

drilling locations will depend, among other things, on the results obtained and operational conditions, from time to time.

(b) Production testing of the second well now being drilled on Bombay High is expected to commence in a few days. It is only after conducting these tests and evaluating the results and if necessary by drilling another well at a distance that ONGC can take up the question of first stage production and the necessary facilities to achieve this production, including the erection and fabrication of fixed platforms.

Dismissal/Removal/Transfer of Employees in connection with May, 1974 Railway Strike

*115. SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) how many Railway employees were dismissed or removed from service or transferred in connection with the last Railway strike; and

(b) how many of the employees dismissed or removed from service, have been reinstated with or without break in service?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MOHD. SHAFI QURESHI): (a) (i) About 11240 permanent employees were dismissed/removed from service; and

(ii) About 950 employees were transferred

(b) Out of about 11240, on consideration of individual appeals, about 7850 ex-employees have so far been taken back to duty. The process of reviewing the cases, on appeals, is in progress. In the case of those who

were dismissed/removed before participation in strike, but have been put back on appeal there will be no break in service, but for those who participated in the strike, there will be a break in service as per rule.

Reports of Study Groups on Working of Foreign Drug Firms

*116. SHRI MUKHTIAR SINGH MALIK:

SHRI BIRENDER SINGH RAO:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have appointed a number of study groups to study the working of foreign drug firms during the Fourth Five Year Plan;

(b) whether these study groups have submitted their reports to Government; and

(c) if so, what action Government propose to take to ensure that all the reports are implemented without delay?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI K. R. GANESH): (a) and (b). Only one study group was appointed in June, 1970 to consider, *inter-alia*, progressive indianisation, remittances made by way of dividends, royalties etc. by foreign companies. This group held one meeting and decided about the collection of relevant data. No specific recommendations were made by this group. Government have since issued in February, 1972, the guidelines for reduction of foreign holdings in foreign majority companies and these are being followed. In addition Reserve Bank of India have

imposed certain restrictions on remittances by foreign companies. Their activities are also governed under the Foreign Exchange Regulation Act, 1973.

(c) Does not arise

Rise in Prices of Soap

*117. SHRI B. S. BHAURA:

SHRI PRABODH CHANDRA:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS be pleased to state:

(a) whether soap prices have risen three-fold during the last two years; and

(b) what are the prices of popular varieties of soaps at present?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI K. R. GANESH): (a) and (b). There is no statutory control over the prices of soaps. Prior to 19th September, 1974 there was, however, an informal price control on soaps produced by the organised sector (except the pre-

mium grade toilet soap) whereby the Indian Soaps and Toiletries Makers' Association consulted Government before making any upward revision in the prices. Increases in the prices of soaps manufactured by the organised sector were last allowed in July, 1973. In the 1st half of the year 1974 there was some fall in the production of soaps by the organised sector. Indian Soaps and Toiletries Makers' Association stated that in view of the unremunerative prices of soaps, they were unable to purchase adequate quantities of oils at the prevailing high prices. In the scarcity conditions, thus created, the soaps were selling at prices much higher than the list prices. The informal price control on all varieties of soaps has been removed from September 19, 1974. Due to improvement in availability of soaps in the market the consumer is now getting them at lower prices.

Before July 1973, the price increases were last allowed in June 1971. The Ministry used to indicate only the extent of the increases and did not fix prices of individual brands. The prices in the last two years and as at present are indicated by the illustrative list below:—

(Rs./Cake)

Variety of soap	Revised prices as from		Present price
	June, 71	July, 73	
Laundry (Sunlight) 150 grams	0.61	0.75	1.05
Carbolic (Life Buoy) 150 grams	0.72	0.90	1.25
Toilet 100 grams (Rexona)	0.74	0.93	1.35
Lux	0.74	0.93	1.33
Janata	1.00—1.05