

Minister of FOREIGN TRADE AND SUPPLY be pleased to state :

(a) whether a working Group has been set up to study the problems of the Jute Industry ;

(b) if so, the composition and the terms of reference of the Group ;

(c) whether it has also been decided to advance Rs. 5 crores to the industry for its modernisation ; and

(d) if so, the details of the modernisation schemes ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN TRADE AND SUPPLY (SHRI CHOWDHARY RAM SEWAK) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d). A sum of Rs. 5 crores has been earmarked for loan assistance to the jute industry through the Industrial Finance Corporation of India for schemes of diversification of production which have an immediate export potential.

Loss to Bhilai Steel Plant

173. SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA : Will the Minister of STEEL, MINES AND METALS be pleased to state :

(a) whether there was a serious accident at the Bhilai Steel Plant on the 22nd October, 1968 due to bursting of a Turbo-blower ;

(b) if so, the loss suffered as a result thereof ;

(c) whether it is a fact that none of the responsible officers was present at the spot where the Turbo-blower was being tested ; and

(d) if so, whether any action has been taken for negligence of duty ?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND HEAVY ENGINEERING (SHRI C. M. POONACHA) : (a) Yes, Sir. On 22nd

October, 1968 the turbine of Turbo-blower No. 6 burst and suffered damages.

(b) Replacement cost of the turbine damaged together with its auxiliaries and control panel is roughly estimated at Rs. 8 lakhs. Five persons including two officers and three workers received injuries. One officer succumbed to the injuries.

(c) No, Sir. General Foreman of Turbine Operation and maintenance and General Foreman of Capital Repairs, Turbo Rotary Apparatus as well as Assistant Foreman, Turbines were present at the time of accident.

(d) A high-level Enquiry Committee was appointed by the Plant authorities and according to its findings no negligence of duty on the part of the personnel was established.

Concessions to Railway Employees

*174. SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the details of the recently announced concessions in respect of Running staff allowances, merger of Dearness Allowance with basic salary and increased promotional opportunities for different categories of Railwaymen ;

(b) the additional financial commitment undertaken thereby ; and

(c) the reasons for not announcing these concessions before the strike on the 19th September, 1968 ?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (DR. RAM SUBHAG SINGH) : (a) and (b). A statement showing the concessions, together with financial implications involved in respect of Running allowances and treatment of a portion of Dearness Allowance as pay for certain purposes, is placed on the table of the Sabha. [Placed in library. See No. LT-18 '69.]

The question of evolving steps to improve the position of Class III staff etc. with a view to giving relief to staff who have been