

(b) if so, the details in this regard so far as the question of amount for upgrading of technology is concerned ; and

(c) whether Government have considered that since the power, steel and cement sectors depend heavily on mineral products, the mining cost would have to be brought down to ensure that there was no general inflation in the economy ?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI K.C. PANT) : (a) to (c). Modernisation of mining methods is a continuing process. Steps taken in regard to mining are generally a part and parcel of the mining project. Modernisation programmes for the mines of Public Sector undertakings under this Department have been drawn up during the Seventh Five Year Plan. The mines of the Public Sector Undertakings e.g. Hindustan Copper Limited, Hindustan Zinc Limited, Bharat Aluminium Company Limited, Bharat Gold Mines Limited etc. have their own plans of modernisation. As per Science and Technology Plan of the Department, outlays proposed for the Seventh Five Year Plan are of the order of about Rs. 65 crores. This will cover the schemes for improved operating practices, improved resources recovery, development introduction of new technology for better performance, improving productivity and environmental control, augmentation facility for ore dressing etc.

During the 7th plan, in regard to coal mines, introduction of large capacity excavation equipment, mechanisation, modern power support longwall equipment, telemonitoring systems etc. are contemplated. Similarly, in the mines of public sector units engaged in the production of non-ferrous metals, modern equipment and techniques are being introduced, where possible.

Efforts are being made by the Government to deploy, as far as practicable, modern equipments and machinery alongwith the import of modern technical know-how in the mining operations so that the cost of production of minerals may be considerably reduced. The minerals required for the mineral-based industries like, power, steel and cement etc. are being mined both in the public sector and private sector. Efforts will have to be made by the public as well as the private sector for reduction in cost. While it is

difficult to spell out any specific measures in this direction, it is being impressed on the public sector to examine their cost structures, and to reduce them so that their products become competitive.

#### Proposal regarding Introduction of Automatic Licensing System

\*175. DR. G.S. RAJHANS :  
SHRI MUKUL WASNIK :

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Indian Council of Small and Medium Exporters (ICSME) has urged Government to introduce automatic licensing system to facilitate the actual users to obtain the basic material without having to resort to any cumbersome procedure;

(b) whether Government have examined the representation of the ICSME;

(c) if so, whether Government have taken any decision in this regard; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI ARJUN SINGH) : (a) to (d). A few representations have been received urging the Government to introduce Automatic Licensing system but it has not been found possible to agree to this suggestion. However the matter is still under examination.

#### Mining/Quarrying of Limestone in Dehra Dun—Mussoorie

\*177. SHRIMATI BIBHA GHOSH GOSWAMI : Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the working group constituted to examine the question of mining/quarrying of limestone in Dehra Dun—Mussoorie headed by Shri D.N. Bhargava has submitted its report to Government ;

(b) if so, the salient features thereof ; and

(c) the action taken by Government in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI K.C. PANT) : (a) Yes, Sir.