

(c) Even with the level of production being the highest ever, HSL could not cover the cost increases over which the Company had little or no control. The cost increases were not covered by price escalations. Had production been still higher than achieved in 1972-73, the loss would have been less to that extent.]

Indo-Sri Lanka talks over the Island of Kachchativu

*564 SHRI HAMID ALI SCHAMNAD
SHRI T V ANANDAN
SHRI M KAMALANATHAN

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to refer to the reply to Starred Question No 789 given in Rajya Sabha on 31st August, 1973 and state the progress made so far in regard to talks with the Sri Lanka Government on Kachchativu Island?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SARDAR SWARAN SINGH)
In pursuance of the Agreement between the Prime Ministers of India and Sri Lanka in April 1973 that discussions would be held regarding Kachchativu and related matters, a further meeting was held on October 15 and 16, 1973. These confidential exchanges between the two Governments are continuing. As Honble Members will be aware, both India and Sri Lanka have expressed the desire to resolve these questions in a spirit of friendly cooperation.

Take-over of Britannia Engineers Factory

*565 SHRIMATI AZIZA IMAM Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRY be pleased to state

(a) whether Government have decided to take over Britannia Engineers (wagon) Factory at Mokameh in Bihar, and

(b) if so, by when?

THE MINISTER OF HEAVY INDUSTRY (SHRI T A PAI) (a) Yes, Sir

(b) As the Company is in liquidation, steps are being taken to obtain the permission of the High Court Calcutta, so that the take over of this undertaking could be effected

Decline in Aluminium Production

*566 SHRI K B. CHETTRI

SHRI HARSH DEO MALAVIYA
SHRI N. R CHOUDHURY

Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state

(a) the present rate of production of aluminium at Hindalco's factory at Renukoot as compared to production during the last three years, and

(b) the reasons for the shortfall, if any, and the steps taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI T A PAI) (a) The present rate of production of aluminium by Hindustan Aluminium Corporation is about 5,000 tonnes per month as against the production of about 6,500 tonnes per month during the last three years

(b) Shortage of power has affected all industries including aluminium. Steps to increase power generation to the extent possible are continuously being taken by the Government.

Cuban Premier Fidel Castro's visit to India

*567 SHRI LOKANATH MISRA

SHRI K P SINGH DEO

SHRI K. C PANDA

SHRI DEBANANDA AMAT

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state

(a) whether the Cuban Prime Minister Fidel Castro stopped over in Delhi on his way home from Hanoi recently, and

(b) whether during his stopover he issued any statement, and if so, what were the points made in the statement?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SARDAR SWARAN SINGH)

(a) Yes, Sir