

(c) Secretary, Indian Cotton Mills Federation who is the sponsoring authority for movement of coal to cotton mills has recommended reduction in allocation of coal wagons in respect of 43 units and has enhanced allocation for 30 units. These recommendations have been accepted for implementation from August 1978

Restructuring of Price of Farm Inputs

3235. SHRI T. A. PAI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) has the attention of the Government been drawn to the reported speech of the Minister for Petroleum and Chemicals that the farm inputs price require restructuring in the interest of the farmers; and

(b) what urgent steps the Government propose to take in this matter in the immediate future?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA): (a) and (b). It has been the constant endeavour of the Government to make available farm inputs to the farmers at reasonable prices. The price of urea, the major nitrogenous fertilizer, was reduced by Rs. 100 per tonne with effect from 12-10-77. Based on a report of Bureau of Industrial Costs and Prices which indicated some scope in reduction of prices of pesticides, a dialogue was held with the pesticides manufacturers who have also reduced prices of a number of items of pesticides ranging upto 12 per cent. Government have also recently withdrawn excise duty on pesticides. Besides, the Chief Ministers have been requested to exempt fertilizers and pesticides as also the raw materials used in their manufacture from sales tax/octroi, etc.

Contracts for construction of Mathura Refinery

3236. SHRI SURENDRA BIKRAM: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) how many contracts for building and construction of Mathura Refinery have been given to foreign and Indian Companies;

(b) whether India is today not fully capable of taking over the entire construction and erection of a refinery of this magnitude; and

(c) for how much money the contracts have already been given to various contractors?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA): (a) and (c). Out of 78 major contracts of the value of approximately Rs. 83 crores, 11 contracts amounting to about Rs. 22 crores have been awarded to foreign companies and the remaining 67 to Indian companies.

(b) Although considerable know-how in the field of process design, engineering and fabrication of equipment and machinery is available in India, for a refinery like Mathura, which has a single Atmospheric column of 6/7 million metric tonnes per annum, expatriate assistance would be needed. Similarly for construction and erection of imported equipment and machinery, some expatriate assistance becomes necessary mainly to ensure performance guarantees.

Effect of Telephone Cable Thefts and Chain Pulling on Punctuality of Railways

3237. SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the large scale theft of telephone cables and indiscriminate pulling of the alarm chain of Railways have adversely

affected the punctuality of Railways throughout the country specially in Danapur Division of Eastern Railways,

(b) if so details of such thefts and chain pulling during the last one year, and

(c) action taken against the thieves and chain pullers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SHFO NARAIN) (a) Theft of telephone cables and unauthorised alarm chain pulling on the Indian Railways including Danapur Division of Eastern Railway has affected the punctuality of trams

(b) During 1977-78 there were 988 cases of cable theft, and 98 499 incidents of unauthorised alarm chain pulling on the railways

(c) The drives to combat thefts of cables and the menace of unauthorised pulling of alarm chain by anti social elements have been intensified with the cooperation of local civil and police authorities. Close liaison is being maintained with the State Governments to curb the activities of these anti social elements

Railway Income Out of Sale of Hill Station Tickets

3238 SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state

(a) whether it is not a fact that income of railways through sale of tickets for hill stations during the current summer season was less than compared to last seasons

(b) if so, the total income in the years 1976-77 1977-78 and 1978 79 upto June, 1978,

(c) whether it is not a fact that inflow of passengers was hit by the introduction of prohibition in some of the hill stations, and

(d) if so, his reaction thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SHEO NARAIN) (a) to (d) The information is being collected from the Zonal Railways and will be laid on the table of the House

Railway Line in Murbad Taluk of Maharashtra

3239 SHRI R K MHALGI Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state

(a) whether the survey has been conducted for the construction of Railway line in the Taluk of Murbad (Distt Thana, Maharashtra),

(b) if so when and with what result,

(c) whether Railway Ministry have taken any decision on the said survey report if so when and with what result,

(d) whether it is a fact that the Murbad Taluk is one of the backward areas of Thana District and whether Kalvan junction on Central Railway is only about twenty miles from Murbad—a Taluk place and

(e) if so the difficulties to construct the rail line?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SHEO NARAIN) (a) to (e) Yes An engineering cum traffic survey for a new railway line from Kalyan to Ahmednagar was carried out in 1969 70 with a view to develop additional line capacity from Bombay across the Ghats. Murbad is 314 kms away from Kalyan on this alignment The survey revealed that it would be cheaper and operationally more advantageous to develop the capacity on the existing Northeast and Southeast Ghat lines instead of constructing a new line between Kalyan and Ahmednagar