

(b) No Madam.

(c) Does not arise.

INDIAN RAILS, WAGONS AND SIGNAL- LING EQUIPMENT FOR AFRICAN COUNTRIES

647. SARDAR RAM SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that officials from several African countries recently visited India to find out the possibilities of booking orders for Indian rails, wagons, signalling equipments etc.

(b) whether it is a fact that one single factor which is inhibiting the prospects of a good supply to the African countries is the lack of long term credit facilities with the African countries; and

(c) the names of the countries of Africa which have shown interest in buying Indian rail equipments and whether Government could make necessary credit facilities available to them?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (DR. RAM SUBHAG SINGH): (a) to (c) On an invitation from the Railway Board, seven senior Railway Officers from the following African Railways joined an Observation-cum-Study tour of Indian Railways which commenced on 17th March, 1969.

1. Nigerian Railway Corporation.
2. Zambian Railways (Two officers).
3. Sudan Railways.
4. East African Railways and Harbours.
5. Malian Railways; and
6. Ghana Railway and Port Administration.

The tour was arranged with a view to foster close relations between Indian Railways and the Railways in Africa.

The visiting Railway Officers had no specific proposals for buying wagons and other railway equipments from India. They, however, evinced considerable interest in the development of Indian Railways, our technical know-how and production capacity in different spheres.

It would not be correct to conclude that the inadequacy of credit facilities is a factor which inhibits exports of railway equipments to African countries. Medium and long-term credit facilities can be extended by our exporters under normal commercial arrangements, in view of the institutional arrangements which exist for facilitating the flow of export finance, such as the refinancing and direct financing schemes of the Industrial Development Bank of India, the export credit insurance and guarantee schemes of the Export Credit and Guarantee Corporation etc. In fact, exports of rails and track accessories, wagons etc., have been taking place to other countries such as Iran, South Korea, etc. and credit facilities have not been found to be an inhibiting factor in these cases.

PRODUCTION IN H.E.C.

648. SARDAR RAM SINGH: Will the Minister of STEEL AND HEAVY ENGINEERING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the production in HEC far from recording a break through has registered a fall; and

(b) if so, what is the rate of production since January, 1969 and the causes for the shortfall?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND HEAVY ENGINEERING (SHRI K. C. PANT): (a) No, Madam. The overall production in Heavy Machine Building Plant has been consistently maintained at a level above 2,000 tonnes per month from September, 1968 onwards. Similarly, in the Foundry Forge Plant and Heavy Machine Tools Plant, production during Janu-