

is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Reduction of customs duty on imported CZ silicon crystals

1212. SHRI K. MOHANAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have abolished about 70 per cent customs duty on imported CZ silicon crystals and wafers in 1983, which is also produced in the country;

(b) if so, the reasons for such heavy reduction in the customs duty for the imported stuff; and

(c) the details of compensating incentives given to Indian producers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT, ATOMIC ENERGY, SPACE AND ELECTRONICS (SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL): (a) Government reduced the Customs duty on Silicon Single Crystals and Wafers to 40 per cent in August, 1983 as a part of the package of incentives given to electronics industry.

(b) The main objective of this exercise was to bring down the prices of electronic components and equipment manufactured in the country.

(c) Simultaneously, the customs duty on the polysilicon, a basic material to manufacture Silicon Single Crystals and subsequently into wafers, was also reduced from 87 per cent to 0 per cent as part of the above package. Subsequently, incentives were given in terms of reduction of duty from 40 per cent to 0 per cent on quartz crucibles used in the manufacture of Single Crystals Silicon.

Production of Indigenous Silicon Crystals and Wafers

1213. SHRI NIRMAL CHATTERJEE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration for developing indigenous silicon crystals and wafers production;

(b) if so, the progress so far made in this regard; and

(c) by when import of such stuff is likely to be stopped?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT, ATOMIC ENERGY SPACE AND ELECTRONICS (SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL): (a) and (b) Starting material for the production of silicon single crystal and wafers is electronic grade polysilicon. M/s. Mettur Chemicals were given an industrial licence in March 1982 to produce polysilicon as well as single crystals and wafers with a plant capacity of 10 tonnes of finished products. They have set up a pilot plant of about 2 tonnes capacity per annum of polysilicon, which is being put into operation since September/October, 1984. In addition, they are planning to set up their production plant, for which they have already imported all equipment. All administrative assistance is being made available to them.

Government is also providing the required support to National Chemical Laboratory for setting up a pilot plant in which experiments on alternate processes, which would reduce energy consumption and lower the cost of polysilicon, would be conducted. More R&D projects will be taken up at other appropriate agencies.

Government has also decided to acquire from abroad basic know-how, process engineering and proprietary equipment from a renowned producer of polysilicon.

To convert electronic grade polysilicon into silicon single crystals and wafers, three companies in the private sector have been given the licences, out of which two have already started operations. The third company viz., M/s. Mettur Chemicals is yet to commission their equipment. In