

(DPR) which was commissioned in April, 1975 was received from the Consultants in October, 1977 and is under scrutiny by Steel Authority of India Limited. Meanwhile, preliminary works like land acquisition, soil investigation, raw material testing, etc. have been going on.

An amount of Rs- 1 crore has been provided for in the budget proposals for 1978-79 for continuation of preliminary works.

**Demand for Government Supervision for Haj Pilgrimage**

\*126 SHRI F. M. KHAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Muslims of Mewat who have been to Mecca and Medina on Haj pilgrimage have urged upon the Indian Embassy in Saudi Arabia to take responsibility for Haj pilgrims instead of leaving them in the care of local contractors; and

(b) if so, what steps Government have taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI S. KUNDU): (a) No, Sir. No such suggestion was made to the Indian Embassy in Jeddah. It may be added that there are no local contractors but there are Mutawwifs (Pilgrims' Guides) who look after the pilgrims under Saudi Arabian Regulations which apply uniformly to all pilgrims from all over the world.

(b) Does not arise.

**Manufacture of Neutron Bomb by U.S.A.**

\*127 SHRI U. K. LAKSHMANA GOWDA: SHRI G. D. LAKSHMANAN: SHRI R. NATRAJAN: SHRI R. NARASIMHA REDDY:

276 RS—2.

SHRI KHURSHED ALAM KHAN:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government of U.S.A. have decided to manufacture neutron bomb; and

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI S. KUNDU): (a) The U. S. Government have, in fact, decided to defer production of the neutron bomb but have linked it to future Soviet action.

(b) The Government of India, in keeping with its firm and consistent policy of opposition to nuclear weapons and all other categories of weapons of mass destruction stand for the prohibition of the neutron bomb.

**Issue of a Commemorative Postage Stamp**

\*128. SHRI M. KADERSHAH: SHRI E. R. KRISHNAN:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any final decision in regard to the issue of a commemorative postage stamp in the memory of Periyar E. V. Ramaswamy Naicker has been taken; and

(b) if not, what are the reasons for the delay?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI NARHARI PRASAD SUKHDEO SAI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

**Nawrangpura Telephone Exchange**

\*129. PROF RAMLAL PARIKH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state: