

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