

(c) In order to meet the demand on a long term basis, additional capacity to the extent of 2,51,000 tonnes per annum has been licensed/ approved for implementation during the Fourth/Fifth Plan periods.

(d) The quantity and value of the aluminium imported during the last three years were as under :

Year	Quantity (in tonnes)	Value (Rs. in thousand)
1969-70	2,519	15,088
1970-71	6,387	33,512
1971-72 (up to November, 1971)	19,700	82,952

CHIEF SETTLEMENT COMMISSIONER'S ORGANISATION

*429. SHRI SURAJ PRASAD : Will the Minister of LABOUR AND REHABILITATION be pleased to state whether it is a fact that permanent official declared surplus in one regional office and re-employed in another regional office of the Settlement Organisation in the same grade, have been treated as temporary and fresh employees; and if so, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND REHABILITATION (SHRI R. K. KHADILKAR) : Yes, Sir, In one case of a Section Officer employed in the Regional Settlement Commissioner's Office in Jullundur, the post held by him was declared surplus on the impending closure of the office and his name was forwarded for re-deployment to the Central Surplus Cell maintained by the Department of Personnel. The Surplus Cell nominated him to a similar but temporary post which had fallen vacant in the Regional Settlement Commissioner's Office in Delhi. As this post was temporary, benefit of his previous permanent appointment could not be given to him under the rules.

The rules of Surplus Cell provide that if a permanent employee declared surplus is appointed to a temporary post through them, the lien on his permanent post will be deemed to be terminated and thenceforward he would be treated as temporary employee in the new Department, if the post to which he is appointed is only temporary.

SECRET TALKS BETWEEN PAKISTAN AND BANGLADESH

*430. SHRI GANESHI LAL CHAUDHARY : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware that the emissaries of Pakistan and Bangladesh met secretly twice in Burma and Ceylon last month; and

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

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SARDAR SWARAN SINGH) : (a) The Government of Bangladesh has categorically denied that meetings of emissaries between Pakistan and Bangladesh have taken place in Burma or Ceylon.

(b) Does not arise.

ISSUE REGARDING THE HIJACKED INDIAN PLANE IN U. N. O.

*431. SHRI INDER SINGH : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the issue regarding the hijacked Indian plane to Pakistan was raised in the last Session of the U. N. O.; and

(b) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) The Government of India feel that bilateral issues between India and Pakistan should be resolved through direct negotiations between the parties.

PRIME MINISTER'S LETTER TO HEADS OF ARAB COUNTRIES

*434. SHRI BEZAWADA PAPI REDDI : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that recently the Prime Minister addressed letters to the head of various Arab countries explaining India's stand on Bangladesh issue ; and

(b) if so, how many Arab countries replied to the said communication and if so, what are the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SARDAR SWARAN SINGH) : (a) and (b) Between May 13 to December 10, 1971, Prime Minister addressed communications to Heads of Govt. of a large number of countries including, of course, those in West Asia and North Africa with the object of keeping them informed on the evolution of the grave situation which developed as a result of the military action by the Pakistani military junta on March 25, 1971 and thereafter. Replies to these communications were received from time to time either directly or through diplomatic channels. The honourable Member will appreciate that it is not customary to disclose these communications without mutual consent of the parties concerned. However, it may be stated that a reply to Prime Minister's communication of December 5, 1971 from one of the countries in North Africa was of a kind and character which contained an obviously distorted interpretation of events.

PLATINUM DEPOSITS NEAR NAGPUR

*435. MISS SAROJ PURUSHOTTAM KHAPARDE : Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Palatinum deposits have been found near Nagpur during the excavation studies by the Nagpur University ; and

(b) whether Government have made any further effort to assess the nature of deposits and the workability of the ore as to whether it could be mined economically?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI S. MOHAN KUMARAMANGALAM) :

(a) and (b) Large deposits of platinum were reported to have been discovered in Bhandara district, Maharashtra by a Nagpur University Team in 1971. On receipt of this report, the Geological Survey of India undertook geological studies of the area and collected samples to test incidence of platinum in the rocks. The data so far available from these samples indicate only traces of platinum, which are irregularly and sparingly disseminated in the rocks. Further work by the Geological Survey of India is in progress. It will be too premature to comment on its economic viability.

*436. [Transferred to the 29th May, 1972.]

†SETTING UP OF BASES BY FOREIGN POWERS IN INDIAN OCEAN

*479. SHRI K. L. N. PRASAD : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government of India had protested to France and the United Kingdom regarding the proposal by those countries for the setting up of a base at Madagaskar in the Indian Ocean ;

(b) whether it is a fact that all the big powers have of late been concentrating their efforts for the setting up of bases in the Indian Ocean ; and

(c) whether Government have requested the United Nations to impress on the big powers to keep away from the Indian Ocean ; if so, with what results ?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SARDAR SWARAN SINGH) : (a) Government are not aware of any such proposal. The question of a protest, therefore, does arise.

(b) Some Naval powers are engaged in establishing bases in the Indian Ocean.

(c) Government co-sponsored the U.N.G.A. Resolution No. 2832 (XXVI) of December 16, 1971 calling upon the great powers to eliminate any manifestation of their military presence in the Indian Ocean conceived in the context of great power rivalry. Government will cooperate in the U. N. context for implementation of the Resolution.

680. [Transferred to the 29th May, 1972.]

VALUE OF PURCHASE OF KHADI ITEMS

681. SHRI G. R. PATIL : Will the Minister of SUPPLY be pleased to state :

(a) the value of purchase of Khadi items from the Khadi and Village Industries Commission during the period 1970 to March, 1972 ;

(b) whether it is a fact that the quantum of purchase of Khadi items has declined during the last three years ; and

(c) if so, the reasons thereof ; and the steps taken by Government in this regard ?

†Transferred from the 30th May, 1972.