

(b) Rs 43.39 lakhs against their share of Rs 19.21 lakhs

(c) The Ministry of Railways have explained to the State Government of Kerala that the share of each state from the Railway Safety Works Fund is determined according to a formula recommended by the last Convention Committee and adopted by both Houses of Parliament. The Ministry of Railways have no discretion to enhance the share of any State Government.

The Chief Minister's suggestion that this formula may be referred to the new Convention Committee for review, has been accepted and the matter has since been placed before the Committee.

Acceleration of Work of Bhimkunda and Bangali Dam Projects to check Floods in Orissa

912 SHRI ARJUN SETHI Will the Minister of IRRIGATION AND POWER be pleased to state

(a) whether in view of the recent devastating cyclone and floods in Orissa Government have accorded priority to the work of Bhimkunda Dam Project and Rangali Dam Project on Baitrani and Brahmani rivers respectively, and

(b) if so, when the projects are likely to be taken up?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF IRRIGATION AND POWER (SHRI B. N. KUREEL) (a) and (b) It has been considered that by constructing Rangali dam on the Brahmani and the Bhimkund dam on the Baitrani on a priority basis, the annual recurring damage due to floods in these rivers can be considerably reduced. The State Government of Orissa have taken-up the preparation of the detailed project reports for these dams. The work on these projects can be taken up after they are examined and approved by the Planning Commission.

Robbery in trains between Jhargram and Kalaikunda Railway Stations (South-Eastern Railway)

913 SHRI ARJUN SETHI Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to

state

(a) whether Government are aware that robbery is frequently committed in trains, especially in Utkal Express between Jhargram and Kalaikunda Railway Stations of South-Eastern Railway, and

(b) if so, the steps Government have taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI K. HANUMANTHAIA) (a) No. Only two cases were recently reported from Utkal Express.

(b) The gang responsible has been detected and G. R. P. has been directed to escort the train.

Grant of Licences to Railway Bookstall Contractors

914 SHRI MAH MUKUL BANERJI Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state

(1) how many Railway bookstall contractors have been given licences on the Indian Railways,

(b) whether it is the policy of the Railway Board to extend the licences granted to Railway bookstall contractors for specific periods if their services are found to be satisfactory, and

(c) the names of the contractors whose services have been found generally satisfactory?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI K. HANUMANTHAIA) (a) 257 contractors, including 42 vending contractors.

(b) The renewal of the licences granted to Railway Bookstall contractors is generally considered taking into account the quality of services rendered by the contractors during the subsisting contract period and subject to the contractors agreeing to such additions, alterations and modifications of the terms of the agreement as the Railway administration shall think fit in the interest of the public.

(c) A statement giving details is laid on the Table of the House. [*Placed in lieu*] See No LT—1506/72]

Suspension of Indian Handloom Imports by U. K.

915 SHRI N K SANGHI Will the Minister of FOREIGN TRADE be pleased to state

(a) whether the British Government have suspended imports of Indian handlooms and have suggested to the Indian exporters to defer the export till the question of 15 per cent additional levy on Indian textiles is decided or in the alternative to reduce the policy by 15 per cent,

(b) whether this stand of the British Government has affected handloom worth Rs 57 lakhs ready for shipment and another 50 lakhs under production, and

(c) whether the Government of India have taken up the matter with the U K Government, and if so, with what result?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN TRADE (SHRI A C GORGE) (a) to (c) With effect from the last January 1972, the British Government have imposed a new customs tariff on cotton textiles imported from India and other Commonwealth countries. In respect of Indian handloom cotton goods and handloom silk goods the British Government have, however, offered duty free entry subject to ceilings of 1 million square yards and 40,000 sq yards respectively for 1972. Under their proposal the duty free entry is dependent on the conclusion of an agreement between the Government of India and the British Government.

The duty free quotas offered are, however, extremely low as compared to our actual exports in the past and the coverage is not also free from doubt. Our efforts to persuade the British Government to allow unrestricted duty free entry for all our handloom goods, have not succeeded so far.

The Government of India are, however, continuing their efforts to reach a mutually

acceptable solution with the British Government.

No precise estimate of the trade affected by the measures taken by the British Government can be given.

Freight charges to be paid at loading point

916 SHRI N K SANGHI :
SHRI BISHWANATH JHUNWALA

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state

(a) whether Railway authorities have taken a decision that freight charges will have to be paid at the loading point rather than at the destination point, as has been the practice hitherto,

(b) if so, the reasons therefor, and

(c) the financial difficulties experienced by the Railways under the earlier scheme post-payment and what financial gains or administrative conveniences are envisaged under the new schemes?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI K HANUMANTHAIYA) (a) There are at present 367 commodities on which pre-payment of freight is compulsory. It has been decided to extend the condition of compulsory pre-payment of freight to additional 26 low valued commodities with effect from 1st April, 1972.

(b) and (c) The reasons for extending the condition of compulsory pre-payment of freight to additional 26 'low value' commodities, and the main advantages which will accrue to the Railway by this decision are—

(1) Pre-payment of freight at the time of booking would reduce the outstanding freight on Railways. Public Accounts Committee (Fifth Lok Sabha) have, vide recommendation No 15 of their 11th Report, specifically stated as under—

“The Committee note that Railways are already in-