

not study properly in schools. The poor and the low salaried parents send their children to schools and arrange for their tuitions after borrowing money with difficulty but those children do not go to schools and colleges for studies; instead they roam on the roads like urchins. This creates problems. In addition, teachers too go on strike during the period of examination.

When the final examination is held, the children score zero marks. But the teachers promote them. You can very well imagine as to how much intelligent such children would be. No one knows who among them will become a Minister, the Prime Minister or the President of India but at least some of them should be intelligent. For this, I would like to know from the Hon. Minister that in spite of the teachers being paid salaries regularly, though not according to their demands, if they go on strike, what action the Government is going to take against them? If in spite of payment of salaries regularly they go on strike, the Government should take strict action against them so that the children of the country may study properly and they may become good citizens. If the present position continues, then we will go on strike.

SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO : It is a question to which I have no reply.

SHRI V. TULSIRAM : Let him remain in that state then.

(English)

Demand for sponge iron

*84 **SHRI HARIHAR SOREN :** Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state :

(a) the total demand of sponge iron in the country;

(b) the total production capacity of each sponge iron plant set up in Orissa and other States;

(c) whether Government propose to increase the production of sponge iron and reduce the import in order to meet the demand of sponge iron; and

(d) if so, the steps taken in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI M. L. FOTEDAR) : (a) to (d). A statement is given below.

Statement

(a) Sponge iron is a partial substitute of ferrous scrap used in steel making. The demand for this product is regulated by technological and economic consideration. Its use in steel making in India is of rather recent origin and the demand is yet to pick up in an appreciable way. During 1986-87, The Electric Arc Furnace Units in the country used about 3 lakh tonnes of sponge iron.

(b) Three sponge iron plants have been set up in the country so far. Out of these, two are in Orissa. They are :-

Name	Location	Installed capacity (in tonnes)
Sponge Iron India Limited, Hyderabad,	Kothagudem A. P.	60,000
Orissa Sponge Iron Limited.	Nayagarb, Keonjhar, Orissa.	1,50,000
IPITATA Sponge Iron Limited.	Keonjhar, Orissa.	90,000
		3,00,000

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Sponge iron industry has been de-licensed with effect from March, 1985, with a view to encourage quicker growth. A linkage Committee has also been set up to assist the entrepreneurs in getting coal and iron ore linkages for their proposed units. Allocation of natural gas has also been made for setting up of two gas-based sponge iron plants in the country.

SHRI HARIHAR SOREN : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Minister has stated the installed capacity of each sponge iron plant located in the country. I would like to know from the Minister when these sponge iron plants started commercial production; and whether it is a fact that some sponge iron plants like Orissa Sponge Iron Limited, Nayagarb, Keonjhar District has not been able to achieve the production according to the installed capacity; if so, the reasons why it

is not able to produce according to its capacity? Is it because of over staff particularly a large number of officials than the actual necessity as a result of which the Company is facing loss and is likely to fall sick; if so, what steps the government is proposing to take to revive the plant?

SHRI M. L. FOTEDAR : I would like to inform the Hon. member that eight units of sponge iron plants have been registered for the State of Orissa. All these are in the private sector and none of them is in the public sector. For these the total registered capacity is 11.7 lakh tonnes and for another it is 3 lakh tonnes. Out of these, only two units are operational, six are not so far operational. The difficulty with the sponge iron units is that they are not producing the sponge iron as per installed capacity because of problems in selling, since the sale of sponge is largely dependent on the prices of steel scrap. Since we propose that the dependence on imported scrap should be reduced, we are encouraging the sponge iron industry in the country and for that purpose we have delicensed these units and anybody can have any sponge iron plant in any part of the country; and we are also giving incentives to the entrepreneurs. We have formed a Linkage Committee under the Secretary, Steel, as Chairman and with two other members from the Department of Coal and the Railways. This committee will assist and help private entrepreneurs to have these sponge iron units in different States.

SHRI HARIHAR SOREN : Is it a fact that some days back the officials of the Sponge Iron Plant came to Delhi and had a discussion with the Ministry. What are the problems discussed with them and what steps the government is proposing to take to solve those problem?

SHRI M. L. FOTEDAR : I am not aware that during my tenure of office any such representation has been made. I have nothing on record to say that any such representation has been made to my predecessor. But, certainly, if any representation comes to us, we will try to help them as best as we can.

