

प्राथमिकता दी जाय इस संबंध में वहाँ के नियमों में या कानूनों में किसी भी प्रकार का संशोधन नहीं किया है और न उन के लिए कोई रिजर्वेशन रखा है ?

SHRI J. B. PATNAIK: Sir: we do not have information at present. But, as I have stated earlier, some reservation has been made by the State Governments in regard to the allotment of land. So far as the land law is concerned, we do not have any information on that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: He does not have the information at present and law must be known to everybody. Next Question.

Manufacture and supply of chassis of commercial vehicles

*241. SHRI ROSHAN LAL:

SHRI DHARAMCHAND JAIN: SHRI SARDAR AMJAD ALIF

SHRI N. R. CHOUDHURY: SHRI HARSH DEO MALAVIYA.

Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of commercial vehicles chassis manufactured during the last three years and upto October 1973, unit-wise; and

(b) the number of such chassis supplied by manufacturers to various States during the above period?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRY (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): (a) and (b) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Sardar Amjad Ali.

Statement

(a) The unitwise production of commercial vehicles chassis during the last three years and upto October, 1973, has been as under:—

Name of the firm	Production			
	1970	1971	1972	1973
1. M/s. Tata Engg. & Locomotive Co., Ltd., Bombay.	24,463	24,654	22,441	(Upto Oct 73) 19,413
2. M/s. Premier Automobiles Co., Ltd., Bombay ..	4,892	4,572	3,489	3,289
3. M/s. Hindustan Motors Ltd., West Bengal ..	1,319	1,609	1,547	1,834
4. M/s. Ashok Leyland Ltd., Madras ..	5,263	5,456	4,244	4,283
5. M/s. Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd., Bombay ..	966	922	911	953
6. M/s. Standard Motor Products of India Ltd., Madras.	158	330	1,418	856
7. M/s. Bajaj Tempo Ltd., Poona ..	3,497	3,322	3,416	4,114
Total ..	40,558	40,865	37,466	34,742*

*Note — Production for Calendar year 1973 is 42,400.

(b) In the absence of any Government control on the sale and distribution of commercial vehicles, the responsibility of distributing chassis vests in the manufacturers themselves. It may, however, be mentioned that the distribution of chassis is not done State-wise but through the authorised dealers appointed by the manufacturers.

SHRI SARDAR AMJAD ALI: Sir, from the Statement it appears that there is a gradual decline in the production of commercial vehicles. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether this decline is because of the production planning undertaken by the manufacturers or for some other reasons.

As far as the statement that Government has no control either over the production or distribution of commercial chassis, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether in view of the present oil crisis Government will take up with the manufacturers the question of producing such type of chassis of commercial vehicles which can be driven on diesel and not on petrol.

SHRI T. A. PAI: Sir, may I draw the attention of the hon. Member to the asterisk in that answer which shows that the production of the commercial vehicles in 1973 is 42,400 as against 37,466 last year? So, the commercial vehicles production has been going up year after year. But the fact is that as against the licensed capacity of 73,400 vehicles now the installed capacity, i.e., what they are capable of achieving, is 50,900 because in one or two factories they will have to undertake improvements in the designs or in the vehicles so that they may be marketable. These efforts are also being made.

SHRI SARDAR AMJAD ALI: Sir, my question is not replied. My question was whether the Government is taking it up with the manufacturers to go on with the manufacture of the diesel-driven trucks or chassis instead of making much more production of the petro-driven chassis.

SHRI T. A. PAI: Sir, it is not always possible to change petrol engine for a

diesel engine but anyway the manufacturers themselves are taking action where-ever it is possible because the demand for petrol vehicles has been going down.

SHRI SARDAR AMJAD ALI: Sir, my second question is about the distribution. How is it that the Government has given a free hand to the manufacturers for the distribution of chassis? I would like to quote only three figures that in the year 1971 while these manufacturers have given only 445 chassis to West Bengal, they gave 1250 chassis to Maharashtra and in 1972, 536 chassis were given to West Bengal as compared to 1190 to Maharashtra. There is an uneven distribution of the tractor chassis to different States. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether they are going to take action in this regard or whether they are going to take it up with the manufacturers so that there is an even distribution.

SHRI T. A. PAI: Sir, the distribution of vehicles does not depend upon the population of any one particular State. . .

