

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (DR. RAM SUBHAG SINGH): (a) Yes.

(b) No general sanction to condone the break in service of those who participated in the illegal strike in Liluah is considered justified by the Government.

IMPORT LICENCES FOR RAW SILK

615. SHRI MAHAMMED HANEEF: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state the quantity of raw silk for which import licences have been issued for the year 1966?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI M. SHAFI QURESHI): The quantity-wise figures are not available. But import licences for raw silk for a total value of Rs. 123 lakhs have been issued for 1966 up to 30-9-1966.

MINISTER'S DISCUSSION WITH MANAGING DIRECTOR OF INTERNATIONAL WOOL SECRETARIAT

616. SARDAR RAM SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether he had any discussion with the Managing Director of the International Wool Secretariat during the month of October, 1966;

(b) if so, the nature of the discussions held; and

(c) whether the export prospects of Indian wool *vis-a-vis* devaluation of Indian rupee was also considered?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI M. SHAFI QURESHI): (a) to (c) The Managing Director of the International Wool Secretariat called on the Minister of Commerce during October, 1966. This was a courtesy visit and no discussion on matters of policy was held.

PAY STRIKE AT BHILAI STEEL PLANT

617. SHRI NIREN GHOSH: Will the Minister of IRON AND STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there was a pay strike in one department of the Bhilai Steel Plant on the 10th October, 1966;

(b) if so, the number of workers involved and the cause of the pay strike; and

(c) what steps the management had taken to settle the grievances of the workers?

THE MINISTER OF IRON AND STEEL (SHRI T. N. SINGH): (a) It is a fact that on the 10th October, 1966 workers of the Steel Melting Shop of Bhilai Steel Plant refused to take their pay.

(b) About a thousand workers were involved. The refusal to take pay was due to dissatisfaction with the reduction in the rate of incentive bonus.

(c) The management explained to the workers that the incentive bonus rate is fixed in relation to the quantum of production. Due to a fall in the demand of steel products, production had to be curtailed and as a result workers were entitled to incentive bonus only at a reduced rate. The workers appreciated the situation and the protest was subsequently withdrawn. The possibility of increasing the sales of the products *inter alia* by exports is being explored.

UPGRADING OF ARTISAN STAFF

618. SHRI P. K. KUMARAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state the progress made so far in regard to upgrading of artisan staff in the Loco Running sheds on the Indian Railways?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (DR. RAM SUBHAG SINGH): It is presumed that the Hon'ble Member is