

capacity would be 1.7 million ingot tonnes and 1.355 million tonnes of saleable steel per annum. Production in the plant in 1976-77 was 0.956 million tonnes of ingot steel and 0.736 million tonnes of saleable steel.

(b) The expansion plan of Bokaro Steel Plant from 1.7 million tonnes to 4.0 million tonnes is under implementation. This is expected to be completed by June, 1979 except for the cold rolling mill complex. Government also intend to expand Bokaro further to 4.75 million ingot tonnes per annum and a detailed project report prepared by MECON is under examination.

(c) Except for cold rolling mill complex of 4 MT stage Bokaro Steel Plant would continue to have collaboration with the Soviet Organisations for implementing the expansion project. In respect of cold rolling mill complex it has been decided to entrust the job to the Indian Organisations who are expected to carry out the major part of work of designing and manufacturing the complex themselves. Use will be made of the existing collaboration arrangements of MECON with M/s. United Engineering (now known as M/s. Wean United of USA) for design and manufacture of cold rolling mills; of EPI with M/s. Wean United of USA for processing lines; of BHEL with M/s. Siemens of West Germany for systems design for industrial drives and controls etc. With the Indian Organisations being entrusted with this work of cold rolling mill complex project, the Government expects that this would not only create a wide technical base but also lead to much greater self-reliance in an area of highly sophisticated technology in the steel sector.

Ambassadors due for Retirement

1630. SHRI R. K. MHALGI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state;

(a) how many ambassadors are likely to retire within a period of ensuing three months; and

(b) their names and the names of the countries to which they are accredited?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE): (a) and (b). No Ambassador is due to superannuate and retire from Service during the next three months. However, the following non-career Ambassadors are expected to relinquish charge on completion of their respective assignments abroad with within the above period:

(1) Shri B.K. Nehru, High Commissioner of India in the U.K.

(2) Dr. Sisir Gupta, Ambassador of India in Portugal, Lisbon.

(3) Shri Imdad Ali, Ambassador of India in the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, Aden.

(4) Dr. K.A. Nizami, Ambassador of India in the Syrian Arab Republic.

(5) Shri S.M. Agha, Ambassador of India in the Republic of Korea.

Russian Base in Indian Ocean

1631. SHRI PRASANNBHAI MEHTA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have enquired into the allegations made by U.S.A. that Russia has built its base in the Indian Ocean; and

(b) whether Government proposes to call a meeting of both the countries to impress upon them the desirability of making Indian Ocean a zone of peace?