

(c) how far these discussions have helped to develop closer economic and political relationship with these countries ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The visit provided an opportunity of intimate valuable exchanges of views with the Heads of States, Vice Presidents and Foreign Ministers of these countries. The discussions covered a wide-range of subjects of international importance, developments in our sub-continent, the African scene and issues of bilateral relations with India ;

(c) The discussions revealed that a great fund of good-will for India exists in these countries, based not only upon India's historic traditions and, more recently, her role in de-colonization but also upon the goals and policies pursued by the Government of India. India's initiative for peace and the spirit and results of the Simla agreements were evaluated as positive developments. India's progress in industrial and economic development has roused keen interest in these countries, themselves engaged in harnessing and developing their abundant wealth of natural and human resources. A number of suggestions for co-operation and collaboration in the economic and technological fields figured in the discussions, and will be pursued in concrete form through diplomatic channels, and detailed discussions between technical delegations. Significant scope appears to exist particularly in the development of mineral resources, agro-industries, joint ventures, and technical training.

Merger of E.P.F.O. and F.S.I.

1716. **SHRI VAYALAR RAVI :** Will the Minister of LABOUR AND REHABILITATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are considering a proposal to merge the Employees Provident Fund Organisation with Employees State Insurance Corporation ;

(b) if so, the main features of the proposal ; and

(c) the steps taken to safeguard the

interests of the employees of the Employees Provident Fund Organisation which came into the existence much later than the Employees' State Insurance Corporation.

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND REHABILITATION (SHRI R. K. KHADILKAR) : (a) to (c). In order to come to a decision on the recommendation of the National Commission on Labour to evolve an Integrated Scheme of Social Security, a Working Group was set up in December, 1969, which suggested integration of all Social Security Schemes as an ultimate objective. A Special Officer was appointed to examine the legal, administrative and organisational matters connected with the integration of Social Security Scheme in a comprehensive manner and to prepare a blue-print of integration. His report has since been received and it has been decided to place it before the next session of the Indian Labour Conference. The matter will be examined further in the light of views of the Indian Labour Conference.

Indians Working in Foreign Countries and Foreigners Working in India

1717. **SHRI VAYALAR RAVI :** Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state the number of Indians working outside under different United Nations sponsored schemes and the total number of foreigners working in India under these schemes ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH) : The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House when full information has been received.

Exchange of Economic Delegations for Promoting Relations with Asian Countries

1718. **SHRI C. K. JAFFER SHARIEF :** Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of Economic Delegations which Government sent to countries of Asia with a view to developing further intimate relations with them during the last two years ; and

(b) the particulars regarding the foreign delegations received by Government in this regard ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH) : (a) and (b). Since the subject matter covered by the question is very vast, material for answer to the question is being collected.

Stabilisation of price of Steel

1719. SHRI C. K. JAFFER SHARIEF :
SHRI D. K. PANDA :

Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state the measure Government propose to take to stabilise the price of steel ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI SHAHNAWAZ KHAN) : The prices of different categories of steel are fixed by the Joint Plant Committee from time to time. These prices are applicable to supplies from the Main Producers. The prices of the categories produced by the Billet Rerollers from the billets supplied to them by the main Producers are further regulated by the Billet Rerollers Committee.

2, Thus, about 95% of the total production of steel in the country is supplied direct to the actual consumers at regulated prices as indicated above. This is a major factor in keeping prices stable. Only a very small percentage—about 3 to 5%—of the production is supplied to traders for free sale.

3 In order to prevent leakage from some of the so called actual consumers to the open market, the Iron and Steel (Control) Order has been suitably amended to provide that the use of steel for any purpose other than that for which it is applied for or allotted will be a violation of the Order and thus punishable under the Essential Commodities Act. Six Regional Offices of the Iron and Steel Controller have been set up in different parts of the country and one of their functions is to check mis-use of steel.

Dispute between Workers and Management of Khetri Copper Project

1720. SHRI VEKARIA :
SHRI B.K. DASCHOWDHURY :

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

(a) whether he has declined to intervene

in the dispute between the workers and the Management of the Khetri Copper Project ; and

(b) if so the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI SHAHNAWAZ KHAN) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Visit of Foreign Secretary to Nepal

1721. SHRI VEKARIA : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the foreign Secretary, Shri T. N. Kaul, visited Nepal recently ; and

(b) if so, the discussions held regarding expanding areas of co-operation between Nepal and India for strengthening cordial ties between the two countries ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH) : (a) Yes, Sir. The Foreign Secretary paid a visit to Nepal from July 17th to July 18th, 1972.

(b) Discussions were held on matters of bilateral interest including political and economic questions as well as on matters affecting this region as a whole, so as to increase mutual understanding and co-operation between the two countries.

Production in Public Sector Steel Plants

1722. SHRI NARENDRA SINGH : Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state :

(a) the month wise break-up of total production of steel in the three Public Sector Undertakings, viz, Bhilai Steel Plant, Durgapur Steel Plant and Rourkela Steel Plant during the last three months, separately ; and

(b) the steps Government propose to take to achieve the target of production ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI