

saved instead of asking a private firm to build a car?

MR. CHAIRMAN: He understands the question.

SHRI MANUBHAI SHAH: We share the feelings of the hon. Member, that of the House and that of the country that there is need for a small cheap car. Whether it will be of Rs. 3,200 or Rs. 3,500, I cannot say. So far what we have been able to aim at is, or the terms of the Jha Committee were to build a car between Rs. 5,000 and Rs. 7,000, delivered to a customer and that is what we said and that is what the Jha Committee has recommended that it is possible to manufacture a car within that price range.

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: Is it a fact that the Defence Department is making experiments or is proposing to bring forth a car or a small jeep car?

SHRI MANUBHAI SHAH: Experiments should be continued everywhere and when the results of such experiments are finalised or when they fructify, the country and the House will come to know of them.

SHRIMATI YASHODA REDDY: What are the different models or types of cars and which are the firms which the Government is considering before they come to a decision about this?

SHRI MANUBHAI SHAH: That is what I have said that no model has been selected.

DIFFICULTIES OF HAJ PILGRIMS

*468. SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to an article published in the 'Al Jamiat' in its issue of the 15th November, 1959 pointing out the difficulties which are experienced by the Indian Haj pilgrims in Saudi Arabia; and

(b) whether Government have made any inquiry in the matter and if so, whether Government will place a copy of the findings of this inquiry on the Table of the House?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI LAKSHMI MENON): (a) and (b) Yes. No further inquiry into the alleged difficulties seems necessary. The House has already been informed on 11th August 1960, in answer to Question No. 180, that an unofficial delegation of two Members of Parliament, was sent to Saudi Arabia during the recent Haj season to enquire into the arrangements made by the Government of India in collaboration with the Government of Saudi Arabia in regard to the travel and stay of Indian pilgrims. A report from them is awaited.

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: Will it be made available to the Parliament?

SHRIMATI LAKSHMI MENON: After examining it, we will consider whether it is necessary to place it on the Table of the House.

*469. [For answer, vide cols. 2472-73 infra.]

*470. [The questioner (Shri K. P. Verma) was absent. For answer, vide col. 2479 infra.]

INDO-SAUDI ARABIAN TRADE

*471. SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India's trade with Saudi Arabia, particularly exports, have been declining steadily during the last five years and our expenditure on our Embassy there is increasing steadily; and

(b) what are the reasons for this decline in exports, whether the advice of experts has been sought to study the situation and make a report and if

so, whether a copy of the report will be placed on the Table of the House?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI SATISH CHANDRA): (a) and (b) A statement is placed on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

India's imports from Saudi Arabia, which consist mainly of petroleum and petroleum products, have been showing a rising trend. Exports to Saudi Arabia have declined, but the figures for the first five months of 1960 reveal an improvement.

2. The expenditure incurred on an Embassy which performs many functions has no direct bearing on the volume of trade. The figures for Saudi Arabian Embassy can be ascertained from the budget papers presented to the Parliament.

3. The decline in our exports to Saudi Arabia may be attributed to competition from alternative sources of supply.

4. As a result of reviews made from time to time, the following measures have been taken to promote trade between India and Saudi Arabia:—

(a) A show-room has been opened at Jeddah for the display of the products which India can export to Saudi Arabia.

(b) A delegation led by the Saudi Arabian Commerce Minister visited industrial undertakings in India and saw a wide range of goods which India could supply.

(c) In August-September 1959, an Indian trade delegation, visited Saudi Arabia to explore the possibilities of increasing exports of processed food stuffs.

(d) A post of Commercial Secretary has now been created in the Embassy at Jeddah for undertaking a

closer study of the possibilities of developing trade between India and Saudi Arabia and is expected to be filled shortly.

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: From the statement it appears that a case is being tried to be made out that the expense on the Embassy has nothing to do with the trade. Have I understood the statement aright?

SHRI SATISH CHANDRA: Yes, the Embassy performs several functions—political work, Consulate work, cultural and information work. There has been no proper commercial section in the Saudi Arabian Embassy. It is only since March 1960 that an attempt is being made to set up a proper commercial section there.

SHRI NIRANJAN SINGH: Since how long the present Ambassador has been there in Saudi Arabia?

SHRI SATISH CHANDRA: That question should be put to the External Affairs Ministry.

SHRI N. M. LINGAM: May I know the items which we have traditionally exported and which have registered a decline?

SHRI SATISH CHANDRA: There are a few items mainly cotton textiles, spices and some brass utensils. There was some decline in the previous years but in the first six months of this year, there has been a definite improvement.

SHRI N. M. LINGAM: May I know if our tea exports to Saudi Arabia are on the increase or decrease?

SHRI SATISH CHANDRA: Tea exports are not very substantial. Only a few lakhs worth of tea has been going there.

*472. [For answer, vide cols. 2465—68 infra.]