

France regarding the Indo-French Commercial development programme;

(c) if so, the details of the protocol; and

(d) whether it would result in increased trade between India and France; if so, to what extent ?

THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN TRADE (SHRI L.N. MISHRA) : (a) to (d) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

(a) India's total exports to France during the last three years were Rs.19.90 crores Rs. 21.71 crores and Rs. 17.98 crores during 1968-69, 1969-70 and 1970-71 respectively.

(b) to (d) No separate protocol has recently been signed between India and France regarding Indo-French Commercial Development Programme. However, the protocol which was signed on 24.3.1972 following the meeting of Indo-French Joint Commission covered this subject among others. The French Government were favourably inclined in principle to the action envisaged under the Commercial Development Programme which aims at diversification and expansion of trade exchange between the two countries. The representatives of the both the Governments will hold further consultation with a view to working out the full details of this Programme and identifying ways and means of implementing the same. Copies of the Protocol have already been placed in the Parliament Library.

COMMON STRATEGY FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AT THIRD SESSION OF UNCTAD

*323. SHRI K.L.N. PRASAD : Will the Minister of FOREIGN TRADE be pleased to state :

(a) whether India had taken any initiative in involving a common strategy for developing countries at the U.N. Conference on Trade and Development held at Santiago (Chile); and

(b) what is the extent of success achieved in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN TRADE (SHRI L.N. MISHRA) : (a) and (b) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

The common strategy of developing countries for the third session of the U.N. Conference on Trade and Development held in Santiago (Chile) was evolved at the Ministerial meeting of the Group of '77' held in Lima in November, 1971. This is embodied in the document 'Declaration and Principles of the Action Programme of Lima' adopted at the Meeting. A copy of this document was laid on the Table of the House on November 23, 1971. India subscribed to the common position of the Group of '77'

RAILWAYS CATERING SERVICES

441. SHRI SANAT KUMAR RAHA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the rates charged from passengers by the Railways Catering Services in different sections of the Railways are uniform;

(b) what has been the percentage of increase in the rates from 1970 to date; and

(c) whether Government have received any complaints from the passengers regarding enhancement of the rates ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MOHD. SHAFI QURESHI) : (a) The rates of the main items of food and beverages, *i.e.* full meals vegetarian and non-vegetarian and breakfast. Lunch and Dinner and tea and coffee have been standardised on all India basis, excepting the rates of tea, coffee and meals sold in Metropolitan cities of Bombay, Calcutta, Madras and Delhi, which are to be fixed by the Railway Administrations concerned. The prices of other edibles, which are fixed by the individual Railway Administrations are uniform over each division.

(b) Ever since the increase made in December 1970 in respect of full meals, vegetarian and non-vegetarian and Western style breakfast, Lunch and Dinner, no increase in the prices has been made so far. There has been increase in respect of other edibles ranging from 4 to 50 per cent.

(c) A few complaints about enhancement of rates have been received.

CONTRACT LABOUR IN RAILWAYS

442. SHRI N.H. KUMBHARE : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the type of work in the railways which is done through contract labour;

(b) what is the number of such contract labourers employed in the various Zonal Railways throughout the country at present and what is the number of the contracts in this regard;

(c) what is the nature of the contracts and terms thereof; and

(d) whether the railways exercise any control over the contractors to ensure reasonable wages and better conditions of employment for the contract labour ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MOHD. SHAFI QURESHI) : (a) Contractors are generally engaged by Railways for the execution of the undermentioned types of works :

(i) goods/parcels handling;

(ii) coal and ash handling/cinder picking;

(iii) engineering works involving large scale construction;

(iv) removal of cinder residue, rubbish etc. from workshops;

(v) conservancy items of work; and

(vi) such other ad-hoc types of work which may be found necessary.

(b) The information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the Sabha.

(c) and (d) The contracts entered into by Railways with contractors for execution of railway works are for a specified duration such as on yearly basis, three yearly basis as the case may be, or in accordance with the size and magnitude of works involved. The general conditions of contract provide for contractors to pay fair wages to their labour and for compliance with all labour laws connected with welfare of labourers and which include the Payment of Wages Act, 1936, to Workmen's Compensation Act, 1923, the Minimum Wages Act, 1948 etc. With the enforcement of the Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1970 with effect from 10.2.1971 the Railway Administrations have been advised to take steps to comply with the various provisions of this Act and the Rules framed thereunder by the Central Government and which include payment of reasonable wages to labourers by contractors.

OIL EXPLORATION BY ONGC IN TAMIL NADU

443. SHRI V.V. SWAMINATHAN : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS be pleased to state :

(a) the basis on which the drilling operations are undertaken by the Oil and Natural Gas Commission for exploring the presence of oil/gas in any area; and

(b) whether there is any proposal to intensify the drilling operations in Tamil Nadu to locate oil/gas deposits in that State ?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE AND PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI H.R. GOKHALE) : (a) Drilling operations are undertaken by Oil and Natural Gas Commission on the basis of the results obtained by geological and geophysical surveys.

(b) No, Sir. However, the exploratory drilling operations using one deep drilling rig, will be continued.

VILLAGES ELECTRIFIED IN MAHARASHTRA

444. SHRI G.R. PAṬIL : Will the Minister of IRRIGATION AND POWER be pleased to state :