

Faulty Planning for Disposal of Concentrates

10476. SHRI MANOHAR LAL SAINI : Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state :

(a) whether due to uncertain and faulty planning of the management of Kudremukh Iron Ore Company, its plant manufacturing concentrates were pushed through time schedule regardless of the prospect of sale in pursuance to original agreement with Iran ;

(b) whether it is fact that the management has done nothing to promote sales or for pelletisation plant within time;

(c) whether as a result, the plant is likely to be reduced to junk in the course of couple of years; and

(d) if so, facts thereof and steps proposed to save the manufacturing plant from being further mismanaged along with programme for disposal of concentrates, setting up Pelletisation Plant and changes in management ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND STEEL AND MINES (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (d). The Kudremukh Iron Ore Project had to be completed according to the time-schedule in order to meet its contractual obligations to Iran. Uncertainties regarding the fulfilment of obligations on the Iranian side, mainly due to development in that country, arose at an advanced stage of the project construction when any deliberate slowing down of the project would not have been in the country's interest in view of the large investments made already. Vigorous efforts are being made by the management as well as Govt. to effect sales of the concentrate and/or pellets. An investment decision for setting up a 3 million tonnes pelletisation plant based on Kudremukh concentrate at Mangalore has also been taken recently by Government. Negotiations with tenderers are in the final stage for putting up a pelletisation plant at Mangalore.

News-Item Captioned "Soviet Purchase From State—Price Hitch in Rice Deal"

10477. SHRI N.K. SHEJWALKAR: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn towards a news item appearing in the "Indian Express Vijaywada edition" dated 7th January, 1981 under the caption "Soviet purchase from State—Price hitch in rice deal";

(b) if so, the details of rice exported from Andhra Pradesh to USSR out of the agreement reached in this regard, how much is yet to be exported and when ;

(c) whether Soviet Union has also agreed to give some concessions in the price of crude oil and petroleum and will not charge OPEC price; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the extent to which India will be a beneficiary in this bargain ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KHURSHED ALAM KHAN) :

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) According to information available with the Central Government Andhra Pradesh State Trading Corporation has supplied 72.6 thousand tonnes of rice to USSR as on 30th April, 1981. Roughly another 38 thousand tonnes remains to be shipped by 30th June, 1981.

(c) and (d). In terms of the Agreement signed with the Soviet Union on the 19th June, 1980, the Soviet Union were to supply to India 200,000 tons of crude oil and 500,000 tons of diesel oil in 1980. "Specifications, prices, terms of payment, specific dates and other terms and conditions of delivery" were to be agreed upon at the time of contract between the concerned Soviet and Indian organisations.

This agreement enables India to get the much-needed crude oil and petroleum products against payment in Rupees, thus saving free foreign exchange.

Export of Rice to USSR

10478. DR. VASANT KUMAR PANDIT : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether an agreement was signed between India and USSR Government for export of 50,000 tonnes of Basmati rice costing over Rs. 25 crores;

(b) whether Government have authorised the Agmark to give sub-contract to procure quality of rice according to the terms of the mutual agreement ;

(c) whether a racket has been discovered where licences and sub-contractors in collaboration with Agmark authorities manipulated subgrade which was stopped from export to USSR; and

(d) whether Government have completed the enquiry in the above scandal, fixed the responsibility of the Agmark Officials and the decision taken thereupon ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KHURSHED ALAM KHAN) :

(a) An agreement was signed for export of 1 lakh tonnes of basmati rice.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d). An anonymous complaint was received in the Ministry of Rural Reconstruction alleging irregularities in the grading of basmati rice under Agmark. This is under enquiry.

Scrap dealer at Howrah

10479. SHRI A. K. ROY : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether he is aware of a sudden rise of a scrap dealer at Howrah purchasing coal based fertilizer plants as scrap at Sindri (Bihar) and laying hand on others ;

(b) whether it is a fact that the scrap dealer is in possession of huge amount of black money and is involved in many illegal pay off, if so, facts in details ;

(c) whether the income tax department has looked into the affairs of this scrap dealing company at Howrah ;

(d) will the Government make a high level probe into the matter ; and

(e) if so, when and if not, the reasons ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI MAGANBHAI BAROT) : (a) to (c). Yes, Sir. The Government are aware of the purchase by an assessee of Howrah of redundant plant, structures and spares from the Fertilizer Corporation of India (Ltd.), Sindri. The matter is under investigation by the Income-tax Department.

Statement correcting reply to the Unstarred Question No. 7231 dt. 10-4-1981 reopening of regional rural banks in Rajasthan

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI MAGANBHAI BAROT) : In reply to Unstarred Question No. 7231 regarding opening of Regional Rural Banks in Rajasthan, an error had crept in the first paragraph of the reply. The first para-

graph may now be read as : "At present there are five Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) functioning in the state of Rajasthan covering 10 districts. One more such Bank is likely to be set up soon to cover 2 more districts" instead of "At present there are four Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) functioning in the State of Rajasthan covering 8 districts. Two more such banks are likely to be set up soon to cover 4 more districts."

The fifth Bank in Rajasthan, namely, Alwar Bharatpur Anchalik Gramin Bank, Bharatpur was set up only recently and was lost sight of while replying the original question. The error is regretted.

Statement correcting reply to Unstarred Question No. 798 dated 20-2-1981 re. non-utilisation of full capacity of aluminium industry

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND STEEL AND MINES (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : The word "Rs. 1.57 crores" mentioned in the last sentence of the reply to part (b) of the question may be read as "Rs. 1.73" crores.

Reasons for delay in correcting the reply

The error which was typographical in nature was detected somewhat late. The information was thereafter cross-checked with the concerned organisation. It was, therefore, not possible to get the inaccuracy corrected within a week of the original reply.

12 hrs.

RE. MOTIONS FOR ADJOURNMENT, ETC.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE (Rajapur) : I draw your attention to the fact that I had given an adjournment motion. Swami Agnivesh, MLA from Haryana . . .

MR. SPEAKER : Professor Sahab, I have to give you permission before you ask.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : I want to make a submission. Without Speaker's permission, I won't make the submission.

MR. SPEAKER : No; there is nothing about it. There is no point for submission. Nothing, Sir.

(Interruptions)**