

SHRI KALYAN ROY : I hope he will agree that one of the reason i for the delay was the failure of the private sector to supply the fine bricks at the proper time and it was reported that there was a fire burning many amounting to several crores. May I know whether cause of the fire has been investigated and whether the people responsible for that fire have been brought to books ?

SHRI S. MOHAN KUMARA-MANGALAM : Part of the reason for the delay is due to the failure of refractories to supply bricks according to the schedule.

SHRI KALYAN ROY : I asked a simple question. The fire bricks amounting to several crores was burnt down. Were investigations made and, if so, who are responsible for it ?

SHRI S. MOHAN KUMARA-MANGALAM: There has been no delay as a result of the fire.

श्री ओमप्रकाश त्यागी : अध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं मिनिस्टर महोदय से जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या यह सच है कि वहाँ के मजदूरों की यूनियन्स ने गो-स्लो स्ट्राइक किया हुआ है अपनी कुछ मांगों के कारण, और उस स्ट्राइक के कारण जो लक्ष्य निर्धारित हुए हैं वोकारों प्लांट के उस में देरी होने की सम्भावना है ? यदि यह सच है तो मजदूरों की मांगें क्या हैं और उनकी पूर्ति के लिए सरकार क्या प्रयत्न कर रही है ताकि निर्धारित लक्ष्य पर कार्य शुरू किया जा सके ?

SHRI S. MOHAN KUMARAMANGALAM : No doubt some delay is being caused even now due to the demand put forward by certain section of the workers particularly in the refractory area of the blast furnace and coke over zone. Their demands are in relation to past non-payment according to their allegation, by their former employers, namely, the Bhilai Construction Company, whose contract has been terminated by Bokaro Steel, the work having been handed over to the H.S.C. Ltd. They have been opposing also the recruit-

ment of new hands on the ground that they should be given preference in certain higher jobs. They have also been asking for refixation of their designations and rates. We are taking whatever action is open to us both in terms of disciplinary action and also in terms of getting the assistance of the Labour Conciliation Authorities to solve this problem.

इस्पात का आयात

*588. डा० भाई महावीर :

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर :

श्री दत्तोवंत ठेंगड़ी :

श्री लाल आडवाणी :

श्री ना० कु० शेजवलकर :

श्री प्रेम मनोहर :

श्री जगदम्बी प्रसाद यादव :

क्या इस्पात और खान मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या हिन्दुस्तान स्टील लिमिटेड और मिनरल्स एण्ड पेट्रल्स ट्रेडिंग कारपोरेशन लिमिटेड द्वारा बड़े पैमाने पर इस्पात का आयात करने की कोई योजना है;

(ख) यदि हाँ, तो इतने बड़े पैमाने पर इस्पात का आयात किये जाने के क्या कारण हैं और तत्सम्बन्धी व्यौरा क्या है; और

(ग) इस आयात किये गये इस्पात के वितरण के लिए किस कसौटी से काम लिया जायेगा ?

IMPORT OF STEEL

*588. DR. BHAI MAHAVIR :
SHRI JAGDISH PRASAD
MATHUR : SHRI D.
THENGARI : SHRI LAL K,
ADVANI : SHRI N. K.
SHEJWALKAR : SHRI PREM
MANOHAR : SHRI J.P. YADAV

Will the Minister of STEEL AND

The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Dr. Bhai Mahavir. ft]
English translation.

MINES, be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any scheme for the large scale import of steel by the Hindustan Steel Ltd. and the Minerals and Metals Trading Corporation Ltd;

(b) if so, what are the reasons for the import

(c) what will be the criterion to be followed for the distribution of this imported steel ?]

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

STATEMENT

Import of steel by Hindustan Steel Limited and the Minerals and Metals Trading Corporation Limited)

(a) and (b) Both HSL and MMTC import steel as canalising agencies in accordance with the Import Trade Control Policy. HSL also imports certain non canalised items of steel in bulk from time to time, to meet the requirements of certain Government Departments, Public sector undertakings, small scale industries, export engineering industries etc. In addition, in 1971-72, HSL was entrusted with the import of steel worth Rs. 20 crores to meet the shortfall in production at Rourkela Steel Plant due to the roof collapse of the Steel Melting Shop.

In future HSL will also be importing certain categories of steel for operating the Steel Bank recently set up by Government.

