

any such complaint against them; and

(c) the action taken by Government against such officers ?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI K. HANUMANTHAIYA) (a) and (b). No complaints have been received against the Fitter-Chargeman of the Loco Shed at Palani.

There is no Railway Workshop at Paani station of the Southern Railway.

(c) Does not arise.

Effect on Indian Goods in world Market due to increase in Railway and Shipping Freights

1281. SHRI RAJA KULKARNI : Will the Minister of FOREIGN TRADE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there has been any effect on the competition faced by Indian goods in the World Market due to increase in Railway fare and 15 per cent increase in the shipping freight by India-UK Continental Conference; and

(b) if so, the steps being taken by Government in this regard ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN TRADE (SHRI A.C. GEORGE) : (a) Railway freight and shipping freight are two of the several important factors affecting the country's foreign trade. Any increase in their incidence is apt to weaken the competitive position of Indian commodities in the overseas markets. It is however, not possible to quantify the impact of the increased incidence of freight rates on the competitive position of Indian products in the world market because trade flows are subject to so many other considerations also.

(b) A Govt. of India delegation held discussions with the India-UK/Continent Conference in London in June, 1971. As a result of these, Conference reduced the general increase from 15% to 12 $\frac{1}{4}$ %. Regarding increase in railway freight rates, Railway Ministry have confined the increase to only low-rated commodities.

General Conditions for Auction of Railway Materials

1283. SHRI NARENDRA SINGH : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the General Conditions of Auction are the same for all types of auctions involving any kind of material are so rated that they save the Railway staff concerned for all acts of omission and commission which are discovered only at the time of delivery of materials; and

(b) if so, whether it is proposed to have the General Conditions re-examined and made rational, equitable and fair to all concerned ?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI K. HANUMANTHAIYA) : (a) The General Conditions of auctions are generally the same for all types of auctions subject to local minor variations. These are equitable and fair to all concerned and as such reply to the latter Part is in negative.

(b) Does not arise.

Comparative Cost of Hydro-Power VIS-A-VIS Nuclear and Thermal Powers

1284. SHRI NARENDRA SINGH : Will the Minister of IRRIGATION AND POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether Hydro-Power is cheaper than nuclear and thermal power but its availability fluctuates because of its dependence on monsoons and melting of snow in summer months; and

(b) the number of Hydro-Power Stations which are affected by such fluctuations ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF IRRIGATION AND POWER (SHRI B.N. KUREEL) : (a) Yes, Sir. The prevailing cost of power generation from hydro plants is lower than that from thermal and nuclear plants. The power availability depends on the availability of water but the fluctuations are evened out by regulating the water supplies by storage in reservoirs where available.