

# Rs 250 cr newsprint unit for Beas

By P. D. Mohindra

CHANDIGARH, March 3 — The Punjab Government is considering a proposal for setting up a Rs 250-crore bagasse-based newsprint project at Beas to provide direct and indirect employment to nearly 20,000 persons of the sensitive border districts of Amritsar and Gurdaspur.

A State-Government committee with Mr M. S. Gill, Financial Commissioner (Development), as Chairman, and Mr Anutabh Pande, Managing Director of the Punjab Agro-Industries Corporation, as Convener, recently visited Madras to study the technology and viability of the Tamil Nadu Newsprint and Papers, Ltd. a 300-tonnes per day production mill based on the

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The quotations: Wheat desi 235 to 315 kulyan 210 to 212 dara 200 to 206 maida 220 to 224 rice basmati 750 to 1200 permal 260 to 330 gram 300 to 242 kabli gram 400 to 625 peas 300 to 400 bajra 150 to 190 jowar 160 to 170 maize 170 to 192 barley 130 to 140 gowara 350 to 390 urd 440 to 515 dal 515 to 610 husked 580 to 725 moong 480 to 515 dal 515 to 560 husked 560 to 620 masoor 365 to 400 dal 450 to 500 moth 510 to 535 arhar 500 to 575 dal 680 to 360 gram dal 360 to 390.

AMRITSAR: Mash 600 to 630 moong 500 to 550 gram dal 390 to 395 gram kabli 450 to 625 black 375 to 400 barley 160 to 165 bajra 190 to 220 maize 190 to 200 wheat (157) 205 to 207 kaliyan 208 (1562) 200 to 205 dara 190 to 195 rice 265 to 270 basmati 900 to 1100.

Beas high-yield bagasse pulping process.

Other members of the committee include the Secretary for Industries, Mr A. S. Chatha, the Secretary for Science and Technology, Miss Raveen Kaur and the Managing Director of the Cooperative Sugar Mills, Mr Gurdev Singh.

The location of Beas has been identified because of its proximity to the river and the availability of bagasse from several sugarcane-crushing mills installed within a radius of 100 km. The project will utilise nearly four lakh tonnes of bagasse now used in the State's sugar mills as boiler fuel. The installed sugarcane crushing capacity in 1985 in Punjab was approximately 13 lakh tonnes per season. The residue or bagasse is a fibrous raw material effectively used for making newsprint, and printing and writing paper in Mexico and Peru.

Another agro-residue which is wasted on a large-scale is rice straw. Nearly 1.75 lakh tonnes of it is burnt in factories leading to pollution in Ludhiana and other urban areas. The left-over is burnt by paddy-growers in their fields.

Mr Pande said here today that rice straw would also be an efficient substitute for bagasse as sugar mill boiler fuel.

The proposed project will manufacture 300 tonnes of newsprint or 240 tonnes of printing and writing paper per day. The sugar mills, on the basis of a tie-up, will supply bagasse to the project which, in turn, will send them rice straw, as a substitute for bagasse, as boiler fuel.

As a result, the growers will get

higher return for both sugarcane and paddy because of added values to agro-residues. The price of bagasse will be Rs 5 per quintal. The rice straw will be procured for Rs 80 per tonne. The sugar mills will also have the guarantee of getting steam and power from the promoters of the project for meeting their needs of process heat.

India is importing newsprint by spending Rs 27 crore per annum in foreign exchange. Quite a bit of this scarce exchange will be saved.

Three major agro-residues: bagasse, rice husk and rice straw—which are abundantly available in Punjab—will be effectively utilised. Further, the use of wood pulp derived from precious forest resources will be dispensed with. This will preserve the forests and the country's environment.

## MMTC hikes tin, copper prices

NEW DELHI, March 3 (UNI) — The Minerals and Metals Trading Corporation of India has announced an increase in the prices of copper and tin.

Price of copper was increased by Rs 1,500 and of tin by Rs 3,000 per tonne. The prices of zinc, lead, nickel and antimony metal remain unchanged.

The price of electrolytic copper wire bars/high grade cathodes has been fixed at Rs 50,500 and of continuous cast copper wire rods at Rs 57,500.

The new selling price of tin is Rs 1.88 lakh per tonne.

## Evening Rates

DELHI, March 3 (NNS) — Hind Motor 30.50 Delhi Cloth 32.50 J.K. Synth 74.50 Escorts 79.50 Silver tezabi 4426 silver (999) 4582 coins 4878 gold vitor 2550 standard 2650 groundnut oil (10 kg) 194 cottonseed oil 170 sesame 217 moong 490 to 520 urd 440 to 515 gram 300 to 335.