

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KHURSHEED ALAM KHAN): (a) and (b). For ensuring supply of low count yarn to the handloom weavers, Government have imposed a statutory obligation on all spinning mills to pack at least 50 percent of the yarn meant for market deliveries in the form of hanks. Out of this, 85 percent are in counts below 40s. Besides, an arrangement was recently made with I.C.M.F., S.I.M.A. and N.T.C. according to which 14000 bales of hank yarn of counts 20s to 40s was to be supplied at prices 10 percent lower than the market prices prevailing in the third week of January '81, which was meant for catering to the needs of "janata" cloth production.

Visakhapatnam Steel Plant

*471. SHRI KUSUMA KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) what was the shortfall in utilising the funds earmarked for the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant; and

(b) what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND STEEL AND MINES (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b). As against a provision of Rs. 66.48 crores for the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant in the Revised Budget Estimates for 1980-81, the actual expenditure by 31-3-81 is expected to be of the order of Rs. 50 crores. The main reasons for shortfall in the utilisation of provision have been less progress on civil and structural works and in the development of township and off site facilities.

Withdrawal of small Coins

*472. SHRI R. N. RAKESH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that with the decrease in the purchasing power of

rupee the 5, 3, 2 and one paise coins have little or no value;

(b) whether it is also a fact that in accounting most departments work to the nearest ten paise;

(c) whether it is also a fact that one, two and three paise have almost become out of date and out of market; and

(d) if so, considering the cost of metal and minting these coins, whether Government propose to withdraw these coins?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI MAGANBHAI BAROT): (a) to (d). The minting of 3, 2 and one paise coins has already been discontinued. The 5-Paise coin still continues to be in demand because most departments round off the transactions to the nearest 5 paise and also because it is used in combination with 25-Paise coins for various payments and thus reduces the demand for 10-Paise coins. In view, however, of the cost in the manufacture of 5-Paise coins and the limited purpose to which it is being put, the quantum of its annual production is proposed to be progressively reduced.

Joint Projects in African Countries

4343. SHRI CHIRANJI LAL SHARMA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) number and details of Joint Projects set up in African countries, country-wise; and

(b) the main terms project-wise thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KHURSHEED ALAM KHAN). (a) and (b). There are 23 joint venture set up in African countries. A statement giving the required details is attached.