

' (b) what are the reason* for lack of interest among the licenced manufacturers;

(c) whether this state of affairs is forcing Government to increase imports of telecommunication equipments;

(d) what are the names of foreign companies, contract value, contract date, delivery schedule and quantity of various types of telecommunication equipments in the case of each order for imports of equipment placed on foreign firms by Government so far since April. 1987; and

(e) what will be the level of dependence of telecommunication equipmen t imports by the end of the Seventh Plan period and what steps are being taken to reduce imports to save precious foreign exchange?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BIR BAHADUR SINGH): (a) and (b) Out of 75

letters of intent issued to private manufacturers for manufacture of telecommunication equipments, 29 have been converted into industrial licences. In view of the liberalised policy for industrial licensing, the interest amongst the licensed manufacturers for the manufacture of telecommunications equipment is considered satisfactory.

(c) No, sir.

(d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

(e) The level of dependence on import for telecommunication equipment will be minimum and only be in

those areas where indigenous manufacture is not considered viable. Indigenous production has been planned for practically all telecommunication equipment to minimise imports.

Representation of Indian Medical Association for Exempting Life Saving Drugs from Tax Net

4575. Shri S. S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the President of the Indian Medical Association has requested the Central Government to exempt all the life saving drugs from the tax net and also to make them available to the general public, including the needy poor at subsidised rates; and

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI J. VENGAL RAO): (a) and

(b) The Indian Medical Association has represented to the Kelkar Committee that Excise Duty, Octroi and other Taxes should be removed while fixing the prices of the drugs.

Sales Turnover of Drugs

4576. SHRI B. SATYANARAYAN REDDY.

SHRI DAYANAND SAHAY:

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 3305 given in the