The imports have been necessitated mainly due to the non-availability and/or inadequate availability of certain categories of steel indigenously. Items which are allowed to be imported are listed in the Import Trade Control Policy.

(c) In the case of canalised items the imported materials are distributed to the

Actual Users against the release orders issued by Chief Controller of Imports and Exports. As regards *ad-hoc* billets imported by the MMTC, these are pooled along with billets available indigenously and distributed amongst the registered Billet Re-rollers by the Billet Re-rollers Committee. The material imported by HSL for meeting the shortfall of production at Rourkela Steel Plant is being distributed to priority indentors whose demands are sponsored to the Steel Priority Committee.

details in respect thereof; and

The material from the Steel Bank will be supplied to priority users against surrender of import licences/release orders which will be issued to the Actual Users by the Chief Controller of Imports and Exports.

†इस्पात और खान मंत्रो (श्री एस० मोहन मोहन कुमारमंगलम) : (क) से (ग). एक विवरण सभा-पटल पर रख दिया गया है।

हिन्दुस्तान स्टील लि० तथा मिनरल्स एण्ड मेटल ट्रेडिंग कारपोरेशन लि० द्वारा इस्पात का आयात

(क) और (ख) आयात व्यापार नीति के अनुसार इस्पात का आयात हिन्दुस्तान स्टील लि० तथा मिनरल्स एण्ड मेटल्स ट्रेडिंग कारपोरेशन लि० के माध्यम से किया जाता है। हिन्दुस्तान स्टील लि० कुछ सरकारी विभागों, सरकारी उपक्रमों, लघु उद्योगों, इंजीनियरी का सामान निर्यात करने वाले उद्योगों आदि की इस्पात की नान-केनेलाइड श्रेणियों की आवश्यकताओं की पूर्ति के लिए समय-समय पर इन श्रेणियों का थोक आयात भी करती हैं। इसके अतिरिक्त 1971-72 में हिन्दुस्तान स्टील लि० को राउरकेला इस्पात कारखाने की स्टील मेल्टिंग शाप की छत गिर जाने के कारण उत्पादन में हुई कमी की पूर्ति के लिए 20 करोड़ रुपये के मूल्य के इस्पात के आयात का काम भी सौंपा गया था।

सरकार द्वारा हाल में खोले गये इस्पात बैंक को चलाने के लिए भी हिन्दुस्तान स्टील

†[] Hindi translation.

लि० भविष्य में इस्पात की कुछ श्रेणियों का आयात करेगी आयात की आवश्यकता मुख्यतः इसलिए पड़ी है क्योंकि कुछ प्रकार का इस्पात देश में या तो उपलब्ध नहीं हैं और या कम मात्रा में उपलब्ध है। जिन किस्मों के इस्पात के आयात की अनुमति दी गई है उनकी सूची आयात व्यापार नियंत्रण नीति में दी गई है।

(ग) केनेलाइज्ड श्रेणियों के बारे में आयात किया गया माल वास्तविक उपभोक्ताओं को मुख्य नियंत्रक, आयात और निर्यात द्वारा जारी किए गये रिलीज आर्डरों पर दिया जाता है। जहाँ तक मिनेरल्स एण्ड मेटल्स ट्रेडिंग कारपोरेशन लि० द्वारा तदर्थ आधार पर आयात किये गये बिलेटों का प्रश्न है, इन बिलेटों को देश में उपलब्ध बिलेटों के साथ मिला दिया जाता है और फिर उन्हें बिलेट रीरोलर कम्पनी द्वारा राजिस्टर्ड बिलेट रीरोलरों में बांट दिया जाता है।

हिन्दुस्तान स्टील लि० द्वारा राउरकेला इस्पात कारखाने में उत्पादन की कमी को पूरा करने के लिए आयात किया गया माल, प्राथमिकता प्राप्त उन मांग कर्ताओं को दिया जा रहा है जिनकी मांग इस्पात प्राथमिकता समिति के पास भेजी जाती है।

इस्पात बैंक से प्राथमिकता प्राप्त उपभोक्ताओं को माल सप्लाई किया जायेगा। माल की सप्लाई मुख्य नियंत्रक, आयात और निर्यात द्वारा वास्तविक उपभोक्ताओं को जारी किए गये आयात लाइसेन्सों। रिलीज आर्डरों को प्रस्तुत करने पर की जायेगी।

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR : If the purpose of permitting the HSL to enter the import business of steel is to enable it to cut down some of the losses it is suffering and if that is so, to what extent the loss has been cut because of this because I have with me the comparative prices of stainless imported from Japan by the MMTC. The Japanese price is Rs. 7075 c.i.f. Bombay whereas the MMTC offers it at Rs. 35,000 per metric tonne. I would like to know if

that is one of the purposes of canalising the import of steel through these institutions and, if so, to what extent the losses have been cut because of this ?

