

Materialisation of goods traffic by rail depends on various factors such as the economic situation in the country, the failure of monsoon and increase in import of foodgrains, the development of competing modes of transport etc and cannot be entirely controlled by Railways' actions. Railways are trying to capture more traffic by improving the time of transit, adjustment of rates, introduction of container services and so on.

In the year 1966-67 the gross earnings of Indian Railways were 482.50 crores, against the budget estimate of 506.53 crores.

Export of Jute Goods

4998 Shri D N Patodia Will the Minister of Commerce be pleased to state

(a) whether the exporters in Pakistan have any advantage over the Indian exporters in the matter of export of jute goods, and

(b) if so, the extent of such advantage enjoyed by Pakistan and the steps Indian Government propose to take to counteract such advantage and to place the Indian Industry at a competitive level?

The Minister of Commerce (Shri Dinesh Singh): (a) Yes, Sir

(b) The advantages of the Pakistan jute industry are (i) the availability within Pakistan of superior quality jute at comparatively cheaper prices, and (ii) the Bonus Voucher Scheme for exports. The extent of the advantage varies from time to time and no definite information is available.

In order to counteract these advantages, all possible measures are being taken to step up the production and yield of required quality and quantity of jute within India. Export duties on jute goods have also recently been reduced so as to improve the competitiveness of Indian jute goods in foreign markets.

Production of Commercial Vehicles

4999 Shri D N Patodia
Shri S K Tapuriah

Will the Minister of Industrial Development and Company Affairs be pleased to state

(a) whether Government are aware of the crisis faced by automobile manufacturers leading to the stoppage or substantial reduction of the production of commercial vehicles and subsequent large scale unemployment in various automobile industries, their ancillaries and subsidiaries

(b) whether Government are thinking in terms of giving tax relief to the road transport industry in view of the rates of taxation on industry at various stages being very high, rendering the cost of operation to become prohibitive and uneconomic, and

(c) if so, what other steps Government propose to take to revive the working and the growth of this industry?

The Minister of Industrial Development and Company Affairs (Shri F A Ahmed): (a) to (c) Government are aware that due to fall in demand for commercial vehicles some of the manufacturers have curtailed production in recent months and laid off some labour

Government have, at present, no proposal under consideration for affording tax relief to the industry. Government have, however, appointed a Committee known as the Road Transport Taxation Enquiry Committee to go into all the aspects of taxation of motor vehicles and to suggest steps for the development of the Road Transport Industry.

Russian Technique at Bokaro

5000. Shri D. N. Patodia: Will the Minister of Steel, Mines and Metals be pleased to state

(a) whether it is a fact that the Russian technique for the manufacture