

(b) This and other suggestions in respect of export duty on iron ore would be taken into account as and when change is made in export duty.

DARBHANGA-SAMASTIPURH-MUZAFFARPUR BROAD GAUGE LINE

256. SARDAR RAM SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) what steps Government have so far taken to extend the broad gauge line from Samastipur to Darbhanga and Samastipur to Muzaffarpur; and

(b) what are the causes of delay to implement the scheme?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C. M. POONACHA): (a) and (b). Investigations carried out have revealed that at present there is no justification on financial and traffic considerations for conversion of Samastipur-Darbhangha and Samastipur-Muzaffarpur portions of Samastipur-Raxaul metre gauge section (*via* Darbhanga and *via* Muzaffarpur) to broad gauge.

CONTRACT FOR AERIAL SURVEY AND GROUND GEOLOGICAL WORK WITH A LOS ANGELES FIRM

257. SARDAR RAM SINGH: Will the Minister of STEEL, MINES AND METALS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that an agreement has been signed with a Los Angeles firm for taking aerial survey and ground geological work in India;

(b) if so, what are the terms of the agreement;

(c) what are the regions which will be surveyed; and

(d) the financial implications of this scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL, MINES AND METALS (DR. M. CHANNA REDDY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) M/s. Persons, Corporation of Los Angeles together with their sub-Contractor, Aero Service, will undertake airborne mineral surveys, ground follow-up geological and geophysical work and diamond drilling over an area of 120,000 square kilometers in selected regions of the country. The entire work will be conducted on contract basis under the overall supervision of the Department of Mines and Metals and will be completed within a period of 30 months from the start of the aerial survey operations. For this purpose, the Contractor will import drilling equipment, laboratory apparatus required for the establishment of a modern metallurgical laboratory and 15 top class technicians to man various positions in the project and simultaneously train their Indian counterparts in the latest techniques of mineral exploration.

(c) The survey will be conducted in Eastern Cuddapah basin in Andhra Pradesh, Aravalli region in Rajasthan and Bihar Mica Belt and Ranchi Plateau in Bihar.

(d) The entire project will cost a sum of Rs. 4.5 crores including a foreign exchange of 3.5 million dollars which will be met out of a US AID loan obtained for the purpose.

EMPLOYMENT OF STAFF ON DEPUTATION" FROM OTHER DEPARTMENTS

258. SHRI P. K. KUMARAN: Will the Minister of STEEL, MINES AND METALS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any fresh instructions were issued by his Ministry regarding the employment of staff on deputation from other departments;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) whether the instructions are being implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL, MINES AND METALS (DR. M. CHANNA REDDY): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.