SHRI S. MOHAN KUMARAMANGA-LAM : There are two different sets of importers, one can say, so far as the import of steel is concerned. That amount of steel which is in addition by and hirse to the steel being produced by Hindustan Steel and the integrated steel plants is canalised through the Hindustan Steel and the rest of it is being canalised through the Minerals and Metals Trading Corporation. The reason is that since Hindustan Steel is already dealing in, these particular items it is in a better position to help and advise the Government on the manner in which steel should be imported. The purpose is not to try and lessen the losses or increase the profits but from the point of view of better and more efficient import of steel. So far as the prices are concerned, there is no doubt a substantial difference in prices due to a number of reasons which I think it is not necessary to go into that here but certainly no great profit is being made as a result of this import.

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR : I asked him about the figures. Rs. 7075/- is the Japanese price and Rs. 35,000/- is the price here per metric tonne. Does he consider this to be a reasonable or desirable margin of profit ?

SHRI S. MOHAN KUMARAMANGA-LAM : If the hon. Member wishes me to check on the figures he may kindly put a separate question in relation to each different item and I shall give him the information.

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR : Need I put a separate question ? Now that I have mentioned this, he could certainly look into it and give me the information later on.

Secondly, is the hon. Minister aware that much of the steel that is sold to the so-called consumers through the stockyards here, the so-called consumers not being real consumers mostly and they being mostly resellers, that steel finds its way into the open market or the black market whichever term you may use and the result is that the

actual users get it at exorbitant prices, and these people who are in the favoured list get a huge margin of middle men's earnings ? So I would ask the hon. Minister if he will consider the proposal of offering whatever surplus stocks lie with the stockyards in open sale to all bidders and sell the same to the highest bidder there so that the huge middle men's profits which are going into the pockets of some favoured individuals can be reaped by the stockyards and by the steel industry of the country.

SHRI S. MOHAN KUMARAMANGA-LAM : The canalised material that is imported is distributed to the actual users against release orders issued by the Chief Controller of Imports and Exports and we think that is the proper way by which this distribution should be made.

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR : Sir, I put the question to him that much of the actual users are not users; it is only a euphemistic term given to people who are able to get the permits and resell them.

MR. CHAIRMAN : His point is whether you will consider his proposal to sell it in the open market.

SHRI S. MOHAN KUMARAMANGA-LAM : We are satisfied with the procedure being followed and we think that the effective check is to see that the actual users are given on the basis of release orders issued by the Chief Controller of Imports and Exports. That is a sufficient guarantee about the genuineness of the actual user. Naturally in any system of control there is bound to be certain violations but we think this is the best way to ensure the genuine character of the users.

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR : Sir, this is a very complacent view the hon. Minister is taking. Will he just look into the charge that the so-called actual users are not users at all and can he tell us what is the explanation for the huge quantities being sold in the open market ?

MR. CHAIRMAN : He has answered the question. Mr. Mathur.

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR : Sir, he is getting up; he wants perhaps to supplement the reply.

SHRI S. MOHAN KUMARAMANGA-LAM : Sir, may I answer that ? If the hon. Member gives me any instances of this character I will have them looked into but such general allegations by themselves do not take us very far.

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR : That is the usual thing which you say.

