

43 blocks as "scarcity areas" in Patna, Gyna, Monghyr, Champaran and Darbhanga Districts, and

(b) If so, whether the Central Government have given any assistance to the Government of Bihar to meet the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ANNASAHAB P SHINDE) (a) The Government of Bihar has declared 20 blocks as "famine affected areas" and 103 blocks as "scarcity affected areas" in the districts of Patna, Gaya, Monghyr, Champaran, Darbhanga, Hrazabagh, Saharsa, Muzaffarpur, Dhanbad, Santhal Parganas, Shahabad and Bhagalpur

(b) The State Government has requested the Central Government for an ad-hoc financial assistance of Rs 3 crores. A Central Study Team is visiting the State for an on-the-spot assessment. The quantum of assistance, if any, will be decided on receipt of the Team's report.

Commissioning of a second mine cut at Neyveli.

*268 SHRI MURASOLI MARAN Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state

(a) whether a decision has been taken to commission a second mine cut at Neyveli, and

(b) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN) (a) No Sir

(b) The proposal to commission a second mine cut at Neyveli is directly linked with the question of setting up additional capacity for power generation to meet the estimated power shortage in the southern region after 1973-74. The matter is presently under examination in

the concerned Departments of the Government of India.

New Process of Making Steel

*269 DR. RANEN SEN Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state

(a) Whether a new process of making Steel has been invented by an Indian Metallurgist and has proved useful in actual practice, and

(b) If so, whether Government have given any trial to the method and if so, the result thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI MOHAN KUMARAMAN-GALAM) (a) The reference presumably is to the concept of Shri I. K. Bharati, which envisages production of sponge iron ore in a static/rectangular chamber by the reduction of iron oxide with the help of carbon monoxide and hydrogen generated from non-coking coal. This process has not yet been proved in actual practice.

(b) A number of complex technical features are involved even before pilot tests could be considered. Ministry has given consideration to the process, however, in the context of the nature of the process. It has been remitted for evaluation to experts. Their report is awaited.

Stock of Foodgrains with FCI and taking over of wholesale trade in foodgrains

*270 SHRI BHOGENDRA JHA Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) The total stock of foodgrains acquired by Food Corporation of India and the target for the next year,