

Mantri that the industries in West Bengal would be given priority in Defence purchases, provided the products satisfy the quality standards set by the Government. This concession will, however, not be extended to the monopoly houses.

(c) Within the existing framework as far as possible the industries located in West Bengal are being given preference in the award of contracts for defence purchases. In order to make the scope of preference wider, proposals have been framed and are being processed.

FIRE AT DURGAPUR STEEL PLANT

*146 SHRI SASANKASEKHAR SAN-YAL : Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that due to a recent fire in the Durgapur Steel Plant, Cables and Cable drums worth lakhs of rupees were destroyed;

(b) if so, the extent of the loss suffered as result thereof; and

(c) whether Government have made any investigation into the cause of the fire and if so, the result thereof and action taken by Government in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI S. MOHAN KUMAR MANGALAM) : (a) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

(a) On the 4th May 1972, there was a fire in the Durgapur Steel Plant causing damage to Cables and Cable drums.

(b) The total value of the Cables involved in the fire is about Rs. 9 lakhs. The salvage value of the damaged Cables is estimated to be more than Rs. 5 Lakhs. There was damage to the Stores building amounting to about Rs. 3,000.

(c) An enquiry Committee was appointed by the General Manager of the Steel Plant to investigate into the cause of the fire

and recommend remedial measures for future guidance. According to the findings of the Committee the fire could have been caused either by the careless throwing of a burning match stick or a cigarette and causing the dry grass in the area to catch fire or by the burning of straw in the vicinity without awareness of the consequences. The plant are taking action on the various recommendations of the Committee to prevent such incidents in future.

ALLOCATION OF STEEL

*147. SHRI A. G. KULKARNI :
SHRI V. R. PARASHAR :
SHRI S. B. BOBDEY :

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

(a) the quantity of steel allocated to different State Directorates of Industries or Corporations in the year, 1970-71;

(b) the percentage of allocation out of total production of steel to organised sector and small scale sector, and

(c) whether Government are aware of the discrimination in quantity and price of steel made available to Small Scale Sector.

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI S. MOHAN KUMAR MANGALAM) : (a) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

(a) Quantities of Steel allocated to different State Directors of Industries and State Small Scale Industries Corporations during October, 1970 to September, 1971 are 84,373 tonnes and 1,00,182 tonnes respectively.

(b) Percentages of allocation to State Directors of Industries and State Small Scale Industries Corporations on total allocations are 5.20% and 6.25% respectively. As against this 11.45%, the S.P.C. allocation to D.G.T.D. units came to 6.82%.

(c) So far as allotment is concerned, it is not correct that there has been any discrimination. As regards prices, supplies of steel to the small scale sector are now made

through the various State Small Scale Industries Corporations, who charge some service charges and include the same in the prices of steel materials released by these Corporations. This resulted in the price for such units being a little higher than for those getting steel direct from the Steel Plants. Presumably, the Hon'ble Member is referring to this. The question of supplying steel materials to the small scale sector at the same rates, as applicable to the despatches made from the Steel Plants direct, is receiving the attention of Government.

PERSONS WORKING IN REHABILITATION
INDUSTRIES CORPORATION, CALCUTTA
ON RS. 40 PER MONTH

*148 SHRI SARDAR AMJAD ALI :
SHRI K. B. CHETTRI :
DR. R. K. CHAKRABARTI :

Will the Minister of LABOUR AND REHABILITATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware that there are persons employed in the Rehabilitation Industries Corporation, Calcutta on a monthly wage of Rs. 40; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND REHABILITATION (SHRI R. K. KHADILKAR) : (a) No, Sir. There are no persons employed in the Rehabilitation Industries Corporation, Calcutta, on a monthly wage of Rs. 40

(b) Does not arise.

SINO INDIAN RELATIONS

*149. SHRI PRANAB KUMAR
MUKHERJEE :
SHRI VENIGALLA SATYA-
NARAYANA :

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether any fresh attempt has been made by Government to improve relationship between India and China; and

(b) if so what are the results thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SARDAR SWARAN SINGH) :

(a) and (b) The Government of India have always desired normalisation of relations with China. However, the Government is still awaiting a response from China to the moves already made by us.

MUNICH MASSACRE

*150. SHRI THILLAI VILLALAN :
SHRI K. A. KRISHNASWAMY :
SHRI SHYAMLAL GUPTA :

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have taken any steps to lodge a protest against Arab guerrillas attack on the Israelis sports group at Munich and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH) : (a) and (b) Government have not lodged any formal protest in this matter, but they have condemned the act of terrorism at Munich. The Prime Minister stated that the shocking and senseless violence could not but be condemned in the strongest terms and that such a dastardly act of hatred could never solve any problem. Shri Ram Niwas Mirdha, Minister in the Ministry of Home Affairs, who was representing the Government of India at the Munich Games as well as the Chief of the Indian Contingent condemned the attack on the members of the Israeli team. The Official Spokesman of the Ministry of External Affairs also made a statement which said, *inter alia*, "India's support for the Arab cause is well known as we believe that justice is on their side. A vast majority of the nations of the world also support the Arab cause including the legitimate rights of the Palestinians. Terrorist activities of this type are deplorable and damage the very cause which is sought to be advanced."