

AFFAIRS (SHRI F. A. AHMED) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) This has not been found to be necessary.

EXPORT OF CASHEW-NUT SHELL LIQUID

5594. **SHRI C. JANARDHANAN :** Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been a decline in the export of cashew-nut shell liquid in the current year;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken to step up the export of cashew-nut shell liquid ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI MOHD. SHAFI QURESHI) : (a) Yes, Sir. There has been a slight decline in our export of cashewnut shell liquid during January-October, 1967 as compared to January-October, 1966.

(b) The decline in export was due to lesser offtake by the traditional buyers viz. U. S. A. U. K., Japan and Australia. Due to larger imports in 1965, the importers created heavy stocks and consequently the demand and price for cashewnut shell liquid decreased in 1966 and 1967. Due to the fall in price of cashewnut shell liquid some of the cashew manufacturers have gone back to the drum-roasting method. This had resulted in a fall in the production of cashewnut shell liquid. In turn the export has also decreased. Another reason is that Indian cashewnut shell liquid is now experiencing keen competition from cashewnut shell liquid produced in Mozambique and Brazil.

(c) The Council proposes to conduct market surveys for cashewnut shell liquid early during next year in U. S. A. and Japan. The Council also proposes to hold a seminar on cashewnut shell liquid for considering measures for increasing the export as well as the internal consumption for cashewnut shell liquid.

EXPORT OF FOREST PRODUCE TO GREECE

5595. **SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR SINGH :** Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government of Greece have expressed their desire to purchase forest produce from India;

(b) if so, the quantity and types of forest produce asked for by Greece and the value thereof;

(c) when the first consignment of the produce is expected to be shipped; and

(d) from which State the produce is expected to be collected for shipment to Greece ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI MOHD. SHAFI QURESHI) : (a) and (b). Yes, Sir. The Public Power Corporation of Athens (Greece) has expressed its desire to purchase two lakhs wooden poles for electrification valued at U. S. dollars 4,469,655 (Rs. 3,35,22,412.50). The type of wood is "Ballagi".

(c) Shipment schedule will be known only after the supply contract, which is under finalisation, is concluded.

(d) Mysore State.

CONFERENCE OF RAILWAY GENERAL MANAGERS

5596. **SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR SINGH :** Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the subjects discussed at the Conference of Railway General Managers held recently in Delhi; and

(b) the decision taken thereon ?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C. M. POONACHA) : (a) The discussions generally covered matters relating to the day-to-day functioning of the Railways. The specific subjects discussed are indicated in the statement laid on the Table of the House, [Placed in Library. See No. LT-2180/67].

(b) Such Conferences provide an opportunity to the General Managers to exchange ideas among themselves and with the Members of the Railway Board. The chief objective is to bring about increased efficiency and this is pursued by the General Managers in the light of discussions at the Conference, with due regard to local conditions.

**OFFICE OF ASSISTANT TRAFFIC SUPDT.,
N. E. RAILWAY, GARHARA**

5597. **SHRI YOGENDRA SHARMA :** Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the office of the Assistant Traffic Superintendent, N. E. Railway, Garhara (Monghyr) is located in the heart of the marshalling yard and the clerks who are not medically fit for yard duty have to attend this office crossing so many lines in the midst of continuous shunting;

(b) whether there has been a joint representation from the Ministerial staff to change the site of the office; and

(c) if so, the action taken thereon ?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C. M. POONACHA) : (a) to (c). The office of Assistant Traffic Superintendent, N. E. Railway, Garhara, is situated between the marshalling yard and the transshipment shed and not where continuous shunting goes on. The medical category of a Railway employee is determined on the basis of the duties performed by him and not on the basis of having to cross Railway lines in going to his place of duty or otherwise. The clerks in question do not perform duties which are undertaken by yard-staff and there should have been no occasion to consider this aspect in relation to their place of work. When a representation from these Ministerial staff was received, the merits of the case were gone into and it was found that there was already a path-way provided from the level-crossing to go to the office across the lines and no justification could be found for taking any further action.

EXPORTS BY STC AND MMTC

5598. SHRI S. K. TAPURIAH : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to set up an apex body consisting of M. Ps., Publicmen and businessmen to draw up programmes and policies to increase exports by S. T. C. and M. M. T. C.;

(b) the useful purpose that will be served by this body in view of the already existing multiplicity of advisory bodies; and

(c) the steps taken for better co-ordination among the existing bodies ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI MOHD. SHAFI QURESHI) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Existing Advisory/Consultative bodies of the S. T. C. and M.M.T.C. have been set up with the special purpose of advising the Corporations on trade matters relating to specific commodities. To the extent necessary, co-ordination already exists among these bodies.

HANDICRAFTS INDUSTRY

5599. SHRI VIRENDRAKUMAR SHAH : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether measures were under consideration to provide higher wages and better working conditions for artisans in the handicrafts industry and if so, the decision taken in the matter;

(b) what other measures are being taken to promote handicraft industry and the export of handicrafts; and

(c) the extent to which the production of handicrafts and their export are likely to increase by 1st April, 1969 ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI MOHD. SHAFI QURESHI) : (a) Steps have been taken to improve the earning capacity of artisans by organised production of co-operatives, use of improved tools and techniques, and introduction of new designs especially for exports. State Governments and Union Territories also have included expansion of similar schemes in their programmes. Measures to improve the working conditions of artisans especially living places where most craftsmen work, are under consideration.

(b) The following steps are being taken for promoting the handicraft industry and promotion of exports of handicrafts:—

(i) Supply of scarce raw material at reasonable prices;

(ii) Expansion of training schemes especially of Apprentices under Mastercraftsmen;

(iii) Provision of certain common facility services, e.g. Wood seasoning plants, dye-houses, baking kilns for pottery, lacquering centres for brass-wares, etc.;

(iv) Expansion of marketing facilities, including modernisation of existing handicrafts emporia;

(v) Research and improvement in packaging;