SHRI ANANDA GAJAPATHI RAJU : The Vishakhapatnam Steel Plant was started

way back in 1971 when the foundation stone was laid. Then this plant had not seen the light of the day for a number of years. The project is still being implemented and still the production has not started and the power plant also is needed. Last time when I met the Minister and requested, he said that the plant has to be a capital intensive plant and only then it can function because it is cost inefficient. So, I would like to know from the Hon. Minister, whether the Visakhapatnam steel plant will end up as a sponge iron steel plant or will it be a stainless steel plant like the Salem Plant, or will it produce steel and how many jobs will it create for the people who have been displaced there by acquiring the land?

SHRI M. L. FOTEDAR : I hope, the Hon. Member is from the State of Andhra Pradesh. He is asking a question about an integrated steel plant. However the question being discussed relates to sponge iron plant.

SHRI ANANDA GAJAPATHI RAJU : I said, 'would it end up as a sponge iron plant'.

SHRI M. L. FOTEDAR : This steel plant would not end up as a sponge iron plant but we require some sponge iron for this plan also and we are making adequate arrangements for it.

SHRI I. RAMA RAI : Sponge iron is a substitute for steel scrap. Even now we are importing a large quantity of steel scrap and large amount of iron ore concentrate and pellets are exported to different countries from Mangalore, i.e. from Kudremukh iron ore project. Will the Government consider setting up a sponge iron plant in the public sector at Mangalore, thereby reducing the import of sponge iron and at the same time saving the foreign exchange?

SHRI M. L. FOTEDAR : We are not considering any such proposal to have a sponge iron plant in the public sector. But so far 15 units have been registered as sponge iron units in the country but only a few units of these are in operation at this time. If the Hon. Member wants to have any sponge iron unit in the State he is welcome to do that and I will take notice now that he is starting it and whatever help he requires we will give.

SHRI I. RAMA RAI : Not me personally.

SHRI M. L. FOTEDAR : Not you, personally, but I mean, for your State.

DR. V. VENKATESH : We are all aware that about 20 years back the Government of India in the name of getting votes got the foundation stone laid for a plant in Karnataka by the late Shrimati Indira Gandhi. So far nothing has been done. I want to know whether it is just to cheat the voters, or whether they are going to do it? I want a categorical answer. *(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : Is the word "cheat" a parliamentary word?

SHRI M. L. FOTEDAR : I can tell the Hon. Member only one thing: That we know how best to serve the people because we represent them.

DR. V. VENKATESH : The Hon. Minister does not know anything about Karnataka. What do you know? For 20 years it is going on...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : Mr. Venkatesh, what are you trying to prove? What are you trying to do? Nothing goes on record. I have not allowed him. Mr. Venkatesh, you can put a question like a gentleman. Why have you to be sarcastic about it? Put a question. That is all. This is not the way.

*(Interruptions)**

MR. SPEAKER : This is not the way. You have also been there. You cannot incriminate like this. Mind your language. I do not like it. This is not the way. Just remain in your senses and talk sense. Be reasonable. You should not behave like that.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY : Let him answer the question. Let the Minister answer the question. He has not answered.

MR. SPEAKER : What is the problem? Is there any question? Do not interrupt. If you get so much agitated there is no question for answering. It is lost in tension. This is not the way to ask a question. I do not like it, and this is not the way to ask a question.

*Not recorded.

SHRI M. L. FOTEDAR : Shall I reply to it Sir?

MR. SPEAKER : The best thing is that you can reply something.

SHRI M. L. FOTEDAR : Perhaps, he thought that I will get confused by the question the Hon. Member has asked. Let him remain under confusion, but I would not like to be confused myself.

The question pertains to sponge iron and does not pertain to any steel plant or any other integrated steel plant or any other mini steel plant. Perhaps his problem is about Vijayanagar Steel Plant. The Hon. Member is welcome to see me and discuss with me. He can ask any relevant question at an appropriate time. I will be able to reply and I will be able to tell the Hon. Member what the State Government is doing.

Integrated Container Terminal at Cochin Port

*85. **PROF. K. V. THOMAS :** Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether a proposal for setting up of an integrated container terminal at Cochin has been accepted;

(b) whether order has been placed for a new dredger for Cochin Port;

(c) if so, the price of the proposed new dredger; and

(d) the new equipments sanctioned for handling containers at Cochin Port?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA) : (a) The proposal to set up an Integrated Container Terminal at Cochin Port is under consideration.

(b) and (c). Tenders for the dredger have been received.

(d) The new equipments envisaged in the proposal under consideration are :

(i) quayside gantry cranes	2 Nos.
(ii) Transfer cranes	2 Nos.
(iii) Tractor Heads	19 Nos.