

resulting in rise in the country's payment to foreign ships at a time when Indian ships are unable to find enough cargo to fill their holds; and

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto and steps proposed to be taken in the matter.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT (SHRI H. M. TRIVEDI):

(a) There is evidence to indicate that some foreign non-Conference Shipping Lines are operating their vessels in India's overseas trade in which Indian Lines have been operating as members of Conferences and Joint Shipping Services.

(b) Government is considering measures for protecting the interests of Indian Shipping in India's overseas trade.

**Central Booking Agency to Replace Freight Brokers**

\*519. SHRI Y. ESWARA REDDY: Will the Minister of SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have a proposal under consideration to set up a central booking agency for replacing freight brokers; and

(b) if so, the facts thereof and the steps being taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT (SHRI H. M. TRIVEDI):

(a) and (b). Government are at present studying the present freight arrangements and the possible role that a Central booking agency will have for the maximum utilisation of available shipping space in Indian flag ships for more efficient carriage of India's overseas trade. As the study is in a preliminary stage the question of supplying details does not arise.

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**Alumina Plant in Serguja**

2426. SHRI RANABAHADUR SINGH: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the feasibility report for the establishment of an Alumina Plant, based on the deposits of main-put in Serguja District is ready; and

(b) if so, when is the project likely to be ready?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI SUKHDEV PRASAD):

(a) and (b). Yes, Sir The feasibility report is under examination.

**Sale of sub-standard goggles**

2427 SHRI VASANT SATHE: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY PLANNING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Society for Prevention of Blindness has drawn the attention of Government to the increasing sale of sub-standard goggles; and

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY PLANNING (SHRI A. K. M. ISHAQUE): (a) Yes.

(b) The Government are seized of this problem and will examine steps necessary to be taken in this regard.

**Assam National Highways**

2428. SHRI NOORUL HUDA: Will the Minister of SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) how many National Highways are there in the State of Assam;

(b) whether the Central Government's attention has been drawn to