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर : क्या माननीय मंत्री महोदय के विभाग में इस प्रकार की शिकायतें नहीं आई हैं कि स्टील का जिनको कोटा मिलता है वह उसका दुरुपयोग करते हैं और जिस भाव में आप स्टील देते हैं उसमें और ओपन मार्केट में जिस भाव में मिलता है उसमें कोई डिफरेंस आपकी नजर में आया या नहीं आया और इसी सदन में आपके विभाग के जो पिछले मंत्री थे उन्होंने स्वयं स्वीकार किया कि स्टील को इम्पोर्ट करते हैं उसका दुरुपयोग होने की शिकायत आपके पास आई है या नहीं आई है और मार्केट में भाव का अन्तर आपकी नजर में आया या नहीं आया ।

SHRI S. MOHAN KUMARAMANGA-LAM : There have been instances brought to the attention of the Government and action has been taken. I think—I am speaking from memory—58 cases have been referred to us. Some of them—if I am not wrong, 18, have been referred to the Central Bureau of Investigation. Others are being investigated by the local authorities, either the State Government authorities, or the Regional Assistant Iron and Steel Controller. But I would like to assure hon. Members that whenever any instance is brought to our notice, we do take action. Further, the instances are not on such a scale that we should think it right to completely change the POLICY and the procedure for distribution.

SHRI JAGDISH PRASAD MATHUR : Have you cancelled the quotas of those persons against whom complaints have been made ?

क्या जिनको टेम्पररीली सस्पेंड किया उन्होंने को कोटा दे जा रहे हैं ?

MR. CHAIRMAN : Have you anything to add ?

SHRI S. MOHAN KUMARAMANGA :

LAM : Obviously, the fact that a complaint has been made does not mean that it is true. Where it has been established that any complaint has got a basis, then action is taken.

SHRI S. MOHAN KUMARAMANGA-

श्री प्रेम मनोहर : क्या मंत्री महोदय को यह मालूम है कि जो स्टील हिन्दुस्तान स्टील द्वारा बनाया जाता है उसकी एक्यूअल कास्ट 900 रु० और 800 रु० के बीच में है जब कि वह स्टील ओपन मार्केट में 2200 रु० टन पर मिलता है। इतना अंतर होने हुए, और इसके साथ जो स्केल मैनुफैक्चरर्स हैं...

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now this question relates to import of steel.

श्री प्रेम मनोहर : जी हाँ, इम्पोर्ट कर रहा है। आज की जो स्थिति है स्टील की, 900 रु० के हिसाब से आपका बनाया हुआ स्टील मार्केट में 2200 रु० में मिलता है। तो जो स्टील इम्पोर्ट कर रहे हैं उसकी प्राइस क्या रखी है और क्या कोई प्राइस फिक्स किया है कि उस प्राइस को एड करके वह कन्ज्यूमर्स को, स्माल स्केल इन्डस्ट्रीज को मिल सकेगा ?

LAM : Government is aware of the fact that the steel is been sold in the open market at a price, substantially higher than the price at which it should go the legitimate and genuine consumer. May be, depending on the different categories of steel, the difference may be as much as what the hon. Member mentioned, sometimes even more, but I would like to also state that the amount of steel that finds its way into what may be called either the open market or the black market is comparatively limited, because we have got a system of distribution which, by and large, ensures that out of the four million odd tons that we produce in our country, a major part—I would say much more than a major part—95% does go to the actual consumer, because every single person asking for steel has to be sponsored by Proper authority, a

Governmental or a quasi-Governmental authority, and we think that is the best guarantee for the moment, though naturally there are deviations from that.

SHRI PREM MANOHAR : What is the price structure of the imported steel ? At what price is the steel imported, what costs are added to it and at what price is it sold in the market ?

SHRI S. MOHAN KUMARAMANGA-
LAM : That also varies; the price of imported steel varies depending on the particular type of steel. I mean just now, I think it was fixed, Mr. Moha, who mentioned about certain alloy steels which are coming in from Japan at a price of Rs. 7,000/- and which are being sold at a considerably higher price in different places. If the hon. Member will say which particular type of steel he is referring to, I will deal with it.

SHRI S. MOHAN KUMARAMANGA-

श्री जगदम्बी प्रसाद यादव : श्रीमन्, मैं मंत्री महोदय का ध्यान मैंसमें हरियाणा स्माल स्केल इन्डस्ट्रीज कारपोरेशन जो 7000 रु० के बड़े 27,573 रु० टन बेचता है, की ओर डिलाते हुए पूछना चाहता हूँ कि क्या इसको आय वाजिब कीमत समझते हैं जिस पर स्माल स्केल इन्डस्ट्रीज में छोटे छोटे लोगों को दिया जाता है और क्या सरकार ने विचार किया है कि जब हम सभी चीजों में आत्मनिर्भर बनने की कोशिश कर रहे हैं, तो इस मामले में भी आत्मनिर्भर कब तक हो जाएगे ? क्या इस बारे में सरकार की तरफ से कुछ बंदोबस्त हुआ है कि नहीं ?

