the use of Aluminium in place of wood in order to overcome the energy and fuel crisis ;

(b) if so, the details of the efforts made by his Ministry in this regard ;

(c) the opinion expressed by the National Aluminium Company (NALCO) in this regard ; and

(d) the action taken by Government thereon ?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI M.L. FOTEDAR) : (a) to (d). Government are concerned with conservation of forest resources in the country. The Department of mines is keen to work out a suitable replacement strategy for encouraging use of aluminium as a substitute for wood and other metals. A study has been entrusted to National Institute of Design (NID), Ahmedabad for design and fabrication of furniture items made from aluminium for use in Government offices and schools in replacement of wood. National Aluminium Company (NALCO) has supported the proposal.