

**Sale by Hindustan Steel and Tata Co. of their products in big lots to big Capitalists or Stockists**

4125. SHRI BHAGAT RAM: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether he is aware that the Hindustan Steel and Tata Company sell their products in big lots to the big capitalists or stockists who after purchasing it sell in black market;

(b) whether he is also aware about the difficulties the small industrialists are facing as a result of this; and

(c) what are these difficulties and steps taken to remove them?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI BIJU PATNAIK): (a) There is, at present, no control on the supply and distribution of any category of iron and steel. The question of any "black market", therefore, does not arise. Priority in selling steel materials is generally given to actual users. The materials available, after meeting the requirements of the actual users, are given to traders who sell these to actual users who require materials in smaller quantities.

(b) and (c). Government is aware that the Small Scale Industries Corporations are finding it difficult to meet the requirements of their units, particularly in the case of iron and steel items which are in short supply. There have also been transport bottlenecks which the Railways are trying to solve. The producers have been asked to pay special attention to the needs of these Corporations. Periodical meetings are also held with the representatives of the Corporations. As a result of these measures, the despatches to the Corporations have been considerably stepped up.

**कारखानों में कार्य के घंटों में कमी**

4126. श्री रामधारी शास्त्री : क्या संसदीय कार्य तथा भ्रम मन्त्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या बेरोजगारी की समस्या को ध्यान में रखते हुए सरकार का विचार कारखानों में प्रतिदिन काम के घंटों को घाट से घटा कर छ: करने का है; और

(ख) यदि हां, तो कब से और यदि नहीं, तो इसके क्या कारण हैं ?

संसदीय कार्य तथा भ्रम मन्त्री (श्री रवीन्द्र वर्मा) : (क) इस समय ऐसा कोई प्रस्ताव विचाराधीन नहीं है।

(ख) प्रश्न नहीं उठता।

**Setting up of a Special Cell to look after Rural Labour**

4127. DR. VASANT KUMAR PANDIT: Will the Minister of PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are planning to set up Special Cell on the National Level to look after all problems affecting rural labour;

(b) what is the estimated number of rural labour force in the country and how many of them are estimated to be unemployed or partly employed; and

(c) whether the above cell will act as an implementing machinery agency to look after rural labour, various laws, affecting their wages, land reforms and land distribution to the landless?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND LABOUR (SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA): (a) to (c). According to the 27th Round of the National Sample Survey conducted during October, 1972—September, 1973, the rural labour force in the country was 199.63 million. Out of this, 1.83 million were chronically unemployed and 50.24 million, who were working as casual labour were reported to be under-employed.

A nucleus of a cell dealing with the problem of labour in the unorganised rural sector has been set up