

(c) the steps taken by Government in the matter?

The Minister of Railways (Shri C. M. Poonacha): (a) No such assurance was given.

(b) and (c). Representations have been received from the employees and some Members of Parliament. Every effort is being made to provide alternative employment to the retrenched staff to the extent possible, but it will not be possible to avoid the discharge of labour on completion of construction works.

Phosphate Deposits near Dehradun

4309. Shri N. K. Somani: Will the Minister of Steel, Mines and Metals be pleased to state:

(a) whether large phosphate deposits were discovered near Dehra Dun in 1965,

(b) if so, the progress achieved in the matter of its commercial exploration, and

(c) the details of these deposits regarding quality, quantity and the likely uses?

The Minister of Steel, Mines and Metals (Dr. Chenna Reddy): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A scheme for commercial exploration of these deposits will be considered only after detailed investigation of the occurrences of phosphate ore has been carried out to establish the quality and grade of the mineral and determine economic method of mining and feasible technique of beneficiation. At present, the Geological Survey of India are carrying out detailed investigations by large-scale mapping, drilling, pitting and trenching, etc. Samples of ore have been sent to scientific laboratories for beneficiation and other tests.

It is also proposed to secure technical assistance of some foreign experts in phosphate geology and mining in carrying out these investigations and

metallurgical tests. In this connection, offers from certain agencies have been received which are under examination.

(c) It is estimated that the possible reserves may be of the order of eight to ten millions tonnes for every hundred metre of depth with fifteen to twenty per cent phosphoric oxide. The phosphatic rocks if suitable will be utilised in the manufacture of phosphatic fertilizers. Possibilities of other likely uses will be determined after the conclusion of present detailed examination of the deposits.

Bhilai and other Public Sector Steel Plants

4310. Shri Shiva Chandra Jha: Will the Minister of Steel, Mines and Metals be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the steel plants at Rourkela, Durgapur and Bokaro are facing certain difficulties partly because of mismanagement and partly because of the unfavourable terms of agreement with the foreign collaborators;

(b) if so, how Government propose to remove these difficulties;

(c) whether the Bhilai Steel Plant, which has also entered into foreign collaboration is free from such difficulties; and

(d) if so, in what respect the terms of agreement with the foreign collaborator for the Bhilai Steel Plant are different from those of the Rourkela, Durgapur and Bokaro Steel Plants?

The Minister of Steel, Mines and Metals (Dr. Chenna Reddy): (a) to (d). The steel plants in the public sector no doubt share with steel plants in the private sector like TISCO and IISCO problems concerning unsatisfactory and varying qualities of raw materials, overmanning, labour relations fall in steel demand etc. These are problems inherent in our situation and are not related to the external source from which assistance was derived for the construction of these