

- (x) Physical education and sports should be vigorously pursued as compulsory subjects.

Transfer of IDPL to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

*168. SHRI P. UPENDRA: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to- state:

(a) whether it is proposed to transfer the Indian Drugs and Pharmaceuticals Ltd., now under the administrative control of Ministry of Chemicals Fertilizers, to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare so that the consumer and producer are in the same Ministry;

(b) whether a number of Members of Parliament have submitted a memorandum to the Minister regarding this; and

(c) if so, what is the decision of the Ministry in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI RAM LAKHAN SINGH YADAV): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The case made out was that the transfer of IDPL to the administrative control of the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare would make the company eligible for preferential treatment from that Ministry, particularly in regard to getting orders for medicines required for the National Health Programmes. The issues were examined in consultation with the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare. Both the Ministries are of the considered opinion that the transfer of IDPL to the administrative control of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare would not meet the objectives sought to be achieved.

Total Reserves of Iron Ore Deposits in Bailadila Iron Ore Mines

*169. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) the total reserves of iron ore deposits in the Bailadila iron ore mine of Madhya Pradesh;

(b) how does it compare in quality of iron ore deposits vis-a-vis other parts of the country;

(c) whether it is a fact that as reported in the Press, a part of this mine is being developed in Joint Sector by a private company;

(d) if so, the reasons thereof; and

(e) the procedure followed in the selection of this private party?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) As per information available from Indian Bureau of Mines, total recoverable reserves of iron ore in the Bailadila area are 954.36 million tonnes.

(b) When compared with deposits in other parts of the country, Bailadila has the largest reserves of high grade iron ore (65% Fe) placed at 508.62 million tonnes.

(c) to (e): Steel consumption is one of the major indices of industrial and economic growth of a country. The total demand for steel in India, including estimated exports, is projected to grow to 37 million tonnes by 2001-02, by which time production from the existing integrated steel plants and units in secondary sector is expected to reach about 24 million tonnes. The projected gap of 13 million tonnes will have to be met only by private sector investment as establishment of new greenfield plants in public sector is not contemplated. The private sector will, therefore, have to be encouraged if the projected gap between demand and availability is to be met.

Indigenous availability of metal scrap is low and large quantities have to be imported in order to meet indigenous demand. Sponge iron contains a large percentage of metallic iron and is a very good substitute for steel melting scrap. Production of sponge iron is, therefore, being encouraged by the Government in order to conserve foreign exchange. There are 18 sponge iron units in the country at present with total capacity of 5.4 million tonnes. These units produced 3.4 million tonnes in 1994-95 and the production is expected to cross the 4 million tonnes mark this year, with exports expected to touch the one million mark. More sponge