

at the meeting of the National Development Council on 12th and 13th July, 1984 have since submitted their reports on the various issues assigned to them;

(b) if so, the main outlines of these reports including a summary of their recommendations; and

(c) if not, the likely date by which the reports are expected from the Panels ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI K.R. NARAYANAN) : (a) to (c) : The National Development Council while approving the Approach to the Seventh Plan 1985-90 had recommended setting up of Expert Groups on some specific issues connected with the formulation of the Seventh Five Year Plan.

Subsequently, three Expert Committees were set up by the Planning Commission (August, 1984). The specific issues remitted to these Committees were :

- (i) Whether the provision for maintenance of assets created out of public sector investment should be an item of Plan expenditure or of non-Plan expenditure.
- (ii) The scope and role of Centrally sponsored schemes in sectoral development plans.
- (iii) whether the Seventh Plan should provide in its formal structure for the effects of inflation, both on resources and on costs on investments.

The reports of the first two Committees have been received recently by the Planning Commission, while the third Committee is yet to submit its report.

As the Committees were set up on the direction of the National Development Council, their reports would have to be submitted to the Council for its consideration.

Development of Hilly Areas

323. PROF. NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR : Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 4806 on 24 August, 1983 regarding Advisory Committee for development of hilly areas and state :

(a) the contribution made by the Advisory Committee of Experts for the development of hilly areas and the formulation of any strategy for the development of hill States regions in the Seventh Five Year Plan; and

(b) if not, the exact date by which the Committee would submit its proposals in respect of the evolution of the strategy ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI K.R. NARAYANAN) : (a) The Advisory Committee of experts for development of hill areas has held two meetings so far. The Committee discussed general problems of the region and certain specific programmes. The Committee generally agreed that (i) the main focus should be on the people and their basic needs i.e. food, fodder, fuel, education, health, etc; (ii) micro-watershed should be the unit of development and (iii) voluntary agencies should be encouraged to participate in eco-development programmes. The views of the Committee have been communicated to the Working Group on development of hill areas in the Seventh plan. The Working Group is expected to take note of these views in formulating its recommendations. The report of the Working Group is awaited.

(b) The Committee is an advisory body and not expected to submit any formal report. The views of the Committee are sought on specific issues as and when the need is felt.

Proposal to Produce Oil from Coal

324. SHRI AJIT KUMAR SAHA : Will the Minister of STEEL, MINES AND COAL be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are considering the proposal to set up a pilot project to produce oil and other products from coal for which West Bengal Government requested the Union Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the present position of the said proposal; and

(d) the reasons for delay to clear the project ?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL, MINES AND COAL (SHRI VASANT SATHE) : (a) to (c) The proposal of West Bengal Govt. for preparation of "Techno-Economic Feasibility Report" was recommended by Government of India for United Nations Development Programme assistance. This project has been taken up and is under implementation by West Bengal Industrial Development Corporation Limited.

Setting up of any such plant would arise only after the Techno-Economic Feasibility Report becomes available.

(d) Does not arise.

Shortage of Small Coins in Raniganj, West Bengal

325. SHRI AJIT KUMAR SAHA : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have received complaints of acute shortage of small coins and low denomination notes in Raniganj area of West Bengal and other parts of the country; and

(b) if so, the steps Government propose to take to improve the situation ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY) : (a) There has been reports regarding shortage of small coins and currency notes of

low denominations from certain parts of the country including Raniganj area of West Bengal.

(b) Government have taken various steps to meet the demand of coins and currency notes. Incentive schemes alongwith the increased working hours have been introduced in all the three Mints, i.e. Bombay, Calcutta and Hyderabad and two Currency Note Presses at Nasik Road and Dewas. As part of modernisation and expansion scheme, twenty two new coining presses are being procured for the three Mints and two production lines at Currency Note Press, Nasik Road and balancing equipments for the Bank Note Press, Dewas are being installed. A second shift in the Calcutta Mint is being introduced. It has also been decided to establish a new Mint and a new Currency Note Printing Press and steps are being taken to implement this decision.

As a result of the improvement in production of small coins and Currency and Bank Notes, the Reserve Bank of India has stepped up releases of these coins and currency notes in the various regions including West Bengal consistent with the available supplies.

Import of Magnesite

326. SHRI CHINTAMANI JENA : Will the Minister of STEEL, MINES AND COAL be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have to import sizeable quantity of magnesite to meet the country's demand;

(b) if so, the quantity of magnesite imported during the years 1982, 1983 and 1984 and the amount of foreign exchange spent during the period;

(c) whether Government have received any proposal from private enterprises to explore the possibility of finding raw magnesite in the country;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and