

(xi) Shortage of cement.

(xii) Allowing below specification work by using less cement in construction of bridges.

Steel Production Cost

338. Shri Sonavane: Will the Minister of Steel and Mines be pleased to state:

(a) the actual cost of production (without taking into consideration the depreciation of the plant) for various categories of steel of basic sizes (not carrying any extra) of the different steel plants in India, both in public and private sector;

(b) the number of workers employed in these plants and the Administrative offices; and

(c) their aggregate salary and wages?

The Minister of Steel and Mines (Shri N. Sanjiva Reddy): (a) Information in regard to the cost of production of pig iron, steel ingots and the average cost of salable steel is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House. It will not be in the public interest to give detailed break-down of costs by different categories of steel.

(b) and (c). Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Import of Ball and Roller Bearings

339. Shri Sonavane: Will the Minister of Commerce be pleased to state:

(a) the criteria used in selecting the firms who have been appointed as the associates of S.T.C. for import and distribution of ball and roller bearings, for which import licences have been issued to S.T.C.;

(b) the instructions given to the State Trading Corporation of India Ltd., for ensuring that the supplies of bearings imported are made available to actual users only;

(c) whether the S.T.C. ensure that the actual users are made aware of the imports in regard to particular sizes;

(d) whether the established importers having small quotas are allowed to join the associations of ball bearing importers, which have been formed at the instance of S.T.C. for handling the imports and distribution of ball and roller bearings against import licences issued to S.T.C.; and

(e) whether the small trader is given a preference over a big trader in accordance with Government's declared policy?

The Minister of Commerce (Shri Manubhai Shah): (a) The following criteria are taken into consideration by the State Trading Corporation in selecting firms to be entrusted with the import and distribution of ball, roller and taper bearings, which are canalised through the State Trading Corporation:

(i) Existing channels of trade to be utilised as far as possible and distribution arrangements to be broad based so that actual users in various parts of the country may be able to get their requirements without difficulty. To ensure this, Associations of importers/dealers who have the necessary technical knowledge, experience and facilities for after-sale-service and advise to the users are entrusted with the distribution arrangement.

(ii) Well known makes of bearings which were being imported in large quantities before canalisation through the accredited agents of the foreign suppliers on established importers' licences, to continue to be imported in adequate quantity so that consumers may not have difficulty in getting their requirements of the well known makes and expert.