

(b) The policy adopted for the opening, retention and confirmation of Post Offices is indicated in the Statements laid on the table of the House [Placed in Library see No. LT—2000/72].

All these offices have completed their experimental period and are found to be working beyond the permissible limits of loss. No body came forward to make good the extra loss as a non-returnable contribution even though this was requested for in advance. The Post Offices were, therefore, closed down on the dates mentioned at (a) above.

(c) No. The relaxations permitted are indicated in the policy and these cases do not satisfy these criteria nor were there any other special grounds.

SHORTAGE OF RAW MATERIALS IN PLASTIC INDUSTRY IN GUJARAT

5673. SHRI PRABHUDAS PATEL: Will the Minister of INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether small-scale manufacturers of plastics in Gujarat are facing an acute shortage of raw materials;

(b) if so, whether many of the small units could use only 30 to 50 per cent of their production capacity; and

(c) whether Union Government propose to supply raw material to help these small scale industries?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI SIDDHESHWAR PRASAD)

(a) Complaints have been received in this regard.

(b) The units concerned are functioning below their capacity.

(c) Actual users have been allowed the import of low density polythene during the current licensing period, that is, 1972-73, to the extent of 25% of their entitlement. Moreover, the Ministry of Petroleum and Chemicals have asked the State Trading Corporation of India to explore the possibilities for importing 3,000 tonnes of this

material from the Rupee Payment Areas. This is likely to ease the situation.

REACTOR RESEARCH CENTRE AT KALPAKKAM

5674. SHRI VISHWANATH PRATAP SINGH: Will the Minister of ATOMIC ENERGY be pleased to state whether the Reactor Research Centre at Kalpakkam has been able to solve the problem of the swelling of materials, especially fuel elements, core-structural materials and associated stainless steel pipes in fast-breeder reactors due to fast neutron bombardment?

THE PRIME MINISTER, MINISTER OF ATOMIC ENERGY, MINISTER OF ELECTRONICS, MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI-MATI INDIRA GANDHI): One of the main objectives of the Fast Breeder Test Reactor (FBTR), being set up at Kalpakkam, is to serve as an irradiation facility to study the problem of swelling of fuel cladding and other structural materials in a Fast Reactor. In the absence of such a facility, research in this field cannot be fruitful. Construction of the FBTR will commence shortly at the Reactor Research Centre. For the study of the above problem in addition to FBTR, a Radio metallurgy Laboratory and a Materials Development Laboratory are also being set up. These three facilities, when completed in 1967, would provide scope for research in these areas towards the development of economic, commercial Fast Breeders of a large size to meet the growing demands for power in this country.

SELF-RELIANCE IN URANIUM

5675. SHRI VISHWANATH PRATAP SINGH: Will the Minister of ATOMIC ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has been relying on USA for the supply of enriched uranium; and

(b) if so, what steps are being taken to make the country self-reliant in this respect?

THE PRIME MINISTER, MINISTER OF ATOMIC ENERGY, MINISTER OF