

KATSWAMY): The Provident Fund Authorities have reported as under:

(a) and (b). The employees of the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation had represented through their Unions and Federations for recognition of their Unions and grant of certain demands like payment of wages to the employees of the Kerala and Tamil Nadu Regions for the periods when they were on strike, revision of work norms, creation of additional posts etc.

(c) The demands are under consideration.

Nickel project in Orissa

696. SHRI CHINTAMANI PANI-GRAHI: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Nickel Project at Sukinda in Orissa has been cleared by now by the Planning Commission;

(b) if so, when the construction work is actually going to start there;

(c) whether any change has taken place in the previous agreement with the Orissa Government; and

(d) if so, the main features of the constitution of the company for working out this project?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI SUKHDEV PRASAD): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) It is too early to work out the constitution of the company.

Locational studies for future steel plants

697. SHRI CHINTAMANI PANI-GRAHI: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Committee which was appointed for undertaking locational studies for future steel plants in the country has started its work;

(b) whether it has undertaken locational studies in Orissa by now; and

(c) if not, when it is expected to start this work?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI SUBODH HANSDA): (a) A Working Group set up by the Ministry of Steel and Mines for identification of locations for, the purpose of undertaking techno-economic feasibility studies for new steel capacity has submitted its report.

(b) and (c). The Working Group has recommended, *inter alia*, that techno-economic feasibility studies may be commissioned for a project based on Banaigarh/Nayagarh iron ore deposits. These studies which will be part of the long-term steel development programme would be taken up during the Fifth Plan period.

Reported statement by Mr. Joseph Sisco of U.S.A. regarding transfer of U.S. arms to third countries

698. SHRI CHINTAMANI PANI-GRAHI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken notice of the statement made by Mr. Joseph Sisco, Assistant Secretary of State, U.S.A. that there is no way of preventing transfer of