LAM : The hon. Member will appreciate that the question is in relation to import of steel. Now the hon. Member wishes to have information about what a particular concern in Haryana is doing with steel. If he is referring to any particular type of steel, he may put a separate question and I shall reply it.

SHRI T. N. SINGH : The control and distribution of steel is spread over various agencies. There is the Chief Controller of Imports. There is the Controller of Iron

and Steel with head office at Calcutta. There are various State Controllers who deal with this question. Now, at all these points there are what are called leakages into the black market. At all these points this occurs. It has not been occurring now. It has been occurring for the last so many years. Now, regarding the imports that are given, the imports that are routed hardly any check is kept. I challenge the hon. Minister to prove whether any check is kept on the imported steel. Does he know where it goes and how it goes at various points? It is not checked. With all the experience that we have had now for twenty-five years, unless you streamline the process and see that all these multifarious points are checked in the proper manner, nothing will work, although you may hold an enquiry into the action of the Iron and Steel Corporation.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please put your question.

SHRI T. N. SINGH : Would the Government tell us—this evil has persisted for so many years—how to find a solution to this problem? It is no use saying over and over again that this will not recur and that you will keep an eye on it. That will not satisfy us. Let us know what definite steps you will take for streamlining the whole procedure.

SHRI S. MOHAN KUMARAMANGA-LAM : So far as the system of distribution which today is in force is concerned, it has been in force for twenty-five years. Actually it is a recent innovation. After the recession, when we had, in fact, perhaps even a surplus of steel, this particular system, which I would call a regulated system rather than a system of controlled distribution, was brought into existence because we found that there were some weaknesses in the system. We have appointed Regional Iron and Steel Controllers in the different centres like Madras, Delhi and Bombay, apart.....

SHRI T. N. SINGH : They were there even before.

SHRI S. MOHAN KUMARAMANGA-LAM : ... from the office of the Iron and Steel Controller. They have been given the

responsibility of trying to check these leakages as much as possible. As a result of their activity I think certain steps have been taken which have led to the discovery, for instance, of certain bogus persons who had claimed that they were running rolling mills. They had actually closed down their mills, but they were getting steel and selling it in the open market. It is as a result of appointing these Assistant Regional Iron and Steel Controllers that 58 instances have been brought to light and action has been taken in relation to them. We will intensify it and I hope that will reduce the mischief considerably.

SHRI VEERENDRA PATIL : Is it not a fact that as against the installed capacity of the existing mills of 9 million tonnes actually then are producing 5 million tonnes? If so, what are the steps that have been taken by the Government of India to see that these mills work to full capacity?

SHRI S. MOHAN KUMARAMANGA-LAM : Despite the fact that the question relates only to imports, I will answer this also...

SHRI VEERENDRA PATIL : The question of imports comes because there is a shortage of steel today in the country. So, we have got every right to know why there is shortage of steel today in the country...

MR. CHAIRMAN : He is answering your question.

SHRI VEERENDRA PATIL : I should like to know why the mills are not working to full capacity.

SHRI S. MOHAN KUMARAMANGA-LAM : The House and hon. Members have the right to have information on every question which they ask, but it should also arise out of the question with which I am dealing. Now, Sir, so far as the question of lack of production or low production in the steel plants is concerned, the hon. Member is not entirely correct in his figure, which would give a production level of something like 45 per cent. Actually the production level is somewhere around 67 per cent. Government are aware of the fact that we are not producing up to the available capacity. I would like to explain very briefly,

since the hon. Member has raised it, what we are doing in this regard.

