

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