

(e) the action taken by Government thereon ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF STEEL (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH) : (a) The Silica content of indigenous magnesite is high and it is because of this that it cannot be used in special high quality refractories. Import of dead burnt magnesite (which is also termed as magnesite sinter) with silica content less than 4% is allowed under the open

General Licence. Import of dead burnt magnesite with silica content between 4% to 6% is permitted under the automatic licensing scheme and import of dead burnt magnesite with more than 6% silica is restricted. Small quantity of fused magnesite and non calcined magnesite are also imported.

(b) The total quantity of all kinds of magnesite imported and the amount of foreign exchange spent during 1980-81, 1981-82 and 1982-83 was as follows :—

Year	Quantity	Value
1980-81	19,794 tonnes	Rs. 4.93 crores
1981-82	1,688 tonnes	Rs. 0.91 crores
1982-83	6,256 tonnes	Rs. 2.19 crores

(c) to (e). Central Geological Programming Board (CGPB) which approved the geological programme of Geological Survey of India (GSI) received suggestions from a private enterprise for inclusion of programme of search and investigation for magnesite in Himalayan area in 1983-84 and Salem area in 1984-85 field season. The suggestions were discussed in CGPB meetings. Search and investigation for magnesite were included in GSI programme. Latest information indicates exploration of magnesite in CHALK hills area and SIRAVALLI area of Salem have been completed. Assessment of reserves is in progress. Investigation for magnesite is continuing in Alaknada valley.

Sanction of Liberalised Family Pension

328. SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have received complaints from various quarters including pensioners' organisations pointing out alleged discrimination in sanction of Liberalised Family Pension under Central Civil Service Rules in the light of Supreme Court's verdict; and

(b) the steps Government are taking to ensure that Supreme Court's verdict is properly implemented in case of pensioners of all categories ?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI VISHWANATH PRATAP SINGH) : (a) and (b). Some representations for the grant of benefits, given in the light of the Supreme Court's judgement to pre-31.3.1979 pensioners, to family pensioners also were received. The Judgement of the Supreme Court related to retirement pensions and has no nexus with family pension which is given in case of death of serving employees or pensioners. The Supreme Court Judgement in case of all other categories of pensioners has, however, been fully implemented.

Modernisation and Expansion of Steel Plants

329. SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA : Will the Minister of STEEL, MINES AND COAL be pleased to state in detail the latest position of the modernisation and expansion programme of the Durgapur Steel Plant, Alloy Steel Plant, Durgapur and Indian Iron and Steel Company, Burnpur and Kulti ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF STEEL (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH): The programmes for modernisation and technological upgradation of Durgapur and I SCO (Burnpur) Steel Plants are at various stages of consideration of the Government.

Modernisation-cum-expansion of Alloy Steel Plant at Durgapur is already under implementation and is likely to be completed by end of 1986.

Shortage of Small Coins in Rural Areas

330. SHRI MOHANBHAI PATEL :
SHRI K.T. KOSALRAM:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware that there is a great shortage of small coins and one rupee coins/notes and two rupee notes throughout the country and particularly in rural areas, due to which people are facing great difficulties in the transaction of their daily business; and

(b) if so, the steps taken or being taken to solve the problem ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY) : (a) There have been reports regarding the shortage of small coins and currency notes of low denominations from various parts of the country, including rural areas.

(b) Government have taken various steps to meet the demands 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, twentytwo 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 Press and steps are being taken to implement this decision.

Abolition of Octroi Duty

331. SHRI MOHANBHAI PATEL :
Will be the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is a great demand to abolish Octroi Duty throughout the country ;

(b) whether some States have already abolished the Octroi Duty in their States, if so, the names of such States ;

(c) whether a number of Committees and Commissions, which have gone into the subject, have found it absolutely retrograde ; and

(d) the steps Government have taken in this respect and the time by which Octroi Duty will be abolished throughout the country ?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI VISHWANATH PRATAP SINGH) : (a) Industry and Trade have sought the abolition of Octroi but there have been representations from Local Bodies against abolition of Octroi.

(b) Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Kerala, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu and Tripura are not levying any octroi. Amongst others that were levying octroi, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh and Manipur have abolished it.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) In view of its importance, the matter was discussed in the Chief Ministers' Conference in September, 1980 and