

next financial year is agreed. This system is applicable all over country.

(c) and (d) No, Sir.

Contracts with Private Parties

2762. SHRI ASHOK MITRA: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a') the number of contracts with private parties both domestic and foreign, the Ministry of Steel or its subsidiary agencies have entered into since 1991-92 for development or expansion of iron ore mines and coal washeries;

(b) whether Government will be agreeable to get up a committee

consisting of eminent financial experts, accountants and economists to review the soundness of these contracts; and

(c) whether representations have been received about lack of transparency in such contractual arrangements?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL & MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI IJIRENDER PRASAD BAISHYA): (a) to (c) During the period since 1991-92, two contracts have been entered into as per details below:—

(i) Bhilai Steel Plant of the Steel Authority of India Ltd. (SAIL) has entered into one contract with an Indian private party as per details given below:

Description of job	Award No. & Date	Value (Rs. in crores)	Name of the Party
Primary crushing and conveying facilities for Dalli Mines.	No. Dy. CE(TK) (281/95/880 dt. 18.5.95	38.88	M/s Bekay Engg. Crop., Bhilai.

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Durgapur Steel Plant of SAIL placed an order on M/sOTTO India Ltd. for 18.90 crores in March, 1994 for Revamping of Captive Coal Washcry at Durgapur under indigenous package of Modernisation Programme of DSP.

No representations have been received about lack of transparency in concluding the above contracts. Well laid down procedures subject to scrutiny by internal and external (statutory/Govt.) agencies, already exist for award of contracts by PSUs/Govt. managed companies. If may, not therefore, be necessary to set up a committee of experts.

While no contracts of the above nature have been awarded by any other agency under the Ministry of Steel, National Mineral Development Corporation

(NMDC) has entered into a joint venture agreement with M/s NIPPON DENRO ISPAT LTD. on 10.7.95 for the development of BAILADILA IRON ORE DEPOSIT II-B, and the Orissa Mineral Development Corporation Ltd. of the Bird Group of Companies, under the administrative control of Ministry of Steel has entered into a MOU with M/s Usha (India), formerly M/s Usha Rectifier Corporation, for setting up a joint venture company for establishing a two million tonne crushing and screening plant for producing sized iron ore for use in Sponge Iron plants. Inter-alia this joint venture company will obtain 50% of its iron ore from OMDC Mines.

Some representations have been received against the development of

Bailadila Deposit II-B by NMDC in the joint venture.

Funds for State Minorities Development Finance Corporation

2763. SHRI RAJUBHAI A.
PARMAR: SHRIMATI
VEENA
VERMA: SHRI
SUSHILKUMAR
SAMBHAJIRAO
SHINDE:

Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the funds provided by the Central Government to the State Minorities Development Finance Corporations of Gujarat, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa during 1993-94, 1994-95, 1995-96 and the current year;

(b) how much of it was utilised by the respective State Minorities Development Corporations for various employment generation and other development schemes and how much of it was surrendered back or reappropriated; and

(c) the number of development projects financed therewith, year-wise?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA): (a) During 1994-95 National Minorities Development Corporation has disbursed a loan amount of Rs. 5.83 crores to the State Channelising Agencies of Maharashtra and Rs. 1.36 crores was disbursed to the State Channelising Agencies of Madhya Pradesh during 1995-96. No disbursements have been made to Gujarat & Orissa States so far.

(b) By the middle of June, 96, the State Channelising Agencies of Maharashtra disbursed Rs. 5.63 crores to the actual beneficiaries. The State Channelising Agencies of Madhya Pradesh disbursed Rs. 0.55 crores to the actual beneficiaries by the middle of July, 96.

No funds were surrendered or eappropriated by these agencies.

(c) The State Channelising Agency of Maharashtra financed 850 development projects in 1994-95 and that of Madhya Pradesh financed 743 development projects in 1995-96.

Children Working under Appalling Condition

2764. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that about 250 million children were compelled to work under appalling conditions today in India;

(b) whether it is a fact that about 3500 out of the 4000 odd cases booked in connection with child labour were disposed of without any stringent punishment to the law offenders, till 15th August, 1996; and

(c) whether the Chairperson of the "Bachpan Bachao Andolan" on 15th August, 1996 assailed Government over child labour for showing neither any political will nor initiative in this regard, as reported by the Hindustan Times dated 16th August, 1996?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) and (b) The information on the number of working children is not factually correct. As per 1981 census the total number of working children in India was 13.65 million. The National Sample Survey 1987-88 put the number of working children at 17.02 million. It is estimated that the total number of working children is around 20 million. Information on the prosecution and conviction under child labour related laws till 15th August, 1996 have not been received so far from the State/UT Governments. Therefore the claims on the number of prosecution and conviction can not be verified.

(c) Government has noted the content of the news item. However the state-