

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

(c) what steps Government propose to take to remedy the situation?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) No, Sir; During April-August 1977, the latest period for which full data are available, the rate of growth of production was lower than last year, but substantially higher than the previous three years. Partial data for September and October show more improvement in production rather than a gradual decline.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Import of watches for marketing through H.M.T.

720. DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRABARTI:

SHRI JAHARLAL BANERJEE:
SHRI PHANINDRA NATH
HANSDA:

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are importing a large number of watches of reputed foreign brands for marketing through HMT;

(b) whether Government propose to expand the HMT units all over the country to meet the demand of watches indigenously; and

(c) whether HMT propose to place orders with small scale units which are capable of manufacturing simple watch parts, like cases, dials, crown-screws, etc. in order of augment the manufacture of watches?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES):

(a) The present production capacity of HMT for manufacture of watches is not adequate to meet the demand. In order to increase the availability of HMT watches, Government have permitted imports of watches in semi-knocked-down and completely-knocked-down conditions and whole

watches. Whole watches will be imported only through H.M.T. and will bear the HMT's brand names and will not be distinguishable from HMT's indigenous production.

(b) and (c) Government have sanctioned the augmentation of HMT's watch production by 2 million watches per year, envisaging the creation of a centralised watch manufacturing unit and 14 dispersed assembly units. The labour intensive operations will be done in these assembly units. Other labour intensive aspect, for instance, relating to case manufacture, will be formed out to small-scale ancillary industries.

Devolution of power to State Governments

721. SHRI U. R. KRISHNAN: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the steps Government have taken during the last seven months for devolution of powers to the State Governments; and

(b) the action Government have taken on the proposals reported to have been sent by the Governments of West Bengal and Jammu and Kashmir in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI DHANIK LAL MANDAL): (a) The question of devolution of power to States has not come up before the Government.

(b) No such proposal has been received from the Governments of West Bengal and Jammu and Kashmir.

Central Information Service

722. SHRI JAHARLAL BANERJEE:
DR RAJAT KUMAR
CHAKRABARTI:
SHRI PHANINDRA NATH
HANSDA:

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) what are the reasons for discontinuing direct recruitment through