

Pensioners in Himachal Pradesh

*1412. **Shri S. N. Ramaul:** Will the Minister of Home Affairs be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the increase of Rs. 5 in pension to the pensioners of Himachal Pradesh Territory on account of dearness has been stopped with effect from November, 1959; and

(b) if so, the reasons for the same?

The Minister of Home Affairs (Shri G. B. Pant): (a) and (b). In July, 1959, the Himachal Pradesh Administration extended to their pensioners certain enhanced rates of temporary increase in small pensions sanctioned by the Government of India for pensioners of the Central Departments who retired on or before the 15th July, 1952. There was a doubt about the applicability of the orders to pre-merger pensioners. This has since been settled and the Accountant General, Punjab, has now allowed the enhanced rates to all pensioners for whom the increase was intended.

Availability of Iron and Steel in Calcutta

*1413. **Shri Basumatari:** Will the Minister of Steel, Mines and Fuel be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to persistent complaints by the people about the non-availability of iron and steel in markets in Calcutta resulting in the holding up of construction of buildings and bridges; and

(b) if so, whether any steps have been taken by the Government of India to expedite the supply of iron and steel?

The Minister of Steel, Mines and Fuel (Sardar Swaran Singh): (a) and (b). Government have not received any specific complaint that the non-availability of steel in Calcutta markets has resulted in the holding up of construction of buildings and bridges. But since total availability of steel is

limited, it might well be that there have been some delays in constructional programmes. With the limited availability of foreign exchange, large imports are not possible but it is expected that with the additional production that we are expecting soon, the supply position will progressively improve.

Electric Furnaces

*1419. { **Shri S. C. Samanta:**
Shri Subodh Hansda:

Will the Minister of Steel, Mines and Fuel be pleased to state:

(a) the number of electric furnaces in the country for the conversion of scrap iron into steel at present;

(b) whether during 1958-59 and 1959-60 any scrap iron has been exported either from Government or private sources;

(c) how many permits have been issued up till now for electric furnaces;

(d) how the steel produced from scrap iron in our country;

(e) whether there is any difference in price?

The Minister of Steel, Mines and Fuel (Sardar Swaran Singh): (a) 19 in production and 10 under construction.

(b) Yes, Sir, from private sources only.

(c) 30 including 4 on small scale.

(d) and (e). The steel produced in these furnaces compares favourably in quality and price with imported steel.

लोहा और इस्पात नियंत्रण का कार्यालय

*१४२०. श्री प्रकाशचौर शास्त्री :
क्या इस्पात, ज्ञान और ईश्वर मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या यह सच है कि लोहा और इस्पात नियंत्रण, कलकत्ताके कार्यालय