

**Port based Steel Plant at Paradeep**

649. SHRI SURYANARAIN SINGH: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have a proposal for setting up a port based steel plant at Paradeep; and

(b) if so, the details of the plant?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND STEEL AND MINES (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b). As part of the overall development programme for the enhancement of capacity in the steel industry, Government have been considering the possibilities of setting up a new port based steel plant with ultimate capacity of 3.0 million tonnes per annum. Paradeep is also being considered as a possible site in this connection. As a result of discussions held with foreign parties who have offered technical and financial assistance for this purpose, two concrete proposals have been received which are being examined.

**Writing off loans taken by small and Marginal Farmers of Tripura**

650. SHRI AJOY BISWAS: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any decision of Government for writing off the loans taken by the small and marginal farmers of Tripura from different nationalised banks;

(b) whether the State Government of Tripura has taken up the issue with the Central Government; and

(c) if so, what steps have been taken by the Central Government in this regard?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI MAGANBHAI BAROT): (a), to (c). No, Sir. It is not the policy

in the commercial banks to write off loans or waive interest on advances as it adversely affects their profitability and is against the interest of their depositors. However, a scheme has been evolved by Government for the waiver of interest liability of small/marginal farmers and agricultural labourers of Kharif loans in 1979 in areas where crop loss due to drought has been more than 50 per cent. The expenditure incurred by Banks for this purpose will be reimbursed by the State and Central Governments.

Banks also grant extension of repayment period/convert short term loans into medium-term loans in case the repaying capacity of borrowers is adversely affected due to natural calamities like floods, droughts etc.

The Government received a proposal from the State Government in February 1980 regarding the write off of Cooperative loans outstanding against the unwilful defaulters. There is no Scheme in Government of India providing for write off of the loans issued by Cooperatives to their borrower members for agricultural operations.

**I.A. and A.I. remained without Boards of Directors**

651. SHRI NAVIN RAVANI: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) how long exactly (date-wise) the Indian Airlines and Air India remained without Boards of Directors after February, 1980, expiry of old Boards;

(b) what were the reasons for such extraordinary delay;

(c) what is the experience of newly appointed Chairman of Air India, in the field of airlines business; similarly under which circumstances newly appointed Chairman Mr. A. M.