

tion of all Zonal Railway Time Tables is being brought out from October '77.

(b) Does not arise.

Stoppage of Soda Ash Import

43. SHRI ARVIND GANESH:
KULKARNI: SHRI M.
ANANDAM: SHRIMATI
AMBIKA SONI. SHRI S. W.
DHABE:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the import of soda ash is being stopped as reported in a news item in the Economic Times of the 15 October, 1978; and,

(b) what is the present position regarding supply of soda ash to small scale units?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) There is no statutory control over prices and distribution of soda ash. However, Govt. have impressed upon the soda ash manufacturers the need to ensure a smooth flow and adequate availability of soda ash to various consuming industries particularly small scale units at fair prices.

All the manufacturers of soda ash have also assured Government that the requirements of all industrial consumers would be met by them and supplies would be ensured in proportion to the previous years' offtake. To supplement indigenous production, two major user associations, namely, the All India Glass Manufacturers Federation and the All India Silicate Manufacturers Association have also been authorised to import 10,000 tonnes each of dense and light soda ash respectively which will be sold by them to units manufacturing Glass and Silicate on a 'No profit No loss' basis in accordance with guidelines issued by the Department of Chemicals and Fertilizers.

Restrictions on Independent Candidates Contesting Elections

44. SHRI S. M. KHAN: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Election Commission has suggested certain restrictions on independent candidates from contesting elections; and

(b) if so, what are the details of the suggestion and what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI SHANTI BHUSHAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Election Commission has suggested the doubling of security deposit of candidates and also the subscription of the candidature of independent candidates by ten proposers and ten seconders. These suggestions are under consideration as part of the comprehensive proposals for electoral reforms at present under examination of the Government.

Difference in rates of railway fare on Darjeeling Himalayan Section

45. SHRIMATI PRATIMA BOSE:
SHRI JAHARLAL BANERJEE:
SHRI PRASENJIT BARMAN:
SHRI AHMED HOSSAIN
MONDAL:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a difference in the rates of railway fare on the Darjeeling Himalayan Section from that of other sections on the Northeast Frontier Railway;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether Government intend to revise the fare on the Darjeeling Himalayan Section and to make the same at par with the other sections of that Railway?