

SCHEME TO PRODUCE SYNTHETIC PETROL

*562. **Shri Sarangadhar Das:** (a) Will the Minister of **Commerce and Industry** be pleased to state whether it is a fact that **Shri Bijayananda Patnaik** had addressed a letter to the Government of India giving a proposal to extract petrol from Indian coal and volunteering to pay even the sum of Rs. 14 lakhs which was needed for preliminary investigations?

(b) What reply, if any, was sent to **Shri Patnaik**?

The Minister of **Commerce and Industry (Shri T. T. Krishnamachari):** (a) and (b). He did address the Government of India on the subject, but I am not aware of any offer to pay Rs. 14 lakhs for preliminary investigations. He did ask the Central Government for assistance towards the capital necessary for the project and for a subsidy. Government's reply was that no assistance in the capital could be offered and the question of subsidy could be considered if the Tariff Board recommended it.

TRAVELLING AGENCIES AND PASSPORTS

*563. **Shri A. N. Vidyalankar:** Will the Prime Minister be pleased to state:

(a) whether it has come to the notice of Government that certain travelling agencies have recently come into existence, that charge exorbitant rates from the intending travellers, by duping them with an assurance that they would secure passports for them;

(b) whether it is a fact that some of the individuals whose applications for passports had been rejected on various grounds at first instance had been granted the passports later, when they applied again through one of these agencies; and

(c) what steps Government are proposing to take to safeguard the public from such agencies, and to ensure that no undue favour is shown to such agencies in the matter of granting passports?

The Deputy Minister of **External Affairs (Shri Anil K. Chanda):** (a) and (c). In 1951 it came to the notice of the Government of India that some Travel Agents were trying to exploit the illiterate public by promising to obtain passports for them if the latter booked their air passages through them. The amounts demanded for these passages were far in excess of the normal rates.

The Government of India have since instructed all Passport Issuing

Authorities in India not to accept applications for passports from Travel Agencies.

(b) The Government of India are not aware of this as passports to private persons are normally issued by the Governments of the States in which they reside. There may, of course, be cases in which applications once rejected were reconsidered on appeal and passports granted, but it would be incorrect to say that such passports were eventually granted because they were applied for through a Travel Agency.

TRADE AGREEMENT WITH PAKISTAN

*564. **Shri S. C. Singhal:** (a) Will the Minister of **Commerce and Industry** be pleased to state whether Pakistan has fully implemented her trade agreement for the year 1951-52?

(b) If not, which provision of the agreement Pakistan failed to implement?

The Minister of **Commerce and Industry (Shri T. T. Krishnamachari):** (a) and (b). Barring foodgrains the Indo-Pakistan Trade Agreement of 1951-52 did not commit either Government to export or import commodities and goods up to the quantities or values specified. The two Governments only agreed to facilitate the importation and exportation of the articles, e.g. by the issue of licences and/or providing foreign exchange.

Pakistan agreed to supply 7.7 lakh tons of foodgrains but could supply 1.92 lakh tons only on account of food shortages which developed in that country later.

COAL WASHING PLANTS

*565. **Sardar A. S. Saigal:** (a) Will the Minister of **Production** be pleased to state how many coal washing plants have been installed to wash lower grade coals?

(b) Have coal washing plants been found useful for prolonging the life of coking coal reserves?

(c) What help do Government propose to give to speed up the work of installation of coal washing plants in collieries?

The Minister of **Production (Shri K. C. Reddy):** (a) Two.

(b) Yes.

(c) The nature and extent of assistance which would be required for the