

(d) There has been considerable delay in setting up and completion of the pilot plant work. The pilot plant, as per original estimates was to be erected and work completed by end of 1973.

The pilot plant was erected in May, 1975 and after sanction of further funds for carrying out necessary modifications, M/s. C.M.D.C. are scheduled to complete their work and submit final report by the end of September, 1977.

Upto 30th June, 1977 a total expenditure of Rs. 34.17 lakhs has been incurred on the pilot plant tests.

(e) Information is given in a statement attached.

(f) Government is considering other alternative for the implementation of the Sukinda Nickel Project including the import of established foreign technology.

**Statement**

Import figures of 'Nickel' (Revised Indian Trade Classification Code No. 683) for the years from 1974-75 to 1976-77 (upto December 1976).

Year	Quantity (in tonnes)	Value Rs. lakhs
1974-75 . . . . .	3,998	1396.36
1975-76 . . . . .	4,316	1596.85
1976-77 (Upto Dec- ember, 1976) . . . . .	3,887	1646.95

Source : Monthly Statistics of the Foreign Trade of India Vol. II—Imports published by the Director General of Commercial Intelligence & Statistics, Calcutta.

**Manufacture of private automatic exchanges**

6109. SHRI SATISH AGARWAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether INTRONIX a small scale manufacturer headed by Shri S. D. Mani has been permitted to manufacture private automatic exchanges;

(b) whether this is not reserved for the public sector; and

(c) whether this in any way violates the Industrial Policy Resolution of Government of India?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BRIJ LAL VERMA): (a) and (b). INTRONIX, a small scale manufacturer, has been permitted to manufacture "digital inter-connect equipment" which is a programmed interface for various kinds of process and control signals. No permission has been accorded to INTRONIX for manufacture of private automatic exchanges. Manufacture of telecommunication equipment is reserved for public sector.

(c) Does not arise.

**Manufacture of Steel Tubes**

6110. SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) the names of public sector and private sector companies manufacturing steel tubes of various types;

(b) whether those companies are also exporting the steel tubes; if so to which countries;

(c) whether Government propose to produce certain types of bigger size steel tubes only by the Steel Authority of India and other public sector concerns; and

(d) if so, facts thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI BIJU PATNAIK): (a) The only public sector plant presently