

raw materials in Assam, Government propose to set up a Newsprint factory in that State in the public sector;

(b) whether any licence was granted to any firm in the past to erect such a factory in the private sector; and

(c) if so, the progress made so far in this regard?

The Minister of Industrial Development and Company Affairs (Shri F. A. Ahmed): (a) No, Sir. However, the possibilities of setting up a paper/pulp unit in Assam to meet the requirements of the North Eastern region are being explored and a project report is likely to be ready by the end of the year.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

Laxmi Rattan Cotton Mills, Ltd.,  
Kanpur

6441. Shri S. M. Banerjee:  
Shri Jyotirmoy Basu:  
Shri Madhu Limaye:  
Shri Ishaq Samdani:  
Shri Satya Narain Singh:

Will the Minister of Commerce be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Uttar Pradesh Government have approached the Central Government for 50 per cent financial aid to enable them to take over the Laxmi Rattan Cotton Mills, Limited, Kanpur;

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto; and

(c) whether a decision has been taken to take over this mill?

The Minister of Commerce (Shri Dinesh Singh): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c). The Central Government are not proposing to take over the management of any mill pending the passing of the Bill proposed to be

introduced shortly, to enable them to take over closed and likely-to-close mills. Moreover, it has not been possible to assess accurately the total financial liabilities of the mill. For that reason too, the Central Government are unable to undertake any financial liability in this case.

Fixation of Seniority in Coal Controller's Office

6442. Dr. Ramen Sen: Will the Minister of Steel, Mines and Metals be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that resentment prevails amongst the employees of the Coal Controller's Headquarters Office in Calcutta in the matter of fixation of seniority; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by Government to ease the situation?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Steel, Mines and Metals (Shri P. C. Sethi): (a) and (b). Representations have been received from employees of the Coal Controller's Headquarters Office in respect of the principle followed in the fixation of Seniority of Lower Division Clerks in Coal Controller's Headquarters Office. The matter is under examination.

Non-ferrous Metal Industry

6444. Shri N. K. Somani:  
Shri Ganpat Sahai:  
Shri Sequelra:

Will the Minister of Steel, Mines and Metals be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the large idle capacity in the non-ferrous metal industry;

(b) whether it is a fact that large scale imports of non-ferrous bars, rods, strips and circles were allowed and are still being allowed from hard-currency areas in spite of the fact that they can be made in India; and

(c) whether a high-level enquiry will be made into this wasteful import policy?

The Minister of Steel, Mines and Metals (Dr. Chenna Reddy): (a) Yes, Sir, This idle capacity is due to non-availability of adequate foreign exchange for import of virgin non-ferrous metals required to feed the industry.

(b) Import in general of non-ferrous semis like brass and copper tubes, rods, sections, strips, sheets etc has been banned under the Import Trade Control Policy for a long time. However, import of brass and copper tubes, sheets etc of such sizes and specifications as were not indigenously available and were essential for the actual users, has been allowed in the case of machinery used in sugar industry, refrigeration and printing industries etc Import of such semis was also allowed under Trade Plans as the Rupee-Payment countries were not prepared to supply virgin non-ferrous metals Due to shortage of foreign exchange for the import of virgin metals, the import of such semis became imperative to maintain the existing level of production and to avoid closure of the units

Further, steps have been taken to formulate the current Import Policy whereby import is permitted only to Actual Users for such sizes/specifications of brass and copper tubes, sheets etc. which indigenous manufacturers are not able to produce All such items for which indigenous capacity exists are totally banned in the current Import Policy.

(c) In view of the position explained at (b) above, an enquiry into the matter is not considered necessary.

**Train from Howrah to Cuttack connecting Puri—Talchar Passenger Train**

6445. Shri K. P. Singh Deo: Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware

that at present there is no train from Howrah to Cuttack connecting Puri-Talchar passenger which leaves Cuttack in the evening, causing great hardship to the passengers; and

(b) if so, whether Government propose to run such a train and when it is likely to be started?

The Minister of Railways (Shri C. M. Poonacha): (a) Suitable connecting trains are already available in Nos 317Up Howrah-Puri Passenger and 99 Up Howrah-Madras weekly Air-conditioned Express which are scheduled to arrive Cuttack at 15 08 and 15 22 hours respectively and connecting with No 436 Dn. Puri-Talchar Passenger scheduled to leave there at 18 45 hours

(b) Does not arise.

**Ticketless Travelling**

6446. Shri K. P. Singh Deo: Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that cases of ticketless travelling among the Railway staff have been detected by the Railway authorities;

(b) if so, the number of such cases detected during the past six months; and

(c) the action taken by Government in this regard?

The Minister of Railways (Shri C. M. Poonacha): (a) and (b). Separate statistics of Railway staff travelling without tickets are not maintained. Only figures of total number of persons travelling without tickets are maintained by the Railways. Some railway staff do get detected travelling without ticket.

(c) when Railway staff are detected travelling without tickets, in addition to the realisation of railway dues, disciplinary action is also taken against them.