

(d) if so, whether the Commission propose to visit Kerala?

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Commerce (Shri Shaif Qureshi):

(a), (e) and (d) Yes, Sir

(b) The Commission will visit the State of Kerala only.

Import of Synthetic Rubber

302. Shrimati Susela Gopalan:
Shri C. K. Chakrapani:

Will the Minister of Commerce be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that licence for importing synthetic rubber cannot be granted for more than 6,000 tons at a time;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Government have granted licences for importing 32,000 tons of synthetic rubber recently at a time, and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor?

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Commerce (Shri Shaif Qureshi):

(a) No, Sir. Although the import of rubber, whether natural or synthetic, requires an import licence, there is no regulation to the effect that not more than 6,000 tons at a time should be licensed.

(b) The total import of synthetic rubber during 1966-67 has been of the order of about 4,700 tons only. This has been done taking into account the deficit between the available domestic supplies of natural and synthetic rubber and actual requirements for rubber for various consuming industries.

(c) Does not arise.

Kerala Rubber Growers

303. Shrimati Susela Gopalan:
Shri C. K. Chakrapani:
Shri C. Janardhanan:
Shri Vasudevam Nair:
Shri F. C. Adichean:

Will the Minister of Commerce be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention

has been drawn to the proposals put forward at the recent conference of the Kerala Rubber Growers held in Pala; that the price of natural rubber be fixed at Rs 6 per kilo and that the rubber factories be opened under the control of the Rubber Board to assist the rubber growers;

(b) if so, the reaction of Government to these proposals; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to protect the interest of small growers?

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Commerce (Shri Shaif Qureshi):

(a) Representations have been received urging Government *inter alia* to revise the terms of reference to the Tariff Commission about the fixation of fair price of indigenous natural rubber and for directing the Tariff Commission to restrict their enquiry to the small growers only. No representation for fixing the price of indigenous natural rubber at Rs 6 per kg has been received.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Interest free loans and subsidies are given to the small growers so as to enable them to develop their holdings. The question of fixation of a fair price of their produce will be considered on receipt of the recommendations of the Tariff Commission.

Bharathi Mills, Pondichery

304. Shri Umanath:
Shri F. Gopalan:
Shri C. K. Chakrapani:
Shri Jyotirmoy Basu:
Shri V. V. Menon:
Shri K. Anirudhan:

Will the Minister of Commerce be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a large number of ex-workers of the Bharathi Mills, Pondichery have still not been reinstated even after the Government's take-over of the mills;

(b) if so, the number of those who are still unemployed and the reasons therefor;

(e) whether the Government Controller of the Mills had proposed to the Workers' Unions, for the revision of the terms and conditions of service that existed before Government take-over, as a condition prior to restarting of the mills;

(b) if so, the details of Government's proposals; and

(d) whether any settlement was arrived at with the Unions and if not, the reasons therefor?

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Commerce (Shri Shafi Qureshi): (a) and (b). About 600 workers constituting about 50 per cent of the ex-workers of the mill have already been recalled, while another 150 workers are expected to be recalled shortly. This will leave about 480 workers out of which only 143 would be permanent workers. The reason for not employing all the workers is that the mill has restarted with 18,000 spindles and 96 looms only out of a total of 25,000 spindles and 386 looms.

(c) to (e) The terms and conditions of service of workers have not been altered. However, the Authorised Controller discussed with the unions certain proposals relating to revised workload for the economic running of the mill. These proposals were, however, not made a pre-condition to the restarting of the mills.

Material Checkers in Railway Electrification Project

305. Shri Satya Narain Singh: Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the former Railway Minister gave an assurance to the Material Checkers in the Railway Electrification Project that they would be given alternative jobs like other Class III employees;

(b) if so, whether Government have implemented the assurance so far; and

(c) if not, when these employees are likely to be absorbed in regular Railway services?

The Minister of Railways (Shri C. M. Poonacha): (a) No.

(b) and (c). Do not arise.

Substitute Workers of Mughal Sarai Diesel Loco Shed

306 Shri Satya Narain Singh: Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of substitute workers of Mughal Sarai Diesel Loco Shed retrenched during the last two months;

(b) whether it is a fact that the retrenched workers had completed more than six months and new hands were appointed for the same jobs; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to stop these measures?

The Minister of Railways (Shri C. M. Poonacha): (a) and (b). 74 men were engaged purely as substitute workers pending regular recruitment, at which these 74 men along with other applicants were considered 47 failed in the recruitment test and are proposed to be replaced by the men who have been successful at the recruitment test. However, only 4 men have actually been discharged on account of being found unfit at the medical examination held before regular appointment.

(c) Substitute workers have necessarily to go through a proper test for regular appointment and if they fail either at the test or at the initial medical examination, they have to be discharged.

Yarn for Handloom Weavers

307. Shri Ramachandra Ujain:
Shri Dhuleshwar Meena:
Shri Bhagapathi Pradhan:
Shri Manoj Mehta:

Will the Minister of Commerce be