

MW Efforts have also been made to ensure uninterrupted supply of other vital raw materials/inputs to the aluminum smelters. Production in 1984-85 has been 2,76,492 tonnes registering an increase of 32.8 per cent over 1982-83 and 25.5 per cent over 1983-84.

.. Financial help to fisheries sector by NABARD

658. PROF. B. RAMACHANDRA RAO: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what are the objects for which National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development was established;

(b) what is its investment towards the fisheries sector ever since it was established;

(c) whether the National Bank of Agriculture and Rural Development/ Nationalised Bank have formulated projects/schemes for the economic development of fishermen; and

(d) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHAN POOJARI): (a) The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development has been established for providing credit support for the promotion of agriculture, small-scale industries, cottage and village industries, handicrafts and other rural crafts and other allied economic activities in rural areas.

(b) Since its establishment in July, 1982, the National Bank has disbursed refinance assistance of Rs. 18.37 crores to Banks against their term loans granted under various fisheries schemes involving marine fisheries and inland fisheries development. The National Bank has sanctioned 473 schemes with refinance commitments of Rs. 59.7 crores.

(c) and (d) The National Bank has prepared detailed guidelines and check lists for formulation of technically feasible and financially viable fisheries projects both in marine and inland fisheries sector. These guidelines and check lists have been

circulated to Banks to enable them to formulate appropriate fisheries projects for availing refinance assistance from NABARD. NABARD has recently sanctioned two 100 per cent export oriented schemes for import of deep sea trawlers with NABARD refinance commitments of Rs. 1.52 crores.

Import of Non-Ferrous metals by U.P. Brassware Corporation

659. SHRI KAPIL VERMA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether permission to import non-ferrous metals under open general licence, as per the import policy of 1981-82 was sought for by the Uttar Pradesh Brassware Corporation and Uttar Pradesh Industrial Development Corporation and the same is pending before his Ministry for approval since 1982; and

(b) if so, what are the difficulties in giving approval and by when the approval is likely to be given?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. A. SANGMA): (a) and (b). No such request appears to have been received in the office of the Chief Controller of Imports and Exports or in its concerned regional office. However two applications were received from U.P. State Brassware Corporation Ltd., in June, 1982, for allowing import of Electrolytic Zinc and Graphite Crucibles under Industrial Raw Materials Assistance Centre (IRMAC) Scheme, which was replied to on 25th August 1982, advising them to contact MMTC for their requirement of Electrolytic Zinc and there was no provision to allow graphite crucibles included in Appendix 3 of AM 83 Import Policy under the IRMAC Scheme.

Strike in Bokaro Steel Plant

660. SHRI K. VASUDEVA PANICKER: Will the Minister of STEEL, MINES AND COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that about 2000 workers of the Bokaro Steel Plant are on strike;

(b) whether Government have received any charter of demands from the workers' unions;

(c) if so, what steps Government have taken to come to an agreement with the workers' union; and

(d) what is the extent of loss due to the strike and what steps Government propose to take to regulate production in the above plant?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF STEEL (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH): (a) About 1800 employees of the Blast Furnace Department of Bokaro Steel Plant are on strike since 5th April 1985. Some more workers of other Departments have since joined the strike.

(b) and (c). Charters of demands were received separately by the plant management from three trade union. On receipt of the charters of demands from the Bokaro Steel Workers Unions (affiliated to (INTUC), and Bokaro Ispat Kamgar Union (affiliated to AITUC) tripartite discussions were held before the Conciliation Officer, Bokaro Steel City. Bipartite discussions were also held with these unions on a number of times. While negotiations with these unions were in progress, another union namely, Bokaro Steel Rashtriya Mazdoor Sangh (BSRMS) affiliated to BMS, gave a notice of strike alongwith a charter of demands. The Labour Superintendent-cum-Conciliation Officer, Bokaro Steel City initiated conciliation proceedings and invited representatives of the management and the union for discussion on 2nd April 1985. The representatives of the union raised certain objections and did not participate in the discussions and thus forced the Conciliation Officer to close the conciliation proceedings. The workers of Blast Furnace Department under the leadership of this union went on strike w.e.f. 5th April 1985 inspite of the advice of the Conciliation Officer not to go on strike as it would be illegal. On 8th April 1985, the government of Bihar while declaring the strike illegal directed the union to call off the strike immediately. The union, however, did not accept the directive of the

Government of Bihar. On 18th April, 1985 with the efforts of the Government of Bihar, a tripartite settlement was reached in which it was agreed that certain demands would be referred to arbitration and that no vindictive action would be taken by the management against the workmen for participating in the strike and that the strike would be called off immediately. Inspite of the initiative taken by the management, the union did not call off the strike with the result that the strike is still continuing.

(d) The plant lost a production of 37,600 tonnes of saleable steel largely on account of this strike during the month of April, 1985, SAL have taken steps to maintain production with the assistance of willing workers and by induction of technical manpower assistance from other plants.

Problems faced by Jute Industry

661. SHRI K. VASUDEVA PANICKER: Will the Minister of SUPPLY AND TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the jute industry in the country is facing serious problems; if so, what are the reasons therefor;

(b) what is the number of jute mills in the country which have recently been closed and also the number of those mills which are lying closed for the past one year;

(c) how many workers have been affected due to the closure; and

(d) what steps Government have taken or propose to take to re-open the jute mills and mitigate the hardship caused to the workers?

THE MINISTER OF SUPPLY AND TEXTILES (SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR SINGH): (a) The jute industry is facing serious problems for the last few months and a number of jute mills have closed down. The ostensible reason for the closure of jute mills is industrial disputes. The shortage of raw jute coupled with its high prices, financial losses caused