

So far as VISL is concerned, maybe that the State Government has taken a decision. We had indicated certain conditions. I wonder whether they have agreed to those conditions or not, though the ex-Chief Minister as also the present Chief Minister had assured me that they would be doing so. But according to my information, I have not received a formal communication from the State Government so far. As soon as the formal positive response from the State Government comes, we will take appropriate action in the matter.

We are more concerned to keep the memory of Shri Visvesvaraya alive not only in Karnataka but throughout the country. We are celebrating Visvesaraya's birthday as the Engineers' day in the country. Our Prime Minister is more concerned about that than the State Government of Karnataka.

SHRI DAMODAR PANDEY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, may I know from the hon. Minister whether the modernisation scheme to increase steel production would lead to retrenchment of personnel or would more personnel be employed? We have seen retrenchment in places like Durgapur, Bokaro and Bhilai where modernisation schemes were introduced. If this happens, the country will prosper but the steel-workers will be ruined.

[English]

SHRI M.L.FOTEDAR : Sir, I may be permitted to reply to him in English lest I be misquoted.

so far as the question of retrenchment is concerned, I can assure the hon. Member that with the introduction of modernisation scheme, there would be no retrenchment in any steel plant under the SAIL. All that we are going to do is to retrain the personnel and after retraining them, to re-deploy them. But we have a scheme that if somebody wants to retire voluntarily, I cannot tell him not to retire and to remain in the Steel Plant if he wishes to go. But so far as retrenchment is concerned, there would be no retrenchment

whatsoever in the Steel Plants.

SHRI DAMODAR PANDEY : My question was not about the retrenchment, but whether there would be reduction in the manpower, or more manpower would be employed.

MR. SPEAKER: That is something else. He has already said that nobody would be retrenched.

SHRI M.L.FOTEDAR: There would be absolutely no retrenchment so far as the existing manpower is concerned, but so far as new employment is concerned, we will have to consider it at the appropriate time.

MR. SPEAKER : Just to bring to your notice that there is shortage of scrap. Production is going down. They have given a petition to me.

#### Re-opening of Haldia Unit of HFC

\*105. KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE†:  
SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any investment decision on the basis of the reports of the consultants for the reopening of the Haldia Unit of Hindustan Fertilizer Corporation; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF FERTILIZERS IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI R. PRABHU) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE : Sir, I asked one specific question to the Minister, but the answer is not satisfactory. As you know, the Haldia unit of Hindustan Fertilizer Complex in West Bengal is one of the impor-

tant units in Eastern region.

Sir, we met the Minister several times and he said that he has appointed M/s. Toyo Engg. Corporation and M/s. Udhe Consultants from West Germany for an end-to-end survey to investigate the money required for the revamping and rehabilitation of this plant. But now his reply is that no such question does arise.

I do not know whether the earlier reply was given by the Minister or Bin Tuglak gave this reply. I want your protection, Sir. This is a very important and sensitive matter for my State. I would like to know from you that since you assured us so many times that you will take a decision after an end to end survey is over, how could you give this reply. I would like to have specific answer from you. I would like to know whether the Government has received any recommendation from the Toyo Engg. Corporation and M/s. Udhe Consultants of West Germany to release Rs 988 crores for the revamping and rehabilitation of the HFC plant in West Bengal.

SHRI R. PRABHU : Sir, I would like to tell the Hon. Member that our reply is to the specific question. The question was that whether any investment decision has been taken yet. Answer to that was, 'No, Sir'. That means no investment has yet been taken.

I agree with the Hon. Member that Haldia is a very important plant in the North-Eastern region and it is because of that we had appointed two consultants for two parts of the Plant; Toyo Engg. Corporation of Japan was appointed to have an end-to-end survey for the Ammonia, Urea and Methanol portion. And M/s. Udhe of West Germany was appointed for the phosphatic side which comprises of Sulfuric Acid, Phosphoric Acid, Nitric Acid, Ammonium Sulfate and Ammonium Nitro Phosphate.

Now, the result of these two studies are with the Government. The end-to-end surveys have been done. They have given their recommendations. The total investment envisaged for the Plant is Rs 1046 crores.