During the last year, our entire maintenance organisation has been tightened up because that has been one of the principal reasons for the fall in or rather for not being able to bring up our steel production to the available installed capacity. And despite the collapse of the steel melting shop roof which hit our steel production hard last year and the fact that we had very serious trouble in the coke ovens in Bhilai, we have been able to register a production in Bhilai which is higher than even before in the history of the Bhilai Steel Plant. And even in the Rourkela Steel Plant during the last two months we have substantially come up to a rate which is somewhere 75 per cent of the rated capacity. The only reason why we have not been able to get higher than that is because of certain troubles so far as electric power is concerned, and if we are able to solve that—that is due to the lack of water in the hydroelectric stations of the Orissa State Electricity Board—we should be able to push forward there. So far as Durgapur is concerned, the hon. Member is aware of the special difficulties which we were facing there. And recently on the initiative taken by the Labour Minister of West Bengal a better climate is being created. I think we can expect substantial improvement there. We have set up certain special capital equipment repair groups in order to be able to improve the coke oven operations which are extremely difficult, both in the private sector and the public sector, and there are so many other steps also which we have taken, and I hope therefore that this year we shall do substantially better.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI : May I know from the hon. Minister whether it is a fact that imported steel is being dumped on the small-scale industries at the cost of the organised industry because the organised big industry is getting the indigenous supply which is cheaper? Imported steel which is costlier is dumped on the small-scale industry. If it is so, may I know whether it will be rectified.

Also, part (b) of my question is : Regarding the supply of steel to the rerollers, an assurance was also given here that the

new comers will be accommodated with the supply of rerollable steel for billets to be supplied to the mofussil sector. Today I know that it is not done. Though the Committee has been reconstituted, the new comers are not accommodated.

SHRIS. MOHAN KUMARAMANGA-LAM : So far as the allegation made by the hon. Member is concerned that there is a policy of dumping of more expensive imported products on the small-scale industrialists, to my knowledge there is no such policy, and if the hon. Member gives me the details of any fact that he has got to show this, I shall certainly have it investigated and try to see that any mistake committed are remedied.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI : Will you enquire?

MR. CHAIRMAN : He is promising.

SHRI S. MOHAN KUMARAMANGA-LAM : Give me fact and it will be useful.

So far as the rerollers are concerned, we are in some difficulties there because the rerolling mills do not have to be licensed now because they usually come within the one crore limit and below one crore anybody can start an industry. The result is that a number of rerolling mills have been set up, and the raw material being limited, we have to distribute it. And the jam gets thinner and thinner as it is spread larger and larger over the board. But we are trying to see that justice is done. Naturally the older rerollers are persons who have got certain priority rights in respect of this and we are trying to discourage now rerollers coming into operation. It is difficult problem to do justice for the actual amount of business which we have got for rerolling is limited. We shall try to be equitable as far as possible.

SHRI CHANDRASHEKHAR : May I know from the Government whether they know that even in the most advanced countries of the world they do not use stainless steel for utensil purposes? In our own country we said that we are not importing stainless steel for making utensils, and they are being used only for manufacturing hospital instruments. But how is it that

stainless utensils are always increasing and are available in large numbers in all the markets of the country ? Has the Government taken this aspect into consideration ? Will the Ministers make a special investigation how these manufacturers got stainless steel which imported only for hospital equipments ?

SHRI S. MOHAN KUMARMANGALAM : I have received allegations and complaints of the diversion of stainless steel imported specifically, as the hon'ble Member himself has said, for the fabrication of hospital equipment to the fabrication of vessels for domestic use. The Government is investigating this and we are trying to take such steps as will make this more and more difficult, if not impossible. *(Some Hon'ble Members stood up in their seats.)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : I cannot call everybody. Please sit down.

SHRI G.A. APPAN : Sir...

MR. CHAIRMAN : You wait for your turn.

DR. K. MATHEW KURIAN : There are some back-benchers also.

MR CHAIRMAN : The back-benchers are interrupting.

SHRI S. CHANDRASEKHARAN : The import of steel even to the little extent that the hon'ble Minister has admitted would mean, Sir, that requirements of *bona fide* industrialists for this import type of steel for *bona fide* reasonable purposes and at reasonable prices would not be met. That is because the Chief Controller of Imports and Exports releases orders on an *ad hoc* ; and arbitrary basis. May I know from the hon'ble Minister what are the criteria followed by the Chief Controller of Imports and Exports for issuing these release orders ?

SHRI S. MOHANKUMAR- MANGALAM : The basic criterion naturally is the non-availability of steel in our country. It may be in relation to, what I would say, the incapacity of the existing domestic industry to supply the steel wanted by the particular group of actual users. That is

the basic consideration. Then we have to take into consideration the priorities, namely the total quantity of steel which we are in a position to import planned from the point of view of resources and the priorities of the actual users. It may be from the point of view of the production that he is producing. It may be from the point of view of the conduction undertaken. But, by and large, we are satisfied with the procedure we are following. It is not leading to many distortions or deviations,

SHRI SWAI SINGH SISODIA : will the hon'ble Minister be able to state whether the steel so imported will be allotted only to the public sector industries or to the private sector industries also, and what will be the estimated expenditure for the imported steel ?