SHRI SARDAR AMJAD ALI: I would like to know how this population comes in here.

SHRI T. A. PAI: Let the hon. Minister follow up my answer very closely because when it is alleged that some States got less and some States got more, it was not a gift given to them. It depends upon the orders placed from each State. We are only willing to look into the complaints where, if any one particular State is at a disability to get the required demand. It all depends partly on the demands and partly on the placing of their orders. However, taking into consideration the questions that have been often raised that there could be more equitable distribution of the vehicles, the Ministry has constituted an Informal Committee to oversee the commercial vehicles in the country. On 8th April, 1974, a meeting of the Committee was held. The Committee consists of 13 members—one representative each of M/s Premier Automobiles, Hindustan Motors, Telco and Ashok Leyland, one representative each of the dealers of these manufacturers, two representatives each of the

two All India Unions of Transport Operators to represent the users of the vehicles and one nominee of the Government of India—to see that this distribution is properly supervised even relating to the claims of various States.

SHRI N. R. CHOUDHURY: Sir, if we study the statement we find that when the Minister says that the production of chassis is increasing gradually, the statement itself says that it fell during 1971, 1972 and in 1973.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you going to put a question?

SHRI N. R. CHOUDHURY: Yes, Sir, point is whether his Ministry has made any enquiry as to why these producers or manufacturers of chassis have kept the production at a low level. Is it only to create an artificial demand for these chassis and to maximise their profits? Again, for distribution, they distribute these things through certain dealers and the demand for the chassis is not the same in all parts of the country. The demand for chassis in industrialised areas like Bombay and Calcutta. . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do not say things which are known to everybody. About that the Minister has already replied. You put your question.

SHRI N. R. CHOUDHURY: My question is whether he would look into the public allegations that the premium is charged from the actual users of the chassis and there is a chain of the dealers and the manufacturers. Has he made any enquiry about it? If so, what is the report? What is the reaction of the Government to such allegations and what steps they are going to take for equitable distribution of these chassis and controlling the manufacturers for not keeping the production at a low level?

SHRI T. A. PAI: Sir, the production in 1970 was 40,558; in 1971 it was 40,865; in 1972 it was 37,466 and in 1973 it was 42,400. The last column figures show production upto October 1973 and not for the entire calendar year. So the hon. Mem-

ber must be satisfied that my statement that production has gone up is correct.

SHRI N. R. CHOUDHURY: What is the production capacity?

SHRI T. A. PAI: So far as Ashok Leyland and TELCO, the main manufacturers, are concerned, the production capacity has been utilised to the full. In the case of Premier Automobiles, the installed capacity is 15,000 but they are not able to make more than 6,000 because of the problem of getting suitable engines. The Hindustan Motors which have a capacity of 15,000, have not made more than 2,000 because their trucks are not saleable.

SHRI N. R. CHOUDHURY: Allegation about black-market is part of my question.

SHRI T. A. PAI: Before I complete the answer, hon. Members have been standing up. I would like to point out that there is a premium on the vehicles of TELCO of about Rs. 8 to 9 thousand. We had also come to know that people who had registered themselves for these vehicles and who are getting these vehicles, are transferring them. Recently we have imposed a control that no vehicle can be transferred within the first two years to see that this kind of practice is not allowed.

SHRI N. R. CHOUDHURY: Sir, he says about persons who purchase the vehicles. But, Sir, dealers charge a premium. My point is that dealers charge a premium over the actual price.

SHRI T. A. PAI: If the hon. Member can make any specific complaint, I shall certainly get that investigated.

SHRI HARSH DEO MALAVIYA: I would like to know what had been the increase in prices of chassis in the course of the last two years and is the hon. Minister aware that among the transport operators who are the bulk consumers of these chassis, there is a great resentment and there are rumours that another increase is going to take place? Will the Government ensure that such arbitrary increases are stopped and the producers do not fleece the bulk consumers, the transport operators?

SHRI T. A. PAI: After the budget in 1973 when the prices were put up by the manufacturers and the complaints came to us, we looked into it with reference to the Bureau of Costs and Accounts and got a report that these increases were justified. At the same time we told the manufacturers not to increase the prices.

SHRI HARSH DEO MALAVIYA: What have been the increases?

SHRI T. A. PAI: I could not tell you the exact amount but there has been an increase of Rs. 3 to 5 thousand.