For the Ammonia, Urea and Methanol portion the investment would be Rs 299.18 crores including a foreign exchange component of Rs 84.04 crores. In the Phosphatic range the investment would be a total of Rs 123.88 crores in the Phase I and Rs 75.29 in the Phase II. The total investment thus would be Rs 501.91 crores. The figure about Rs. 1046 crores includes the money that has already gone into Haldia till now, which is about Rs. 543.93 crores till date.

The Government is looking at the result of the end-to-end survey. It is a very difficult economic decision to take because if we revamp Haldia at this price the retention price that the Government would have to pay for the Urea and Ammonia is very high. In fact the Ammonia retention price would be Rs. 12139. per tonne and urea Rs 10,741 per tonne. This is in contrast to the new Gas based fertiliser plant which we have just set up in Aonla where the retention price is about Rs 3600. There is so much difference.

So, this will be a very difficult economic decision to take and Government is still looking into it. I assure the Hon. Member that we will give due consideration to all aspects and take a comprehensive decision.

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE: Sir, We know, the justice delayed is justice denied. Since 1986 the production work has stopped. The consultants firms have made a proposal that by December the Government should invest money so that this plant may be reopened. I would like to know from the Hon. Minister how much time will he take to take a final decision; whether he will invest the money within this 20th century or he will invest it in the 21st century.

MR. SPEAKER: Now, we are talking in terms of the centuries.

SHRI R. PRABHU : I agree with the hon. Member that the Haldia plant is closed down from somewhere in October 1986. But the employees who are about 1900-odd are being paid their wages, at a cost of Rs 20 crores to the Government every year. I

would like to inform the hon. Member and the House about the situation in Haldia. The Haldia plant was envisaged in 1971. It was mechanically complete in 1979, i.e. 3 1/2 years after the due date of completion. In 1979, West Bengal Government did not give power as they had promised. So, it took another three years for the Government to put a captive power plant. After that, the commissioning was started, trial runs were done, and there was some failure in the machinery because, as Mamata was saying, justice delayed is justice denied. When a plant is ready for operation and it is not operated, and is operated after three years, there are bound to be breakdowns, because a sort of complacency comes in the workers there.

Not only that. The labour situation there is very militant. I am not saying that they are going on strike; I am not saying that they are doing anything like that. But I would like to cite a specific instance of what happened there. The operators left the plant, left the work spot. Because of that, an oxygen gas holder failed, and an oxygen compressor was burnt. This is the situation. There have been various criticisms, that technology is not good, and the machinery is not good. I would like to tell the House that the machinery is all right, and the technology is all right. It may not be the latest technology; but the situation there is so because the maintenance is not good, and the repairs are not done in time; and the proper work culture is not there.

SHRI SATYAGOPAL MISRA : About the situation at Haldia, what the hon. Minister has stated, is not correct. Two oxygen compressors got fired, but not because of the labour problems. Some experts were engaged to find out the causes, but no cause was found out. Now he is shifting the whole blame on the workers. Here, I may remind you that in H.F.C. I (Haldia), the union is led by you.

My question is that these two consultants have specifically recommended that

Rs. 502 crores will be necessary for the re-opening of this plant, and for the first year, viz. 1989-90., Rs 138.48 crores will be necessary. If you do not take the investment decision right now, how will work be started from 1st April 1989? Because in between, some formalities are there; some tenders will have to be floated and some other technicalities are there? Therefore, my point is that investment decisions should be taken right now, without any further delay. You have appointed these consultants. They have given you the report. Now you are sleeping. But this is not the time for sleeping. You should have to take an investment decision right now. What are you doing about that? I want a specific answer.

SHRI PRABHU: Just because foreign consultants have given an end-to-end survey report, it does not mean that Government has automatically to take an investment decision. Like I said, Sir, it is a very difficult economic decision to take, because the retention price that we have to pay for urea or other products is nearly 3 to 4 times that we pay for modern, gas-based plants. But I am not saying that we are not going to re-vamp that plant. I am just saying that we are going to take a comprehensive decision; give us some more time, because we have to look into all the aspects and then take a decision, because we cannot ask the people of this country to subsidize the plant at Haldia.

#### **Setting up Expert Group for Seed Production and Distribution**

\*106. SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have set up an expert group to go into various aspects of seed production and distribution in the country;

(b) if so, the composition of the group; and