

Setting up of a Mini Steel Plant in Bhojpur District of Bihar

362. SHRITEJ NARAYAN SINGH: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to set up a mini steel plant in Bhojpur district of Bihar;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI BASAVARAJ PATIL): (a) Government has not received any proposal to set up a mini steel plant in Bhojpur District of Bihar.

(b) and (c). Do not arise.

Plantation of Fast Growing Trees

363. SHRITEJ NARAYAN SINGH: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the danger of extinction of traditional varieties of trees in forests as a result of the present policy to plant fast growing trees in the country; and

(b) if so, the steps taken to ensure plantation of traditional varieties of trees in the tree-less forest areas to maintain ecological balance as existed earlier?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) and (b). The Government has no policy to plant fast growing trees in the Country. The National Forest Policy of 1988 emphasises that no exotic species be introduced under afforestation programmes un-

less long term scientific trials undertaken by specialists in ecology, forestry and agriculture have established that they have no adverse impact on native vegetation and environment.

[English]

Writing Off Agricultural Debts

364. SHRI A. VIJAYA RAGHAVAN:
SHRI SHIKIHO SEMA:
SHRI VAMANRAO MAHADIK:
SHRI PALAI K.M. MATHEW:
SHRI GULAB CHAND
KATARIA:
SHRI K.D. SULTANPURI:
PROF. K.V. THOMAS:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the total amount of agricultural debt written off by various States and the number of farmers benefitted under the policy of Union Government to write off agricultural loans upto Rs. 10,000/-;

(b) the details thereof, State-wise; and

(c) the total amount of assistance given by Union Government to States in this regard State-wise?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) and (b). As per reports available from the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) and Public Sector Banks (PSBs), out of 272.28 lakh beneficiaries identified so far under the Scheme, 179.47 lakh beneficiaries have already been given relief involving an amount of Rs. 4739.70 crores.

The State-wise progress of debt relief