

Indo-Soviet Relations

431. SHRI A. G. KULKARNI:

• SHRI KALI MUKHERJEE:

SHRI GURMUKH SINGH
MUSAFIR:

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR:

SHRI NIREN GHOSH:

SHRI J. S. TILAK:

SHRI KRISHAN KANT:

SHRI SANAT KUMAR RAHA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any follow-up action has been taken in pursuance of the Indo-Soviet Joint Communiqué issued at the end of Mr. Brezhnev's recent visit to India; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir. In pursuance of the Joint Indo-Soviet Declaration of November 29, 1973, the Government of India and the Government of the USSR have been engaged in implementing the various decisions taken on strengthening economic and technological cooperation between the two countries.

(b) This cooperation will be in the expansion of existing industrial projects built earlier with the assistance of the USSR and in the construction of new industrial enterprises in the fields of ferrous and non-ferrous metallurgy, geological prospecting, in the field of petro-chemicals and other branches of industry, in agriculture as well as in training of technical personnel. Concrete steps are also being taken to expand Indo-Soviet trade. A protocol has been concluded during the visit of the Soviet Minister for Coal Industry in December 1973 for the development of various coal mines in India. Another Protocol was concluded during the visit of the Soviet Minister for Oil Industry, the next month, under which the Soviet Union will assist India to exploit new oil and gas bearing structures.

Under the Indo-Soviet Trade Protocol of 1974, concluded on January 22, 1974, bilateral trade between the two countries will increase by 55% over the 1973 level and will be of the value of Rs. 670 crores. The Soviet Union will supply increased quantities of such essential commodities as kerosene, fertilisers, machinery and components, industrial raw materials etc., while Indian exports of traditional and non-traditional goods will be increased correspondingly.

Kedla-Jharkand Group of Mines

432. SHRI KALYAN ROY: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) the rate of production in the Kedla-Jharkand group of mines prior to take over and during the last three-months; and

(b) what steps have been taken to improve the production in the mines and re-employ the 6000 workers who lost their jobs as a result of take over?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI SUBODH HANSDA): (a) and (b) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Payment of compensation to Indians by Burma

433. SHRIMATI KUMUDBEN MANISHANKER JOSHI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government of Burma have announced that compensation would be paid to persons of Indian origin whose properties were nationalised in 1963 and 1965;

(b) if so, the details thereof, and.

(c) whether compensation would be paid in the Burmese currency or in the Indian currency?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH): (a) On December 6, 1973, the Burmese Government issued a Notification providing for compensation in respect of the national and foreign-owned enterprises nationalised under the Burmese Nationalisation Law 1963 and the Socialist Economic System Establishment Law 1965.

(b) According to the Notification compensation will be paid for buildings (which are being used by the Government) machinery, furniture, office fittings, vehicles and other commodities nationalised. In respect of the buildings which are not being used by the Government, legal ownership title will be returned to the owners. Similarly, cash and bank balances nationalised will be refunded to the Compensation not exceeding Kyats 10,000 will be paid in lump-sum. In respect of the compensation exceeding Kyats 10,000, a sum of Kyats 10,000 will be paid as the first instalment and the balance will be given in the form of Government Security Bonds which will bear interest. Owners of business nationalised will have to apply in a prescribed form within 90 days of the issue of this Notification.

(c) There is no mention about this in the Notification and this matter will be taken up as necessary.

Medical and housing facilities to Coal Mine Workers

434. SHRI KALYAN ROY: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) the steps taken so far to improve the medical and housing facilities to the workers in coal mines since their take-over; and

(b) the number of quarters which have been constructed by the Coal Mines Authority and at which places?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI SUBODH HANSDA): (a) and (b) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Excise duty on coal in Delhi

435. SHRIMATI KUMUDBEN MANI-SHANKER JOSHI: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether excise duty on coal in Delhi has recently been increased; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the number of times such increase was allowed during 1972-73?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI SUBODH HANSDA): (a) and (b) There has been no increase in the rates of excise duty on coal since October, 1968. It may be mentioned that the excise duty on coal is being levied by the Central Government (not by State Governments or Local Administration) under the Coal Mines (Conservation, Safety and Development) Act, 1952 and the rates are not fixed destination-wise. Therefore, there is no separate rate of this excise duty for or in Delhi.

Coal Shortage in Delhi

436. SHRI SHYAMLAL GUPTA:

DR. K. MATHEW KURIAN:

Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there has been an acute shortage of coal in Delhi for the last six months;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the remedial measure taken by Government to meet the shortage?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI SUBODH HANSDA): (a) to (c) The coal production during 1973 has been more than in any previous year. In recent months the movement of coal to various consuming centres in the country including Delhi has been affected by staff troubles on the Railways. Owing to increase in the demand of coal, particularly from the power houses and the steel plants which enjoy higher priority for allotment