

(d) An element is added to the ex-works prices of different categories of iron and steel produced by the main steel producers for contribution to the Steel Development Fund.

Air India Cheated of Rupees one crore

5451. SHRI M. V. CHANDRASHEKARA MURTHY:
SHRI AMAR ROYPRADHAN:

Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Air India is reported to have been cheated about Rs. 1 crore by its agents in Philippines, Iran and India;

(b) if so, whether any enquiry has been conducted;

(c) if so, the outcome of the same; and

(d) what action has been taken against those held responsible?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI A. P. SHARMA): (a) Travel agents in Philippines, Iran and India owe Air India about Rs. 75 lakhs. Action is on hand to recover the outstanding dues.

(b) to (d). Disciplinary proceedings have been instituted against concerned officials of Air India to determine their responsibility for the lapse.

Export of Steel ingots by SAIL

5452. SHRI B. V. DESAI: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that SAIL has ultimately decided not to export steel ingots from January, 1981 onwards;

(b) if so, the main reasons for this abrupt change in the policy; and

(c) to what extent this will help Government?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND STEEL AND MINES (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c). It would not be correct to say that there has been any abrupt change in policy. At a time when the stock of ingots was at 7.24 lakh tonnes on 1.7.80, consideration was given to various avenues open to reduce ingot stocks, including exports. However, the position continued to be under constant review and efforts in other directions also contained to be made to reduce the stocks, such as getting them rolled in plants inside the country itself. As a result of these efforts, the stock of ingots as at the close of February, 1981 had come down to 386,700 tonnes only, Steel Authority of India Limited are, therefore, no longer keen to export the ingots. Rolling the ingots within the country instead of exporting them as such has added to the availability of saleable steel within the country.

Shortfall in Newsprint Arrivals from Abroad

5453. SHRI B. V. DESAI:
SHRI KRISHAN KUMAR GOYAL:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been a shortfall in newsprint arrivals from abroad to the extent of over 66,000 tonnes in the first 8 months—April to October of the financial year 1980-81;

(b) whether it is also a fact that STC had claimed that 33,700 tonnes would arrive in October and 42,000 in November and 49,000 in December, 1980 but actually only 25,000 tonnes each in October to Deember have been arrived;

(c) if so, what were the main reasons for this shortfall;