

given commodities from or to the treaty-making country, as against, or contradistinguished from, any other country?

(e) If so, what is the degree of such preference, and what are the countries towards which such preference is shown, as well as the reasons for such preference?

The Minister of Commerce and Industry (Shri T. T. Krishnamachari): (a) and (b). A statement giving the required information is laid on the Table of the House. [See Appendix VI, annexure No. 27.]

(c). With the exception of the short-term agreement concluded with Pakistan in April 1950, none of the trade treaties mentioned in the above statement are in the nature of a Barter Agreement. As regards settlement of trade balances, none of the treaties or agreements in question require transfer of bullion. Such balances are generally settled in sterling or rupees.

(d) and (e). No, except in the case of Pakistan as provided in the June 1949 Agreement with that country on Rebate of Central Excises, a copy of which will be found in the Library of the House.

SCIENTIFIC EXPEDITION TO HIMALAYAS

442. Shri Raghavaiah: (a) Will the Prime Minister be pleased to state whether an expedition of scientists recently toured the Himalayas?

(b) By whom was the expedition organised, who were the members thereof and what was its purpose?

(c) Which parts of the Himalayan region did they cover?

(d) What help did Government render the expedition?

The Prime Minister (Shri Jawaharlal Nehru): (a) The latest expedition to the Himalayas is the Swiss Expedition which has not yet returned.

(b) The expedition has been organised by the Swiss Foundation for Alpine Research. It consists of 14 Swiss Nationals and its purpose is to climb the Everest and to collect scientific information.

(c) Nepal and the region of the Everest.

(d) Exemption from payment of Customs duties was granted in respect of the equipment imported by the expedition, subject to the condition that it was re-exported within a specified period.

EXPORT OF TEXTILES

443. Shri Nanadas: Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state:

(a) the quantity, value and varieties of exports of Indian textiles during 1947-48, 1948-49, 1949-50 and 1950-51;

(b) the countries which imported our textiles and the value of such exports to each country;

(c) whether it is a fact that there is at present no quota restrictions operating on the exports of cloth from India; and

(d) if the answer to part (c) above be in the affirmative, the reasons which led the Government to remove export restrictions?

The Minister of Commerce and Industry (Shri T. T. Krishnamachari): (a) and (b). A statement is laid on the Table of the House. [See Appendix VI, annexure No. 28.]

(c) Yes.

(d) The reasons are:—

(i) the easy supply position of cloth in the country.

(ii) the need for maintaining export markets and earning foreign exchange.

VERIFICATION OF CLAIMS

444. Shri Gidwani: Will the Minister of Rehabilitation be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that from 1st of September 1952 to the 20th October 1952, not a single claim sheet has been verified by about 125 Claims Officers; and

(b) whether many Claims Officers wrote to the Chief Claims Commissioner that they and their staff were sitting idle as no work was allotted to them after 31st August 1952?

The Minister of Rehabilitation (Shri A. P. Jain): (a) and (b). About 12,400 property sheets were verified from 1st September, 1952 to 20th October, 1952, by 110 Claims Officers. Since the bulk of the verification work had been finished by 31st August, 1952, greater emphasis was laid on attestation and rationalisation of decided claims. Upto 23rd November, 1952, 1,68,203 claims were attested and rationalised.

TENDERS FOR WHEEL LATHES

445. Shri Gidwani: (a) Will the Minister of Works, Housing and Supply be pleased to state whether it is a fact that tenders No. SW 1/17787-C/11 for two wheel lathes were publicly invited

by the Director General of Supplies and Disposals, New Delhi?

(b) What is the value of these equipments?

(c) Is it a fact the said tenders were publicly opened at the appointed date on the 22nd September, 1952?

(d) Is it a fact that after the opening of the tenders the date for receiving more tenders was extended?

(e) Why has time been extended after opening of the tenders and in how many cases such procedure, without rejecting all tenders, has been adopted?

(f) Is it a fact that some foreign firms were interested to make new offers?

(g) How many more tenders were received as a result of the extension date?

(h) What is the policy laid down after opening of the public tenders?

(i) Is it the policy of the Director General of Supplies and Disposals, to permit the tenderers to change their rates after they are made public?

(j) What instructions do Government propose to issue to observe the sanctity of the tenders?

The Deputy Minister of Works, Housing and Supply (Shri Buraogain): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Rs. 6 lakhs approximately.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) Time was extended in this case as the prospective tenderers did not get enough time to quote. The tender notice was sent for publication in the Indian Trade Journal, on 30th August 1952, for tenders to be opened on 22nd September 1952, but the tender notice actually appeared in the Journal in its issue dated 13th September 1952. Thus there was only a week for the tenderers to give their quotations.

There were complaints that the Trade had not been given sufficient time to quote, particularly, those firms which had to consult their Principals abroad. It was also felt that there was not sufficient competition (only 4 tenders having been received of which only one was to the specifications) and that the rates quoted were on the high side. It was therefore decided by the Deputy Director General (Supplies and Disposals), that quotations should be called for again. The firms which had quoted first, were also given the chance to re-quote their offers and one of the firms which had quoted the lowest first time actually reduced its tender by Rs. 54,000 while re-quoting.

Tenders are not invited ordinarily afresh after opening them. It is only in exceptional cases that this is done.

(f) Yes, Sir.

The lathes in question are imported ones and not produced locally.

(g) Three more tenders were received as a result of the extension.

(h) After opening the tenders in public, the most suitable tender(s) in respect of prices, delivery, particulars, etc., is/are accepted and action taken to place orders in the usual way.

(i) Tendered rates are not allowed to be changed except when for special reasons, the prices and other terms, are to be negotiated with the tendering firms which then get equal chances to revise their quotations.

(j) An elaborate procedure has already been prescribed by which the sanctity of tenders is duly maintained.

ECONOMY MEASURES TAKEN BY DELHI STATE ELECTRICITY BOARD

446. Shri Radha Raman: Will the Minister of Irrigation and Power be pleased to state what steps have been taken by the Delhi State Electricity Board to economise expenditure and what financial controls are exercised by Government?

The Deputy Minister of Irrigation and Power (Shri Hathi): (a) The Board are examining a proposal for reducing the recurring expenditure on clerical staff by preparation of consumers bills and other statistics with the aid of sorting and duplicating machines. Although Government do not exercise any direct control on the finances of the Board, whose functions and powers in this respect are defined by statute, the following provisions in the Electricity (Supply) Act of 1948 vest sufficient powers in the Government to have an overall picture of the finances of the State Electricity Boards and to impose their decisions in some cases:—

(i) Under Section 61 of the Act, the Board have to submit their annual financial statement giving estimated capital and revenue receipts and expenditure for the ensuing year as well as statement of salaries of the members and servants of the Board and other particulars to be placed before the Parliament. The Board has to take into account any comments made in the Parliament.

(ii) Under Section 63, Government can make subventions to the Board and in doing so impose suitable terms of financial control.

(iii) Under Sections 64 and 65 of the Act, Government can impose terms and conditions of loans granted by it or in according permission to the Board to borrow loans.