

IMPORT OF RAILWAY STORES FROM  
USA

265 SHRI NIREN GHOSH. Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state-

(a) whether Government of India have imported from USA large quantities of Railway stores during 1965-66,

(b) if so, the total value of the stores imported during the period,

(c) whether some of the stores are produced in India, and

(d) if so, the reasons for purchasing the stores from abroad?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C M POONACHA) (a) and (b) Railway stores involving foreign exchange payment of approximately Rs 16.61 crores only were imported from USA during 1965-66 against the total purchases of stores during the same period of the value of Rs 329.71 crores

(c) The stores referred to against (a) and (b) above were not produced in India when orders were placed

(d) Does not arise in view of (c) above

LAND ON SIDE OF RAILWAY TRACKS FOR  
CULTIVATION

266 SHRI G MURAHARI Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state the total land on either side of the Railway tracks available for cultivation and the total land leased out so far?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C M POONACHA) Total cultivable land available along the Track and in railway yards and colonies is approximately 90,000 acres. Out of this, about 41,839 acres have been handed over to the State Governments and 21,129 acres allotted to the cultivators and railway employees directly by the Railways

NEW BHOPAL TEXTILE MILL, LTD

267 SHRI D THENGARI Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state-

(a) whether it is a fact that the New Bhopal Textile Mills Ltd, which was taken over by the Government in February, 1966, has been lying closed since 9th July, 1966,

(b) the number of workers rendered jobless on account of the closure,

(c) the compensation/relief paid to them so far, and

(d) when the same is expected to be reopened?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI M SHAFI QURESHI) (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) 1460

(c) Relief Advance of Rupees Six Lakhs and Thirty thousand has been paid out of Provident Fund. No compensation has been paid

(d) Efforts are being made to reopen the mills

GRATUITY SCHEME IN HINDUSTAN  
STEEL

297 SHRI T V ANANDAN Will the Minister of STEEL, MINES AND METALS be pleased to state

(a) whether it is a fact that gratuity scheme for retiring personnel is not in force in the "Hindustan Steel",

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefore,

(c) whether there is any proposal to bring such a scheme into force in the near future, and

(d) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL, MINES AND METALS (DR M CHANNA REDDY) (a) to (d) Hindustan Steel Limited has a Gratuity Scheme which has already been introduced in two of the Steel Plants and the Head

Transferred from the 7th April, 1967.

Office of the Company. It is likely to be introduced in the other Steel Plants and units of the Company shortly.

Broadly, the Scheme envisages payment of gratuity to all its regular employees except those who are appointed on contract basis for a period of five years or less, foreign technicians, re-employed persons etc. It is admissible for good, efficient and faithful service on discharge on abolition of post and permanent incapacity provided the employee has rendered atleast five years' qualifying service, on death and on superannuation. Gratuity will be equal to 15 days emoluments for each completed year of service subject to a maximum of 15 times the emoluments or Rs 24,000 whichever is less.

CALLING ATTENTION TO A MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

REPORTED GRANT OF ABOUT 375 INDUSTRIAL LICENCES TO THE BIRLA GROUP OF INDUSTRIES DURING THE YEARS 1957—66

SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA (Uttar Pradesh): I rise to call the attention of the Minister of Industrial Development and Company Affairs to the reported grant of about 375 industrial licences to the Birla Group of industries during the years 1957—66 with a total estimated investment in capital equipment alone of Rs. 384 crores and involving import component of Rs. 248 crores.

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED): Sir, presumably the reference is to the article entitled "Empire of Birlas" which appeared in "Mainstream" on December 17, 1966. The article mentions that the Licensing Commission granted approval for 375 applications of which investment data are available for 240. These 240 applications involved an investment in capital equipment alone of Rs. 246 crores with an import component of Rs. 159 crores.

If the available figures are boosted up *pro rata* for all the applications approved, the total investment and its import component would be, according to the article, Rs. 384 crores and Rs 248 crores respectively.

2. An interim study which has been made of industrial licensing policies by a consultant is under Government's consideration at present. As soon as the study and examination thereof by Government is completed, a statement regarding the issue of industrial licences will be placed on the Table of the House.

SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA: May I know whether the hon. Minister is in a position to tell the House if there are similar other firms who have been granted such a large number of industrial licences in the same period 1957-66, and whether there are any principles laid down in the Industrial Policy Resolution of the Government and, if so, by grant of such a large number of licences, whether any of the provisions of the Industrial Policy Resolution have been violated?

SHRI FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: Sir, I have already informed the House that the entire matter regarding the licensing policy was examined by a consultant appointed by the Planning Commission. The interim report has just come to us which is being studied at various levels and we also expect to get the full report from him after which it will be possible for us to examine all the questions involved so far as this policy is concerned. I may inform the House that with regard to this very matter, some statement was made by our late Prime Minister, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, in 1963, and we stand by the policy enunciated by him. It will only be possible for me to examine in greater detail after all the facts are before us when the full report is there and when we have had an opportunity of discussing this matter at various levels and also in the Cabinet.

SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA: May I know whether the hon. Minister will give an assurance to this House that