

1	2	3	4
7.	9	Washery Organisation to have experienced instrument engineers.	Service contract have been entered with the equipment supplying firms as well as qualified engineers posted in the washeries.
8.	10	Conversion of two product washeries to three product washeries	All washeries are three product washeries
9.	11	Ash content of middling not to achieve 35% and heavier material above S.P.G.R. of 1.8 not to be allowed to go beyond permissible limit	With three product separation into washeries, amount of heavier material and SPGR of 1.8 from the middlings has been totally eliminated.
10.	12	Thermal Power stations to consume middling	Thermal power stations are consuming middlings.
11.	14	Middlings to be exempted from excise duties	Currently only stowing excise duty is levied on despatch of raw coal.
12.	15	Washery rejects for underground stowing in admixture with sand & or ash.	Technical suitability of washery rejects as stowing materials are yet to be established.

(English)

#### Negotiations with WTO

\*244. SHRI CHADA SURESH REDDY Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

- whether India is joining the Millennium Round of negotiations at WTO;
- if so, the details thereof; and
- the steps taken by the Government to put their views before WTO?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE) : (a) and (b) There is no decision in the WTO about a "Millennium Round" of negotiations.

(c) Government has throughout been proactively projecting India's own priorities before the WTO. India has, *inter alia*, highlighted its concerns regarding implementation of the existing WTO Agreements in their proper spirit and the operationalisation of the Special and Differential Treatment provisions for developing countries in the WTO Agreements, with the objective of raising standards of living and securing to developing countries a share in the growth of international trade commensurate with the needs of their economic development.

#### Reduction in Excise and Increase in Import Duty on Steel

\*247. DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARY : Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state :

- whether the Steel Industry has requested the Union Government to reduce excise duty and hike import duty on steel items to end sluggishness in the steel sector.

(b) whether the above demands would help the steel industry to increase their output capacity; and

(c) if so, the measures taken to fully utilise the installed production capacity of steel plants?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI NAVEEN PATNAIK) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Several measures have been taken to improve capacity utilisation in the integrated steel plants. They are :

- modernisation and technical upgradation of the plants;
- improving techno-economic factors, i.e. reduction in coke rate, energy consumption; and
- effective maintenance of plant and machinery.

Government has also taken several measures recently to make Indian steel competitive which is expected to result in better capacity utilisation. These include launching of a National Campaign to boost demand and consumption of steel, reduction in import duty on certain raw materials, levy of anti dumping duty and fixing of floor prices on import of certain flat products, rationalisation of Duty Entitlement Pass Book (DEPB) rates to enhance steel exports etc.

#### Investment by Non-Resident Indians

\*248. SHRI VIJAY GOEL : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

- the details of total investment (in rupee terms) made by non-resident Indians (NRIs) during each of the last three years, till date; and