

Import of traction motors

302. SHRI PILOO MODY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether an order was placed with a Japanese firm in November, 1973 for supply of 400 Nos. of traction motors, with gears, pinions, jigs, tools; etc.;

(b) if so, what were the salient points of the contract;

(c) whether any of the prototype traction motors supplied by the party was found to be unsatisfactory; and

(b) if so, what action Government have taken in this regard?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) Yes.

(b) Firm was required to supply 14 prototype traction motors within 9 months of the effective date of contract i.e. by 25-10-74 and after approval of prototype and service trials in India for a period of 6 months bulk shipments were to be effected @ 45 per month for the first three months and @ 60 per month for the next 4 months and the balance in the 8th month.

(c) Prototype motors offered in Japan for tests failed in August 1976.

(d) A better and uprated insulation system for the traction motor will have to be followed by the firm so that the requirements of Indian Railways specifications are met.

Also, the firm is being asked to get their drawings, process sheets stage testing procedures, etc. cleared by Indian Railways before undertaking manufacture of the new prototype motors. The prototype motors will be given extended service trials in India before series manufacture is undertaken by the firm.

Traffic at Calcutta Port

303. SHRI R. R. MORARKA: Will the Minister of SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the volume of traffic handled by the Calcutta Port has declined from 1964-65; and

(b) if so, what are the reasons for such decline and what measures are taken for greater use of the port facility?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT (SHRI A. P. SHARMA): (a) It is true that total traffic handled at Calcutta port has declined over years since 1964-65.

(b) Broadly speaking, the decline in traffic has been on account of inaccessibility of the port to the medium and large sized vessels on account of draught limitation, absence of food-grain traffic, fall in ore traffic and quantum of coal exports and possibly availability of other ports to the importers and exporters.

As regards draught limitation, technical studies are being carried out to determine the steps that could be taken for improving the situation. Efforts have been made to divert import of cargo on Government account to Calcutta.

Supply of axle bearings to Railways

304. SHRI R. R. MORARKA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that by accepting an offer of an indigenous party in preference to a foreign supplier for supply of 33,000 axle bearings the Railways had to pay about a crore of rupees more;

(b) whether it is also a fact that in further supply of 42,000 axles from the same party there was a further

extra expenditure of about Rs. 1.69 crores; and

(c) if so, what were the reasons for not negotiating a reasonable price at par with the international price offered by a Polish supplier?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) to (c) A statement is attached.

Statement

On the basis of global tenders invited by the Ministry of Railways in November, 1973, for purchase of Roller Bearing Axle Boxes, order for 33,000 Nos. Roller Bearing Axle Boxes was placed on the indigenous supplier in May, 1974, after holding negotiations with the indigenous supplier and also the Polish firm who among others, had quoted in response to this tender. When the tender was being finalised, the Ministry of Industrial Development allowed an expansion in April, 1974, in the licenced capacity of indigenous supplier and on this basis the entire requirements of Roller Bearing Axle Boxes of the Railways could be met by the indigenous supplier. The import was, thus considered not inescapable and therefore, the Polish supplier's offer for 25,000 Nos. of Roller Bearing Axle Boxes was not availed of. Further in July, 1975, the Ministry of Railways placed another order on the same indigenous supplier for the supply of 42,000 Nos. of Roller Bearing Axle Boxes on the Basis of a single tender enquiry. Since the indigenous supplier had the capacity to meet the Railways' requirements fully and the prices quoted by the indigenous supplier were considered reasonable, the question of extra expenditure in placing the orders for 33,000 Nos. 42,000 Nos. Roller Bearing Axle Boxes on the indigenous supplier, does not arise.

As regards negotiating a reasonable price at par with the international price offered by the Polish supplier, it is stated that the Ministry of Railways held negotiations with the indigenous supplier and on this basis,

they reduced their price substantially. The negotiated price of the indigenous supplier, though higher than the negotiated price of Polish firm, was considered justified on the basis of cost escalations which had taken place since the placement of the last order on them.

Supply of defective brake heads to Amritsar workshop

305. SHRI R. R. MORARKA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that out of a total supply of 6850 brake heads made by a firm required for manufacturing wagons by Amritsar workshop, about 75 per cent were found defective and not conforming to the specifications;

(b) if so, whether there was no pre-supply inspection of these brake heads; if there was, how such a huge quantity of this item in defective condition, came to be supplied;

(c) if answers to parts (a) and (b) above be in the affirmative whether any responsibility has been fixed for the numerous failures in this case; and

(d) what is the total loss suffered by the Railways as a result of these defective supplies?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) Yes. Out of the total of 6850 Nos. brake heads. 1727 Nos. only were found conforming to specification;

(b) Pre-supply inspection was done by Research Designs & Standards Organisation of the Railways. Certain manufacturing defects in welding, alignment and dimensions came to the notice when the supply was put to use. Evidently Research Designs & Standards Organisation failed to carry out proper inspection;