

contracts for Railway Electrification in our country; and

(b) if so, the progress of work so far made in respect of various contracts awarded to the firm since 1958?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C. M. POONACHA): (a) Yes.

(b) Out of total of 14 contracts awarded to this firm for installation of over-head equipment and switching stations, work has been completed on 13 contracts. The only contract yet to be completed by the firm is the one placed on them on 28th March, 1967, for work on Rourkela-Bilaspur section.

DEPOSITS OF ASBESTOS FIBRE IN MADRAS

579. SHRI SURJIT SINGH ATWAL: Will the Minister of STEEL MINES AND METALS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that large deposits of Asbestos fibre have been found in the State of Madras; and

(b) if so, what steps are being taken by Government to exploit the same?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL MINES AND METALS (DR. M. CHANNA REDDY): (a) An occurrence of Asbestos fibre has been recorded by the Geological Survey of India in a well in Tiruchirapalli district.

(b) The investigation by the Geological Survey of India is in progress. The question of exploitation will be considered after the investigation is completed.

DEPOSITS OF LIMESTONE IN KERALA

580. SHRI K. DAMODARAN: SHRI BALACHANDRA MENON:

Will the Minister of STEEL, MINES AND METALS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that limestone deposits have been found in the Palghat district of Kerala;

(b) if so, whether the quantity available of limestone in this area has been estimated; and

(c) whether feasibility studies for the commercial exploitation of limestone in this area has been taken in hand?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL, MINES AND METALS (DR. M. CHANNA REDDY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The reserves of limestone have been estimated by the Geological Survey of India at 1.25 million tonnes in Pandaretu block of Walayar reserve forest and 82,000 tonnes in Gopalapuram of Palghat district. The State Geological Department have estimated 7.14 lakhs tonnes in three main bands of Thavalam, Gopalapuram and Nadupunni of Palghat district.

(c) No, Sir. Possibilities of commercial exploitation of limestone in these areas will depend upon further detailed estimation of the deposits.

RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION ANCILLARY TO DEVELOPMENT OF COCHIN PORT

581. SHRI BALACHANDRA MENON: SHRI K. DAMODARAN:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the Railway construction or developmental projects taken in hand by Government ancillary to the development of the Cochin Port; and

(b) whether any proposal to construct the Kollengode-Trichur Railway line in this connection is under Government's consideration?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C. M. POONACHA): (a) No special works were undertaken by the Railways as ancillary to the Development of Cochin Port. The broad gauge line from Ernakulam was extended to the Port area (Wellington

Island) by the Port authorities in 1940. With the opening of the metre gauge line from Quilon to Ernakulam in 1958, the metre gauge line was also extended to Cochin at the cost of the Port authorities.

(b) No.

RAILWAY SERVICE COMMISSION

582. SHRI BANKA BEHARY DAS: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are Railway Service Commissions for each of the Railway Zones for recruitment of personnel, and if so, how many are functioning at present;

(b) whether State Government's representatives are always associated as members in this Commission;

(c) whether any principles are being followed in the appointment of members; and

(d) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C. M. POONACHA): (a) No; there are only four Railway Service Commissions for all the Zonal Railways.

(b) No.

(c) and (d) Appointments of Chairman and Members of Railway Service Commissions are made in accordance with Rules framed in consultation with the Union Public Service Commission. These Rules have been notified as G.S.R. 128, dated 15th January 1966.

SWAMINATHAN COMMITTEE REPORT ON DELICENSING OF TEXTILE INDUSTRY

583. SHRI M. S. OBEROI: Will the Minister of INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have considered the recommendations of the Swaminathan Committee regarding delicensing of textile industries; and

(b) if so, recommendations which have since been accepted by the Government?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Government have approved in principle the partial delicensing of the cotton textile industry to the extent that no industrial licence should be necessary for—

(i) establishment of a new cotton spinning mill with a capacity not exceeding 25000 spindles;

(ii) expansion of an existing cotton spinning mill to come up to 25000 spindles;

(iii) new textile processing units or for the expansion of existing processing units; and

(iv) it should be permissible for any cotton textile mill to utilise for spinning or processing any raw materials which is indigenously available.

In view, however of the present cotton situation the implementation of the above decision is being kept in abeyance.

REVISION OF EXPORT POLICY

584. SHRI K. SUNDARAM: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the post-devaluation export policy has been revised in the light of the export earnings made through different items since June, 1966; particularly in relation to cash assistance for export promotion; and

(b) if so, what are the modifications made in the export policy?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI DINESH SINGH): (a) and (b) A statement outlining selected immediate programmes to help and develop exports during the post-devaluation period was laid on the