

machinery within the time envisaged earlier.

(c) According to present indications, the first blast furnace is likely to be commissioned by March, 1971 and the entire project (First Phase) is likely to be completed by the middle of 1972.

Ban on Import of X-Ray Films

12. SHRI NAMBIAR :
SHRI K. RAMANI :
SHRIMATI SUSEELA GOPALAN :
SHRI P. RAMAMURTI :

Will the Minister of FOREIGN TRADE AND SUPPLY be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have banned the import of X-ray films:

(b) if so, the reasons therefor:

(c) whether it is a fact that the hospitals and private clinics are not able to meet their needs as a result of this ban ;

(d) if so, the steps Government propose to take to meet the situation ;

(e) whether the Hindustan Photo Films Manufacturing Company at Octacamund can meet the demand in full; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor ?

SHRI DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN TRADE AND SUPPLY (SHRI CHOWDHARY RAM SEWAK) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d). Do not arise.

(e) and (f) : M_s. Hindustan Photo Films Manufacturing Company started production of X-Ray Films in 1968 only and are not yet in a position to meet the full demand of the country. Steps are, however, being taken to meet the full demand indigenously by 1969-70.

Shortage of Truck/Bus Tyres and Tubes

13. SHRI NAMBIAR :
SHRI JYOTIRMOY BASU :
SHRI K. RAMANI :
SHRI UMANATH :
SHRI M. N. REDDY :
SHRI VISHWANATH PANDEY :
SHRI D. N. PATODIA :
SHRI RAMACHANDRA VEERAPPA :

Will the Minister of INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a shortage of truck bus tyres and tubes throughout the country;

(b) if so, the steps taken by Government to meet the shortage;

(c) whether it is also a fact that due to the shortage the dealers are selling tyres in black market; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by Government to stop the black market in tyres ?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT INTERNAL TRADE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI F. A. AHMED) : (a) shortage of particular sizes of truck/bus tyres has been brought to the notice of Government.

(b) Government have taken the following steps to meet the shortage of tyres:

(i) The various automobile tyres manufacturers have been advised to step up the production of automobile tyres, particularly of categories which are in short supply. For this purpose, Government are also assisting the manufactures to import the requisite moulds and other balancing equipment.

(ii) Government have also permitted

some vehicle manufactures to import 14000 truck tyres.

- (iii) Government are also taking steps to establish additional capacity for the manufacture of automobile tyres.

(c) Complaints have been received about over-charging of prices in respect of truck/bus tyres.

(d) Truck Bus tyres and tubes have been declared as "essential commodity" under the Essential Commodities Act to enable the State Government/local Administrations to regulate the acquisition and distribution of such tyres so that the requirements are adequately met.

Writing off Capital of Steel Plants

14. SHRI NAMBIAR :
 SHRI BHAGABAN DAS :
 SHRI MOHAMMAD ISMAIL :
 SHRI P. RAMAMURTI :
 SHRI D. N. PATODIA :
 SHRI SURENDRANATH DWIVEDY :
 SHRI SAMAR GUHA :
 SHRI K. LAKKAPPA :

Will the Minister of STEEL, MINES AND METALS be pleased to state

(a) whether his Ministry is considering a plan to write off capital block of public sector steel plants ;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) how the plan is proposed to be implemented; and

(d) the amount of interest on capital payable by the public sector steel plants ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND HEAVY ENGINEERING (SHRI K. C. PANT) :
 (a) to (c). some of the basic handicaps under which Hindustan Steel is functioning were listed out in a pamphlet 'Performance

of HSL' laid on the table of the House on 5. 4. 1968. There are various measures under examination with a view to removing or minimising these handicaps. No final decisions have yet been taken.

(d) The amount of interest paid by HSL for the year 1967-68 was Rs. 291.7 million.

Loss Suffered by Hindustan Zinc Limited

15. SHRI K. LAKKAPPA : Will the Minister of STEEL, MINES AND METALS be pleased to state :

(a) the amount of loss which the Hindustan Zinc Ltd. suffered since its inception on account of irregularities, thefts, stock shortages and fires ;

(b) whether the matters were looked into and, if so, the result thereof ; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to find out the draw backs and to bring about improvements in its working ?

THE MINISTER OF PETRO CHMICALS AND MINES AND METALS (DR. TRIGUNA SEN) : (a) to (c). The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Director, Small Industries Services Institute, Trichur

16. SHRI E. K. NAYANAR :
 SHRI C. K. CHAKRAPANI :
 SHRI A. K. GOPALAN :
 SHRI K. ANIRUDHAN :

Will the Minister of INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether any charges of misuse of official power against Director, Small Industries Service Institute, Trichur (Kerala) have been brought to the notice of Government ;

(b) if so, whether any enquiry has been conducted ; and