

(a) whether there is a proposal to de-control Aluminium; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI M.L. FOTEDAR): (a) and (b). With increasing domestic production of Aluminium metal, the question of decontrol of aluminium in the context of emerging surplus has been receiving the attention of the Government for some time.

**Setting up an Electrolytic Manganese Metal Project In Sundergarh District of Orissa**

354. SHRI HARIHAR SOREN:  
SHRI SRIBALLAV PANI-  
GRAHI:

Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to set up an Electrolytic Manganese metal project at Baraigarh in Sundergarh district, Orissa;

(b) whether Government is likely to give clearance to the project soon;

(c) if so, the details of the site selected for the project; and

(d) the capacity and the estimated cost of the project?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI M. L. FOTEDAR): (a) No, Sir. (b) to (d). Do not arise.

**Proposal to set up Second Steel Plant In Orissa**

355. SHRI HARIHAR SOREN:  
SHRI SRIBALLAV PANI-  
GRAHI:

Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have recently considered the proposal to set up the second steel plant in Orissa;

(b) if so, the site selected for the project; and

(c) the steps taken to implement and expedite the project?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI M.L. FOTEDAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c). Do not arise.

**Body for Primary and Secondary Schools**

356. DR. G.P. THAKUR: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to set up a body like University Grants Commission for improvement of primary and secondary education; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI L.P. SHAHI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Do not arise.

**Implementation of NREP in Punjab**

357. SHRI KAMAL CHAUDHRY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have provided assistance to Punjab in cash or in the form of foodgrains under the National Rural Employment Programme;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have verified that the foodgrains or cash given to Punjab Government have actually been distributed to agricultural labourers;

(d) if so, the results thereof;

(e) whether any misuse in utilising the assistance was noticed; and

(f) if so, the details thereof and the remedial measures taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY):

(a) and (b). For 1988-89, the State of Punjab was allocated Rs. 446.00 lakhs of cash (central share) and 3660 Metric Tonnes of foodgrains worth Rs. 60.02 lakhs worked out at a subsidised rates. Out of this, the cash component of Rs. 154.54 lakhs and 1830 Metric tonnes of foodgrains worth Rs. 30.01 lakh (valued at subsidised rates) were released to the state as first instalment in the first week of April, 1988. Punjab, however, declined to take the delivery of foodgrains allocated to it on the plea that they had a lot of surplus stocks left over from the preceding year. The state made out a case that the stocks were so much that unless consumed quickly, the foodgrains would become unfit for human consumption. Punjab's request for cancellation of the foodgrains allocation for the year 1988-89 was accepted. The state was also allowed to transfer the excess stocks, over & above the requirements of 1988-89, to be Punjab Distribution system at a price equal to the issue price of Food Corpn. of India. The cash recovery so made was to be treated as addl. central cash allocation for the year to be matched by the state government as per prescribed formula. Subsequently an amount of Rs. 279.35 lakhs were also released to the state govern-

ment during the current year as central assistance.

(c) to (f): The resources made available under the National Rural Employment Programme (NREP) along with the State share equivalent to the cash contribution of the Government of India is required to be spent under NREP as per prescribed guidelines. Government of India have received no complaint regarding either the non-utilisation or the misutilisation of resources made available to Punjab. According to the report furnished by the State, the State had utilised about 70% of the resources made available to it till January, 1989.

#### French President's Visit to India

358. SHRI DHARAM PAL SINGH  
MALIK:  
SHRI PRAKASH CHANDRA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the President of France visited India in the month of February, 1989;

(b) if so, the outcome of the talks held with him;

(c) whether any agreement has also been signed during his visit; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (PROF. K.K. TEWARY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Extensive talks were held on international and bilateral matters of interest. This high level dialogue between the two sides is expected to impart a new dynamism to Indo-French exchanges in various sectors and to a better understanding of each others' position on international issues of impor-