

X-Ray Units for Railways

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*165. { Shri Warrior:
Shri Kunhan:

Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Railways have placed orders for a large number of X-Ray Units;

(b) if so, their number and the probable requirements during the current year and the next year; and

(c) whether these X-Ray Units are proposed to be imported or locally manufactured?

The Deputy Minister of Railways (Shri Shahnawaz Khan): (a) Yes

(b) Total Number	31
During 1957-58	15
During 1958-59	16

(c) Proposed to be imported since locally manufactured good quality X-Ray machines are not available in the country

Shri Warrior: What will the amount of foreign exchange be involved in this transaction?

Shri Shahnawaz Khan: I am sorry to say I do not have the figures with me just now I could give him later on

Shri A. C. Guha: Is it not true that at least one factory in India has been manufacturing fairly good X-Ray units? In view of the present foreign exchange position, why have all the orders been placed with foreign firms, and why has Government not thought it proper to utilise the local product?

Shri Shahnawaz Khan: We want to get the best type of X-Ray machines. The hon Member knows we cannot take any chances with machines like this

Shri A. C. Guha: Is it not true that it has been brought to the notice of the Railway Ministry that there is an Indian manufacturer, that the units manufactured by that company were

examined by Government experts and found to be fairly good, and that their units have been in use in a number of hospitals?

Shri Shahnawaz Khan: We will certainly look into it. If they are good, we will place orders with them when we require more

Shri Ranga: What is the practice of Government when they want to place these orders? Is there any Cabinet sub-committee or anything like it to screen these orders in order to see whether they could not be obtained in this country efficiently and properly?

The Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs (Shri Jawaharlal Nehru): I can only say there is no Cabinet Committee to consider this. Naturally, Government's policy is to obtain goods in India, even if they are more costly, provided they are good enough for the purpose, but obviously a Cabinet Committee cannot consider every purchase

Shri A. C. Guha: Is it not a fact that the cost of the Indian machine is fairly less than that of the imported one, and is it not true that a number of hospitals in India have been using this Indian manufactured X-Ray unit?

Shri Shahnawaz Khan: I require notice for that I am unable to say

Shri Thirumala Rao: Are the machines manufactured by the Indian concern certified by the Indian Standards Institution as fit to be taken by our hospitals?

Shri A. C. Guha: I hope the Government will look into the matter and see that the Indian manufacturing unit is properly utilised in the service of the nation

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: Certainly

Mr. Speaker: That is the object of the question

The Minister of Commerce and Industry (Shri Morarji Desai): We have ceased importing these things. So, there will be no question of the Railway Ministry buying

Shri Tyagi: May I inform the House that there is a screening committee already which looks into these cases?

Price of Sugar

*166. { ⁺ Shri H. C. Mathur.
Shri Assar:

Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state

(a) the price of sugar (i) in wholesale market and (ii) in retail market before the announcement of fresh excise duty,

(b) what are the present rates, and

(c) the steps taken or proposed to be taken to keep the prices at a reasonable level?

The Deputy Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri A. M. Thomas): (a) to (c) A statement containing the required information is laid on the Table of Lok Sabha [See Appendix I, annexure No 52]

Shri H. C. Mathur. It is obvious from the statement that there has been a general rise of Rs 6 per maund. May I know if the Government considers it to be justified, or are they taking any steps to bring down the prices and if so to what level?

Shri A. M. Thomas. We have been taking steps. There has been some increase, not exactly to the extent of the increase in the excise duty. The Government are taking steps. The Reserve Bank has now tightened up its restrictions in the matter of advances. A circular has been issued on June 29, 1957 to all Scheduled and the three State-associated banks requiring them to raise the margin against sugar by 10 per cent subject to a minimum of 35 per cent.

Shri H. C. Mathur. My question has not been fully answered.

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri A. P. Jain). This apparent

rise of Rs 6 per maund includes Rs 4-2-0 per maund on account of excise duty.

Shri Bishwanath Roy: In view of rise in price the rate of sugar, may I know whether Government would reduce the quantity of sugar to be exported?

Shri A. P. Jain: Government want to encourage as much export as they possibly can, consistent with the maintenance of internal supplies.

Shri Heda: Apart from the rise due to this excise duty, may I know whether Government have noticed that even in a city like Hyderabad which is situated within the surplus area, there is normally in a period of two to three months a good rise in the prices, and if so, what steps are they taking to curb this uncalled for rise in prices?

Shri A. P. Jain: In fact, Hyderabad is not a surplus area. The whole of South is a deficit area and it receives about one lakh tons of sugar from the North. There was some difficulty about movement, that difficulty is now being overcome. We are constantly watching the price movement and we propose to regulate it by adjusting our releases. Apart from that, as my colleague the Deputy Minister has stated, the Reserve Bank has applied curb on advances against sugar owned by the traders.

Shri Mohiuddin: The hon. Minister has stated that the Reserve Bank has asked that the margin should be increased. Is it a fact that about 40 per cent of the production of sugar is at the disposal of the Government and this sugar stock is not being released?

Shri A. P. Jain: The entire sugar is at the disposal of the Government. It is only after Government issues a release order that sugar can be sold in the market. And we regulate the releases in such a manner that a regular supply is guaranteed all over the year.