

But occasionally units may have been subdivided artificially to circumvent this provision. Necessary instructions have been issued by the Provident Fund authorities requiring a squad of senior inspectors to examine doubtful cases closely to prevent circumvention of the provisions of the Act. Specific cases of circumvention, if any, could be examined by the authorities, if they are brought to their notice.

Manufacture of Coke Oven batteries by Octo India Ltd.

*530. SHRI SEYAMLAL YADAV: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Mecon/ HSCL undertakings have sufficient technology and construction expertise to undertake the manufacture of Coke Oven batteries;

(b) if so, what are the reasons for which global tenders were invited and foreign based companies like the Octo India Ltd., and the Simon Craves are being considered for the job;

(c) whether it is a fact that the performance of batteries built by the Octo India Ltd., used our steep plants has been found unsatisfactory as the recent battery built by them at the Rourkela Steel Plants has, suffered serious damage within one and a half years of its working against its normal life of ten years; and

(d) whether it is also a fact that the Octo India Ltd. has associated itself with EPIL a Government of India Undertaking, in this venture?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI BIJU PATNAIK): (a) Yes, Sir, Mecol have the technological competence to build coke oven batteries up to a height of 5 meters.

(b) The reference is apparently to the new Coke Oven battery to be constructed at the Burnpur Works of Indian Iron and Steel Company. No global tender was invited in this

case. Consistent with the prescribed procedure and instructions, only limited tenders were invited from companies in India who were considered to have the requisite expertise or experience in design, supply and construction of Coke Oven batteries and ancillary plant and equipment.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Against the tender from IISCO, Engineering Projects (India) Limited (a Government of India Undertaking) submitted an offer stating that in the event of their getting the order, they would undertake the project in association with Octo India Private limited.

Closure of Industries

*531. SHRI P. K. KUNJACHEN: Will the Minister of PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND LABOUR be pleased to state the steps which Government have taken to prevent closures, lay-offs retrenchment in the industries?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND LABOUR (SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA): The Industrial Disputes Act was amended by the Industrial Disputes Amendment Act, 1976 which makes it obligatory for employees of industrial establishments engaging 300 or more workers to obtain prior permission of the specified authority before laying-off workmen or retrenching them. They have also to obtain the previous approval of the appropriate Government Act, 1976 which makes it obligatory undertaking. This came into force with effect from the 5th March, 1976.

Properties left by Indians in Bangladesh

*532. SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA:

SHRI INDRADEEP SINHA: SHRI BIR CHANDRA DEB BURMAN:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state: