

DIVERSION OF GOODS TRAFFIC TO ROAD TRANSPORT

349. SARDAR RAM SINGH:
SHRI UTTAM SINGH DUGAL:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

• (a) whether Government have made any assessment of the high rated long distance goods which during the last three years have been diverted to road transport;

(b) if so, what is the annual recurring loss to Government on this account; and

(c) what steps have been taken to win back the goods traffic?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C. M. POONACHA): (a) and (b) The traffic in high rated commodities is under continuous study the Railway Boards office as also in the zonal railways. Diversion to road transport is only one of several possible causes of a decline in the movement of any commodity, the quantum offered for rail movement depending also on internal production and marketable surplus. The precise extent of the diversion to road transport is not easy to quantify as estimates of movement by road are not available, and it is only possible to surmise the overall loss of traffic to the Railways from data on earnings, originating tonnage and total output of the commodities moved.

(c) Traffic in high rated commodities is sought to be attracted back to the railways by attempting to provide better service, and by offering better rates, both generally and for station-to-station movements.

KENNEDY ROUND OF TARIFF NEGOTIATIONS

350. SHRI K. SUNDARAM: SHRI RAM CHANDER:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether an agreement has been reached in the Kennedy round of tariff

cut negotiations; if so, what tariff cuts are being enforced under the agreement; and

(b) how far India's trade with U.K. and other countries is likely to be affected by these cuts in the near future?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI DINESH SINGH): (a) and (b) On May 15, 1967, agreement was reached amongst major participants on the essential elements of trade negotiations between them. Negotiations on other elements are in the process of being concluded.

In the agricultural field, the agreement envisages an international grains arrangement to stipulate basic minimum and maximum prices for wheat of standard qualities, and to provide for food aid to developing countries to an amount of 4.5 million metric tons of grain, annually over a period of 3 years.

In the industrial field, tariff cuts upto 50 per cent have been agreed upon in many areas. The United States have agreed to some meaningful concessions in respect of products important in our trade with them. The abridgement of our preferences in the United Kingdom is confined to a small sector of our trade with that country.

It will not be possible to strike a balance between gains and losses until the negotiations are finally concluded. The conclusion reached in these negotiations would be embodied in formal schedule. The requisite procedures are expected to be complete* by the third week of June.

DEMAND FOR CONTROL OF CEMENT

351. SHRI RAM CHANDER: Will the Minister of INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that some State Governments including the