

rates of interest to agencies nominated by the State Governments for public distribution of essential commodities.

Shortfall of Steel

1620. SHRI ARJUN SETHI:
SHRI R. L. BHATIA:
SHRI D. P. JADEJA:
SHRI K. PRADHANI:

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

(a) whether it is a fact that Government had projected at the beginning of current financial year that the steel shortfall would be 1.4 million tonnes compared to the estimated demand and had planned to meet the gap by imports, both under the buffer import scheme and the 'back to back' import scheme, roughly in equal proportions;

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that the gap has further widened by the production loss in the last 6 months; and

(c) if so, to what extent and the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND STEEL AND MINES (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c). In order to meet the gap between indigenous production and demand, Government have been following a liberal import policy. In addition to the imports by SAIL under the 'Buffer' and 'Back to back' schemes, actual users have also been given the facility of direct imports under the automatic licensing of 'Restricted' items and a few items under Open General Licence. It is expected that with all these imports the gap would be met.

It is true that at the beginning of the year SAIL had planned to import 1.46 million tonnes in all of which 6,92,000 tonnes were to be under the buffer scheme. While the imports under the buffer scheme will be as planned, back to back imports depend on the registration by interested actual

users with SAIL. From the trend of registration so far, it appears that there may not be need for any upward revision of the imports planned earlier.

The actual shortfall in production of saleable steel as compared to the target during the six months April—September, 1980 in the integrated steel plants has been 7,39,000 tonnes. The main reasons for this shortfall are inadequate availability of coking coal and sever shortage of power.

Amount asked for by Government of Tamil Nadu from LIC

1621. SHRI C. CHINNASWAMY:
Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government of Tamil Nadu has asked Life Insurance Corporation to finance Rs. 95 crore programme of construction and renovation of school building in the State; and

(b) if so, the Government's reaction in this regard?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI MAGANBHAI BAROT): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The statutory framework for LIC's investments provides that not less than 75 per cent of annual accretions to the LIC's Controlled Fund shall be invested in Government Securities, other approved securities and loans for socially oriented schemes. The socially oriented schemes for which the LIC may give loans have been settled in consultation with the Planning Commission and in this sector the LIC gives loans to the following:—

(i) State Governments for housing.

(ii) Housing and Urban Development Corporation (HUDCO).

(iii) Apex Cooperative Housing Finance Societies.

(iv) State Electricity Boards.

(v) Water Supply and Sewerage Schemes.

(vi) Sugar Cooperatives.

(vii) Industrial Estates.

(viii) State Road Transport Corporations.

Schemes for construction and renovation of school buildings are not included in the socially oriented schemes for which the LIC may grant loans.

अभ्रक व्यापार और संकट का सामना कर रहे कर्मचारी

1622. श्री रामावतार शास्त्री : क्या वाणिज्य मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या यह सच है कि अभ्रक व्यापार तथा उसके कर्मचारियों को गम्भीर संकट का सामना करना पड़ रहा है ;

(ख) यदि हां, तो क्या यह सच है कि कुछ संसद् सदस्यों ने उनको तथा अध्यक्ष, बिहार ट्रेड यूनियन कांग्रेस ने उनके विभाग को इस समस्या के हल के लिए कोई पत्र लिखा है ;

(ग) यदि हां, तो उसकी मुख्य बातें क्या हैं; और

(घ) सरकार की इस बारे में क्या प्रतिक्रिया है ?

वाणिज्य तथा इस्पात व खान मंत्री (श्री प्रणब मुखर्जी) : (क) से (ग) : यद्यपि अभ्रक उद्योग का सुधार करने के लिए कुछ संसद् सदस्यों तथा अध्यक्ष, बिहार ट्रेड यूनियन कांग्रेस से कुछ सुझाव प्राप्त हुए हैं, तथापि सरकार को मिलने वाली रिपोर्टों के अनुसार अभ्रक व्यापार द्वारा किसी प्रकार के संकट का सामना नहीं किया जा रहा है। प्राप्त पत्रों में

उल्लिखित मुख्य मुद्दे निम्नोक्त से सम्बन्धित

(1) बड़े पैमाने पर अभ्रक फैब्रीकेशन तथा निर्माण उद्योग आरम्भ करने की आवश्यकता ;

(2) अभ्रक व्यापार निगम (मिटको) द्वारा उन अभ्रक कर्मचारियों का खपाया जाना जो सं० 5 से कम आकार वाले अभ्रक को शेयरिंग फार्मूले के साथ पुनः सम्बद्ध करने के फलस्वरूप तथाकथित छंटनी का सामना कर रहे हैं; और

(3) मिटको उन अभ्रक व्यापारियों को एफ ए एस कीमतों से 25 से 50 प्रतिशत तक कम भुगतान कर रहा है जो मिटको को अभ्रक की सप्लाई करते हैं।

(घ) अभ्रक फैब्रीकेशन तथा निर्माण उद्योगों की स्थापना के लिए आवश्यक कार्यवाही मिटको द्वारा पहले ही की जा रही है। अभ्रक कर्मचारियों की छंटनी की कोई रिपोर्ट प्राप्त नहीं हुई है।

Demand and Supply of Coarse Cloth

1623. SHRI K. P. SINGH DEO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the per capita availability of coarse cloth in the country vis-a-vis demand and how much of its is being produced by the Mills and the handloom sectors respectively;

(b) whether it is a fact that mills are reluctant to undertake manufacture of coarse cloth being non-profitable; and