

The nature and number of recent trade enquiries, however, indicate that there is a growing interest in Indian goods in the foreign markets.

Amendments to Labour Acts

705. Shri Priya Gupta: Will the Minister of Labour and Employment be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any proposal to amend the Workmen's Compensation Act, Payment of Wages Act and the Factories Act; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor?

The Minister of Labour in the Ministry of Labour and Employment (Shri Hathi): (a) Yes.

(b) Briefly the reasons for the main amendments are as follows:—

Workmen's Compensation Act.—The existing rates of compensation are pre-War rates. They have become out of date. It is accordingly proposed to revise them. It is also proposed to increase the wage limit for coverage under the Act from Rs. 400 to Rs. 500 and prescribe suitable rates of Compensation for the workers of this higher wage group.

Payment of Wages Act.—Certain amendments have become necessary in the light of the working of the Act. It is proposed to authorise deductions towards the payment of premia in respect of Fidelity Guarantee Bonds to enhance penalties for the infringement of the provisions of the Act, to extend the time limit for presentation of claims etc.

Factories Act.—With a view to enabling the State Governments to take proper steps towards accident prevention and to ensure better safety standards, certain amendments on the lines of the recommendations of the Labour Ministers' Conference and other Conferences have become necessary. This opportunity is also being taken to make a few other amendments to remove the difficulties experienced in the working of the Act.

Azad Market, Delhi

706. Shri Mqhan Swarup. Will the Minister of Works, Housing and Supply be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a complete block of 30 shops in Azad Market constructed by Government is in danger of collapsing;

(b) whether it is also a fact that wide cracks have appeared in the roofs and walls of the shops on the ground floor of the said block; and

(c) if so, the action proposed to be taken by Government in this connection?

The Minister of Works, Housing and Supply (Shri Mehr Chand Khanna):

(a) No.

(b) Only four shops have developed some cracks which can be repaired. No cracks have appeared in the roofs. The blocks are single storeyed.

(c) All these shops have been transferred to the allottees in ownerships and they are now responsible for their repairs and maintenance.

Shortage of Coal and Transport

707. Shri R. Barua: Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to the reply given to Starred Question No. 23 on the 19th April, 1962 and state:

(a) whether Government have finally examined the recommendations made by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry regarding removal of procedural difficulties, adequate supply of coal and augmentation of transport capacity; and

(b) if so, the steps taken to implement them?

The Minister of Industry in the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (Shri Kanungo): (a) and (b). The following are the main steps taken by the Government to ensure adequate supply of coal to meet the increasing

demand, of coal from all parts of country:

- (i) Provision from July, 1962 of additional wagons for the movement of coal from the Bengal-Bihar coal-fields;
- (ii) movement of an additional one million tons of coal by the rail-cum-sea route;
- (iii) creation of coal dumps;
- (iv) movement of coal in block rakes in heavier type of wagons;
- (v) increasing the production in the Central India Coalfields to the maximum extent possible to avoid haulage from the Bengal/Bihar coalfields;
- (vi) loading of coal wagons on Sundays and Holidays; and
- (vii) transporting some coal by river and road for short distances in North India so that wagons for distant consumers may be released.

Exchange of Fire between Indo-Pak Police

708. { Shri Hem Barua:
 { Shri Raghunath Singh:
 { Shri Yashpal Singh:
 { Shri Ram Ratan Gupta:

Will the Prime Minister be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there was an exchange of shots recently between West Bengal police and East Pakistan police near Char Dawnapur, Murshidabad District, West Bengal; and

(b) if so, the details of the incident?

The Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs and Minister of Atomic Energy (Shri Jawaharlal Nehru): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) On 22nd July, 1962 an Assistant Sub-Inspector and a member of the National Volunteer Force were kidnapped by Pakistani nationals, supported by two members of the East-Pakistan Rifles, from the West Bengal-East Pakistan border at Char Deonapur. On receipt of this report, a Havildar of our border out-post proceeded towards the scene of occurrence, showing the flag, in accordance with the Ground Rules for peaceful contact with the Pakistan border police, but the Pakistan armed personnel suddenly opened fire. Our border personnel had no alternative but to return the fire in self-defence. The exchange of fire continued for about ten minutes without any casualty on the Indian side.

Importers in Goa, Daman and Diu

709. **Shri Hem Barua:** Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that certain concessions have been effected in the import policy, so far as established importers are concerned for Goa, Daman and Diu; and

(b) if so, the nature of these concessions and the basic reasons for effecting them?

The Minister of International Trade in the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (Shri Banubhai Shah): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Items like certain varieties of textiles, wines and spirits, etc., the import of which into India is disallowed or restricted, have been allowed for imports into Goa, Daman and Diu by Established Importers. These concessions have been allowed having regard to the fact that such items have special economic significance for Goa, Daman and Diu, and necessity for allowing established traders to adjust themselves to the changing conditions and similar factors.