SHRI HARSH DEO MALAVIYA: Every price increase is justified. How do you say that?

SHRI T. A. PAI: We are not interested in increasing the price for the consumer but so far as we are concerned, while we are very keen to look after the interests of the consumers, the truck-drivers and also of the industry which may close down ultimately and will not benefit either the consumer or the industry, we are willing to strike a balance between the two. Supposing the cost of steel goes up or the cost of copper and aluminium which go into the manufacture of trucks, goes up or the cost of ancillaries goes up or the wages go up and taxes go up. Subject to these limitations, a revision in prices may become inevitable. But we are keen to see that the interests of the consumers in getting their vehicles are safeguarded.

SHRI HARSH DEO MALAVIYA: Sir. . :

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Malaviya, other members have also got a right.

SHRI HARSH DEO MALAVIYA: Sir, a clarification. . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: No clarification.

SHRI HARSH DEO MALAVIYA: Sir, I want a clarification. 25 per cent of the...

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, Mr. Malaviya, under the name of clarification you are asking another question. I don't permit it.

SHRI S. S. MARISWAMY: I would like to know from the hon. Minister what is the pricing policy regarding the com-

mercial vehicles? As the whole system of distribution, purchasing power or capacity of the people depends upon the pricing policy, I would like to know what is the pricing policy of the Government. Also I want to know whether we have reached the optimum capacity in the production of commercial vehicles. If not, what are the constraints?

SHRI T. A. PAI: So far as TELCO and Ashok Leyland, the principal manufacturers of these trucks, are concerned, they have reached the maximum level and we have allowed them to expand, Telco from 24,000 to 36,000 and Ashok Leyland from 5,500 to 10,000. As I said the licensed capacity in the past both of Hindustan as well as the Premier was taken as availability but unfortunately it has proved to be otherwise because both these two units which should have produced 30,000 units are manufacturing hardly 8,000. The actual availability out of the three units is 24,000 from TELCO, 5,500 from Ashok Leyland and 8,000 from these two units, but the preference is particularly for the TELCO and Ashok Leyland vehicles for which the registration is continuously higher than for other type of vehicles. Therefore the availability also does not mean that the requirements of the community are met if the preference is only for a particular type of vehicle. That is the reason why both these units have been allowed to increase their capacity and in the case of Premier as well as Hindustan we are trying to see why their trucks should not be acceptable to the public with the necessary improvements effected because we have already invested a lot in these factories and we cannot allow them to remain idle. So far as the other type of vehicles below 3-tonners are concerned we have already a licensed capacity of 1,04,000 which is expected to go into production during the Fifth Five Year Plan. Whatever we may do, ultimately it is increased production or increased availability alone that can remove the constraints that we have. It is true that compared to five years ago the prices have almost doubled of commercial vehicles; it is also true that the prices of all the raw materials have doubled and I really sympathise with those who

want to go in for these at higher prices along with the increased price of diesel and also the taxes which have gone up too.

SHRI S. S. MARISWAMY: I asked what are the constraints that stand in the way.

SHRI T. A. PAI: As far as constraints are concerned, in the case of Premier they require engines for their entire production and we are trying to see that they are made available with the expansion of the Simpson unit. In the case of Hindustan Motors they require a completely new design and their proposal to increase their production to 15,000 with this new design is being looked into.

SHRI G. C. TOTU: Is it a fact that (a) the Tata Mercedes are selling at a premium, (b) the manufacturers of Tata I Mercedes have asked LOT an expansion to 35,000 trucks a year and (c) by refusing that expansion programme Government is helping the Premium?

SHRI T. A. PAI: (a) and (b) I have already answered; as for (c) we have already licensed them to expand.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: All the allegations are because of shortage of production in the country. Specially it seems to me the requirement is to the extent of 1,10,000 and the shortage particularly of Mercedes and Ashok Leyland vehicles—that type of vehicles of 10-tonners and above—is about 46,000 in the Fifth Plan. I want to know from the Minister whether to bridge the gap of 46,000 units new capacity will be created or you will sit on the old idea of utilising the capacity which has already been licensed but which is not saleable due to any deficiency whatever it may be. In this connection I also want to know whether there is a proposal that the General Motors of USA are going to collaborate with Hindustan Motors and if so whether the Government has taken any decision on that. So I have asked two specific questions one is whether. . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now Mr. Kulkarni, should you have said that you have asked so many questions? I expect hon. Members should not take time unnecessarily.

