

and the export-embargo regime being adopted by industrially advanced countries.

The plan envisages the following three-pronged thrust for achieving increased self-reliance:—

- (i) sustaining existing defence systems through indigenisation of spares,
- (ii) upgrading viable existing defence systems and stretching their life and capability, and
- (iii) inducting more of indigenous defence systems in a progressive manner and minimising the import of major systems.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) A "Self-Reliance Implementation Council" has been constituted by the Government under the Chairmanship of Scientific Adviser to Raksha Mantri and with senior officers from various wings of Ministry of Defence including Services as members. In addition, the existing Defence Research and Development Council, with Raksha Mantri as Chairman, has been entrusted the following additional role:—

- (i) pooling national expertise and infrastructural strengths,
- (ii) ensuring priorities for self-reliance programmes,

- (iii) promoting consortia approach to maximise exploitation of national technological strengths.

Fire accidents in fireworks and cracker units

*237. DR. RANBIR SINGH: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether fire accidents are regularly taking place in the fireworks/cracker units in one or the other part of the country;

(b) if so, how many accidents have taken place in the last three years, and how many of these accidents were enquired into, with what results and how many people were killed therein;

(c) what have been the main causes of these accidents and how is it proposed to contain such accidents in times to come; and

(d) whether the rules on the explosives are violated with impunity and there is nexus between the staff of the explosives departments, the manufacturers and the wholesale dealers?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI K. KARUNAKARAN): (a) and (b) The number of accidents that have occurred in fire cracker units licensed by the Department of Explosives during the past 3 years is as follows:—

Year	No. of accidents	No. of accidents investigated	No. of persons killed
1992-93	7	6	24
1993-94	3	3	3
1994-95	9	9	23

(c) and (d) As established by investigations, the accidents in the premises licensed by Department of Explosives were mainly due to presence of grit in composition, impact by sub-standard tools and careless action on the part of some workers. It is proposed to contain

recurrence of such accidents by rigorously enforcing the provisions of the relevant Act and rules. Cases have not come to notice indicating a nexus between the staff of the Explosives Department, manufacturers and wholesale dealers.