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7. Setting up of Welfare Centres.	
8. Grants to M.P.s/D.M.P.s./ Welfare Centres.	
9. Sports Grounds.	
10. Holiday Homes.	

Water Supply:

1. Sinking of Wells.
2. Assistance to Small Mines Owners.
3. Water Supply Scheme For high mines.

[English]

Bailadila Mines

968 SHRI G.G. SWELL : Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state :

(a) whether the decision to lease out deposit 11-B of Bailadila Mines to a private person, Nippon Denro, in the name of a joint venture by National Mineral Development Corporation was taken against the written objections of the Ministry of Finance;

(b) if so, the objections of the Ministry of Finance;

(c) whether the Ministry of Steel and the NMDC sought to procure a post mortem endorsement of its cost and method and updation of the development of the deposit valued at Rs. 1.685 16 lakhs from the Institute of Costs and Works Accountant of India; and

(d) if so, the facts thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA) : (a) and (b). Initially at the time of inter-ministerial consultations prior to government decision to allow the National Mineral Development Corporation Limited (NMDC) to develop Bailadila Deposit 11-B in joint venture, certain observations were made by the Ministry/Department consulted, including Ministry of Finance (Department of Expenditure), such as inadequate consideration proposed to be charged, NDMC taking up the development of the mine itself in view of its better profitability vis-a-vis Bailadila 10/11-A Project and NMDC's ability to raise resources for the project as well as offer of the mine for competitive bids. The Government after taking due note of these observations as well as other views expressed in favour of the proposal, considered the matter at the highest level and accorded its approval on 12.6.95/13.6.95 permitting NMDC to participate in a joint venture company for the development of Bailadila 11-B Deposit

(c) and (d). In terms of the approval granted by the Government, NMDC updated the actual expenditure incurred by it on Deposit 11-B and obtained confirmation in writing from the Institute of Cost and Works Accountants of India to the extent that methods/principles

adopted for updating the cost are appropriate and reasonable.

[Translation]

Reservations for OBCs

969. SHRI O.P. JINDAL : Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No.396 on February 29, 1996 and state :

(a) whether the Government propose to provide reservation of seats in educational institutions including technical institutions to the students belonging to other backward classes;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA) : (a) to (c). The matter is under consideration of the Government.

Prices of Essential commodities

970. SHRI ANAND RATNA MAURYA : Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state

(a) whether there is a steep hike in the prices of essential commodities like sugar, rice, pulses, ghee, soap and tea during the last few years and the common people are facing difficulties in their livelihood

(b) if so, the steps propose to be taken by the Government to check the price rise permanently and to provide essential commodities to all by reducing their prices;

(c) whether the Government propose to make effective changes in the Essential Commodities Act by incorporating provisions containing stern action against those traders who hike prices voluntarily and provide these commodities to the people all over the country at fixed prices; and

(d) if so, the time by which these steps are likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV) :

(a) A statement showing the trend in the Wholesale Price Indices of selected essential commodities is given in the statement.

(b) With a view to keeping the prices of essential commodities under check, the Public Distribution System is being strengthened to provide Foodgrains at cheaper rates to the poor strata of the society. Besides, stringent actions are being taken against the speculators, hoarders and traders indulging in unfair trade practices. The essential commodities are also being supplied