SHRI S. MOHAN KUMARAMANGALAM : I cannot give a guarantee that it will be used only for public sector and not for the private sector industries. We look at it from the point of view of the importance of that particular industry. And whenever it is necessary we give them priority.

Regarding the question about the quantum, that is to say, the quantum of imports, the latest figures for the period April 1 to September 30 are just about Rs. 116 crores worth of steel has been imported. The probable figure for 1971-72 will be around, if not a little more than, Rs. 200 crores.

DR. K. MATHEW KURIAN : The hon'ble Minister stated that the imports have been necessitated mainly due to the non-availability or inadequate availability of certain categories of indigenous steel. Imports of steel are taking place involving heavy expenditure of scarce foreign exchange at a time when we are having unutilised capacity in most of the steel mills under the Hindustan Steel. In view of the Government's tall task of self-reliance I would like to know from the hon'ble Minister whether the Government has prepared any time schedule for reducing and, if so, by what date ?

SHRI S. MOHAN KUMARAMANGALAM : The hon'ble Member will appreciate that the preparation of time schedule for the avoidance of imports is a preparation of a time schedule for increasing

production. I am not in a position to give him any guarantees like this. We hope that if we are to attain our targets this year in production of steel, we will be able very substantially to bring down imports from Rs. 200 crores to perhaps somewhere around Rs. 50 or 60 crores.

SHRI VEREENDRA KUMAR SAK-
LECHA : Mr. Chairman . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN : I will not call you. You interrupt.

SHRI G. A. APPAN : May I know. . .

MR. CHAIRMAN : I have got to see if there is any Member who has not been able to put any question. For those who want to put supplementaries on every question, I cannot allow an opportunity always. Yes, Mr. Appan—last question.

SHRI G. A. APPAN : May I know from the hon. Minister as to when the Government of India will stop the import of steel ? May I also know whether it is not a fact that he has stopped the import of iron and steel for the housing schemes of Madras ? And what is the difference between the prices of various items of imported iron and steel and the prices of comparable items of iron and steel produced indigenously ?

SHRI S. MOHAN KUMARAMANG-
LAM : To my knowledge, the Government of India has been stopped the import of steel into any State, whether it be Tamil Nadu or any other State, except on the application of the same principles and in pursuance of the same policy, namely, where steel is not available in the country, where it is of a priority character, where it is not being manufactured in our country, we do help to see that the imports are made. I am not aware of what the hon. Member is referring to when he says that it has been stopped. So far as the question of relative prices is concerned, if the hon. Member wants information, I will provide it to him.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Next question.

PAYMENT OF BONUS IN COAL MINES

♦589, SHRI KALYAN RAO : Will the Minister of LABOUR AND REHABILITATION be pleased to state :

(a) Whether Government are aware that a large number of employers in coal mines in the Private Sector do not maintain any register under the Bonus Act in order to evade the payment of profit sharing bonus to workers ;

(b) Names of coal mines and managements which have not been maintaining any Bonus Register and refusing to pay Profit Sharing Bonus in 1969, 1970 and 1971 ; and

(c) What steps Government have taken so far or propose to take to compel the managements to maintain proper Registers and make them pay profit sharing bonus to workers and details thereof ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE
MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND REHABILITATION (SHRI BALGOVIND VERMA):

(a) A few cases of this type have come to notice.

(b) Information is being compiled.

(c) Prosecutions are launched against the defaulting employers as and when cases of default come to notice.

SHRI KALYAN ROY : Sir, an intolerable situation has been created. Out of nearly 533 coal mines in the private sector, over 410 coal mines do not keep any registers showing the amount of bonus paid to the workmen. The Minister said "a few collieries", Please give us the names of the "few collieries" which do not keep bonus registers.

SHRI R.K. KHADILKAR : Sir, it is very difficult for me to give the names. But I can give him the figures of cases of non-maintenance of registers. In the Dhanbad region in 1969, it was 33 and in 1970, it was 106 ; then Asansol, 31 and 81 ; Jabalpur 1 and 1 ; and Bhubneswar, 1. These cases of non-maintenance of registers have been detected.