

Amindivi Islands, Manipur, Pondicherry and Tripura. Information in respect of remaining States/Union Territories is not readily available.

Recommendations of Enquiry Committee on the Working of Railways Especially the Claims Section

381. SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES :
SHRI ONKAR LAL BERWA :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Railway Board had appointed a Committee consisting of Shri R. B. Lal, to enquire into the working of the Railways and especially the functioning of the Claims Section of the Railways ;

(b) if so, whether the Committee has submitted its report;

(c) the principal recommendations made by the Committee; and

(d) the action taken thereon ?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NANDA) : (a) A 'One-man Expert Committee' consisting of Shri R. B. Lal was set up to enquire into the question of losses of and damage to consignments booked by the Railways and the compensation claims arising therefrom.

(b) Yes.

(c) A statement of the observations and recommendations of this Committee was attached to the Answer to Unstarred Question No. 8596 given in the Lok Sabha on 5.5.1970.

(d) Out of 618 Observations and Recommendations made in the Report, 324 have been examined and finalised and the rest are still under consideration. Some of the steps taken or proposed to be taken in pursuance of the observations and recommendations so far considered include exercise of greater care in 'marking and addressing' of packages and 'labelling of

wagons' to prevent consignments from going astray, improved sealing and proper riveting of wagons and locking of luggage vans for better security, arousing of consciousness for the safety of goods and parcels in the minds of the staff at all levels, review of adequacy of staff at the stations for supervision of loading, unloading, etc., watching of detentions to consignments en route, strengthening of security measures for preventing pilferages through holes cut in the panels of the wagons, doing repairs to damaged wagons on a larger scale, stoppage of loading of pilferable commodities in panel cut wagons, fitting of anti-bleeding device on the flapdoors of the wagons to prevent pilferage through flapdoor crevices, providing sufficient accommodation in trains for carriage of perishable parcels, providing proper facilities for handling of goods at stations, conducting of surprise checks for detecting irregularities and malpractices, rationalisation of the procedure for opening of files and issue of pay orders, submission of Missing and Damaged Goods Reports by the stations to the Claims Offices in advance of the claims, prompt completion of enquiries, introduction of mobil claims offices to settle claims at stations, prompt disposal of reminders and appeals, tightening up of the supervision, minimisation of litigation, etc.

Allegations Against M/s. Alembic Group of Industries

383. SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES : Will the Minister of COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 10284 on the 19th May, 1970 regarding the allegations against M/s. Alembic Group of Industries and state :

(a) whether Government have since investigated into the charge that two Companies from the Alembic Group of Industries, Baroda have made a donation of Rs.50,000 to Shri S. K. Patil though it is officially stated that the donation is in the name of the Bombay Pradesh Congress Committee;

(b) if so, the details of the findings of the inquiry;

(c) whether any legal action would be instituted against Shri S. K. Patil for not showing the donation in the Bombay Pradesh Congress Committee accounts and, if, not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) whether any action is proposed to be taken against the Company for showing a personal gift as a political donation and, if not, reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI RAGHUNATHA REDDY) : (a) to (d). Inspection of the books of accounts of the company has been ordered under section 209(4) of the Companies Act, 1956. The inspection report is awaited.

Price of Capstan Brand Cigarettes

384. SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES : Will the Minister of INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNAL TRADE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the Imperial Tobacco Company had been marketing Capstan brand cigarettes at Re. 1/- a packet before the February, 1970 Budget;

(b) whether this packet now sells at Rs. 1.30 per packet;

(c) whether soon after the Budget, the Company introduced another Capstan packet and marketed it at 55 paise.

(d) whether Government are aware that the second brand was introduced in order to confuse the consumer and make him feel that he is smoking the high priced Capstan at a reduced price; and

(e) whether it is also a fact that this new brand has been introduced by the Imperial Tobacco Company in order to indulge in unfair competition with their rivals marketing popular cigarettes in the medium price range ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNAL TRADE (SHRI M. R. KRISHNA) : (a) and (b). The Imperial Tobacco Company were marketing Capstan Medium cigarettes at Rs. 1.25 per packet of ten cigarettes, and increased its price to Rs.1.30 per packet following the February 1970 Budget.

(c) The Company which had discontinued their Capstan Navy cut Magnum cigarette in 1947, reintroduced this brand in 1969.

(d) and (e). As these cigarettes are packed in different coloured packets, the Medium in white packets and the Magnum in blue, such confusion should not normally take place. There does not appear to be any element of unfair competition in the company reintroducing a medium priced cigarette which had earlier been sold by them.

Incidents in Public Sector Steel Plants.

385. SHRI M. L. SONDHI : Will the Minister of STEEL AND HEAVY ENGINEERING be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that violent incidents have escalated in the public sector Steel Plants;

(b) if so, the opening of his Ministry, the labour Ministry and the Home Ministry regarding this phenomenon; and

(c) the decision taken by Government for the control of violent conflicts and lowering of tensions in the public sector Steel Plants ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND HEAVY ENGINEERING (SHRI MOHAMMED SHAFI QURESHI) : (a) No, Sir.

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