SHRI T. A. PAI: With regard to the first question of the hon. Member the House will agree that if it is possible with a little investment immediate production and larger production can be ensured the present capacity should not be ignored. Whatever problems are there in making use of that capacity, those problems should be solved and I can assure the House that every step is being taken to see that the shortages are removed because even there has been a public sector project going into commercial vehicles production particularly in order to remove shortages in 10 tonnes and above vehicles.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: What about the General Motors?

SHRI T. A. PAI: I was explaining to you the problem faced by the Hindustan Motors in making their Bedford vehicles easily saleable. Therefore, they have sought the help of General Motors to improve the design and also get a commitment to export Rs. 7 crores worth every year for a period of ten years in order to sustain this investment. The matter is under the consideration of Government.

SHRI K. N. DHULAP: Now, it is found that the State Road Transport Corporations in different States are the bulk consumers of the commercial vehicles but they cannot pay on money. May I know whether any arrangement has been made by the Government to provide them with chassis, so that they can run their services efficiently?

SHRI T. A. PAI: The manufacturers . . . at the instance of our Ministry, have been confining themselves to the manufacture of chassis for buses in the last three months for the various Transport Corporations, but unfortunately some of them were not ready with cash to pay when they were offered. So, I feel they have to organise themselves in order to pick them up when they are made available.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Last question.

SHRI B. P. NAGARAJA MURTHY: May I know whether there is a direction from the Government of India that Ambassador, Fiat and Standard vans should be

registered as commercial vehicles, if they are not used for private purposes?

SHRI T. A. PAI: I do not think we have given any instructions, but some of the State Governments have been doing it on their own. There has been a suggestion that they should be allowed to be run as private vehicles and the matter will receive our attention.

Pak propaganda against India

*242. SHRI N. R. CHOUDHURY:†

SHRI SARDAR AMJAD ALI: SHRI HARSH DEO MALAVIYA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the Pakistan Radio and Press reports on the eve of the tripartite talks in New Delhi to the effect that India was standing in the way of normalisation of relations between Bangladesh and Pakistan; and

(b) if so, what is the reaction of the Government of India thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH): (a) and (b) Government had seen reports to this effect in the Pakistan press. However, this kind of speculation was quite contrary to facts. India's desire to bring about normalisation of relations among the three countries of the sub-continent is well known. The successful conclusion of the tripartite meeting between Bangladesh, India and Pakistan is evidence of the sincerity of India's efforts.

SHRI N. R. CHOUDHURY: In view of the fact that even after the repatriation of POWs the attitude of Pakistan towards India has undergone little change and this is quite evident from its stand on Diego Garcia. . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you going to put the question?

SHRI N. R. CHOUDHURY: Pakistan does not favour the stand of the Government of India on Diego Garcia. When India wants to keep the Indian Ocean a zone of peace, Pakistan, favouring the base at Diego Garcia, wants that it should be a zone of confrontation. The policy of Pakistan. . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, you are repeating.

SHRI N. R. CHOUDHURY: In view of the policy of confrontation, which Pakistan has not changed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: What is your question?

SHRI N. R. CHOUDHURY: What is the expectation of the Government of India regarding the normalisation of relations among the three countries in the subcontinent?

SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH: There are many international issues over which India and Pakistan do not see eye to eye. It is not necessary that they should do so. With regard to bilateral matters, as the House is already aware, our relations have improved considerably and at the end of the tripartite talks there was a joint communique issued in which both India and Pakistan expressed their desire to exchange delegations to discuss matters regarding normalisation of relations. So, it is not correct for the hon. Member to say that Pakistan has changed its attitude or it is bent upon following a policy of confrontation.

SHRI HARSH DEO MALAVIYA: In the editorial of the Patriot of yesterday—I do not know whether the hon. Minister has seen it—there is a reference that Mr. Bhutto has been telling his people that by his cleverness and wisdom and diplomatic skill, he has induced India to part with all the land and release all the prisoners. But the official journal of Mr. Bhutto's party, Mussawat, has been hammering out the point that India is very busy creating differences between Bangla Desh and Pakistan, and the anti-Indian attitude of the

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri N. R. Choudhury.