

—review of capital expenditure with a view to defer such expenditure as far as possible;

—cut in expenditure on items such as telephones, over-time, transportation, etc.

#### **Retrenchment in HSCL and Kudremukh**

640. SHRI KRISHNA CHANDRA HALDER: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the HSCL management is retrenching a large number of workers on the plea that they were surplus;

(b) whether Government are also aware that in Kudremukh itself 239 workers had been served with notices of retrenchment 100 of whom are skilled and highly skilled; and

(c) if so, what steps have been taken to absorb these workers in adjoining Supa Project and other projects being run by it?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND STEEL AND MINES (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE (a) HSCL is essentially a construction company, As soon as the work on a particular site is over, the employees engaged thereon become surplus and have to be retrenched if they cannot be transferred/absorbed at other sites.

(b) Consequent on the completion of work awarded to HSCL on Kudremukh Project, the Company had a surplus of 429 departmental workers. Out of this, 239 workers have been retrenched on 24th September, 1980. The aforesaid retrenched workers did not include 100 workers belonging to skilled and highly skilled categories but it included thirty two skilled and one highly skilled workers.

(c) At present there is no requirement of workers in other units of HSCL including the unit at Supa. However, in case employment opportunities arise in future in the area,

HSCL will give preference to the retrenched employees for employment. It may be mentioned that as a measure of assistance for employment, HSCL has furnished a list of retrenched workers to the local Employment Exchange, and has also circulated it to the other public sector undertakings in the area.

#### **Dearness Allowance to Central Government Employees**

641. SHRI M. RAMGOPAL REDDY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government Employees have become entitled for another slab of Dearness Allowance with effect from 1st September, 1980; and

(b) if so, the decision of Government on it?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SAWAI SINGH SISODIA): (a) Consequent on the 12-monthly average of the Consumer Price Index reaching 376 points at the end of August, 1980, a further instalment of Dearness Allowance to the Central Government employees from 1-9-1980 has become due for consideration.

(b) The matter is under the consideration of Government.

#### **Non-availability of Sugar, Rice and Wheat to Card Holders in Ration Shops**

642. SHRI SUSHIL BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to the fact that the rationing/public distribution system in the capital has come under serious stress and most of the card holders do not get sugar, rice, wheat etc. from the ration shops; and

(b) if so, what steps have been taken in this matter?