

scope there is for a reduction in manufacturing costs.

Shortage of Copper and Zinc

*409. **Shri Nihal Singh:**
Shri Madhu Limaye:
Shri Ram Sewak Yadav:

Will the Minister of Steel, Mines and Metals be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the acute shortage of copper and zinc;

(b) the steps proposed to increase the production of these metals;

(c) whether Government intend to increase imports of these metals in the current year; and

(d) if so, by how much?

The Minister of Steel, Mines and Metals (Dr. Chenna Reddy): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A Statement giving the required information is laid on the Table of the House. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-587/67].

(c) and (d). There is likely to be some increase in the imports of copper and zinc during 1967-68 over the corresponding figure for 1966-67. However, it is not possible to indicate at this stage the extent of such increase.

Bokaro Steel Plant

*410. **Shri Virendrakumar Shah:** Will the Minister of Steel, Mines and Metals be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the total cost of the first stage of the Bokaro Steel Plant would be not less than Rs. 850 crores;

(b) whether the cost per tonne of the finished product would not be less than Rs. 1,100;

(c) whether the above cost is appreciably higher than the average international price prevalent at the moment; and

(d) whether such a project with long gestation period and with in-

herent high cost of production would add to the inflationary conditions in the country?

The Minister of Steel, Mines and Metals (Dr. Chenna Reddy): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d). The Project Report for the Bokaro Steel Plant contemplates a plant with an economic capacity of 4 million tonnes of steel ingots per annum. Complete estimates of the cost per tonne of finished steel at the first stage of 1.7 million ingot tonnes are being worked out. Economical costs of production will, however, be achieved only when the second stage is completed, and the costs of production at the first stage will be comparably much higher. Provided resources are available, it is the intention of Government to take the plant to its economic capacity as early as possible. The Plant will produce flat products which are even now in short supply. Even at the first stage, the production from the plant will reduce the need for imports of flat products of the order of 1 million tonnes or more and thereby save at least Rs. 90 crores of foreign exchange every year.

Port facilities to Traders

*411. **Shri Y. A. Prasad:**
Shri N. K. Sanghi:

Will the Minister of Commerce be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to give port facilities to traders of North India engaged in the import-export business; and

(b) if so, the nature of facilities likely to be given?

The Minister of Commerce (Shri Dinesh Singh): (a) and (b). The Government have received a proposal for grant of port facilities to the traders by setting up a dry port at Delhi, which is under examination at present in consultation with the concerned Ministries. No decision has been taken so far.