

new policy for the 1971-72 is announced, specific provision may be made for allowing imports of essential components according to the particular manufacturing programme of the machinery manufactures.

(vii) Although there are units for the manufacture of leather, footwear and leather goods in the country, there are not enough trained technicians for the short-term and long-term maintenance of the machines. It is, therefore, suggested that large scale units having machines would train adequate number of people in the maintenance of these machines so that their services can be made use of by new units which are set up in the country.

(viii) Training of technical personnel for the specific requirements of leather and footwear machinery should be paid adequate attention to. In order to acquaint these technical personnels with the latest advances in such machinery, periodical visits to internationally known machinery fairs should be undertaken. Particularly in the footwear apart from new machines, radical new changes in techniques of production are constantly being evolved, and show technologists in this country should be permitted and encouraged to keep full abreast of such developments.

(ix) Every year the Ministry of Education sponsors several candidates in various branches of industry for training abroad. It is suggested that training in the design, maintenance and manufacture of leather, footwear and leather goods machinery should also be included in the programme.

(x) In case any indigenous manufacturer of all these machineries require their people to be trained abroad or require services of foreign technicians in the manufacture of these machines (including footwear moulds, industrial sewing machines, etc.) every facility may be provided by the Government.

Absorption of Retrenched Employees of Railway Electrification Project

*355. SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the then Railway Minister assured several Members of Parliament that all the 600 retrenched employees of Railway Electrification Project would be reinstated and absorbed in regular employment anywhere on the Indian Railways ;

(b) if so, how many of them have been absorbed so far and given regular employment ; and

(c) the reasons for not absorbing the entire staff till now ?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI HANUMANTHAIYA) : (a) Several Members of Parliament had represented this matter to my predecessor. His decision, which is on record, was that the discharged casual labourers of the Railway Electrification should be given preference and also considered against additional vacancies.

(b) and (c). Casual labourers to the tune of 366 have already been taken back in the Railway Electrification Allahabad. In view of the workload tapering off, further chances of any of the casual labourers being absorbed are very remote. Efforts have, however, been made to get regular employment for Railway Electrification casual labourers. After screening, a panel of 158 surplus casual labourers was initially formed, out of which 114 have since joined the Jagadhri, Kalka, Alambagh and Bikaner workshops. 2 further panels of 100 and 117 have since been formed for appointment on the Northern Railway.

Credit from Nationalised Banks for Early Completion of Rajasthan, Gandak, Kosi and Other Canal Projects.

*356. SHRI BHOGENDRA JHA : Will the Minister of IRRIGATION AND POWER be pleased to state.

(a) Whether the Rajasthan, Gandak, Western Kosi and other big Canal Projects require huge amounts and the major cause of delay in their completion is paucity of funds ; and

(b) whether his Ministry has approached the Ministry of Finance for securing credit from the nationalised banks for early completion of such projects and if so, the result thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF IRRIGATION AND POWER (DR. K. L. RAO) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The nationalised banks lend mostly short-term credit and occasionally medium-term credits only. They also lend support to the borrowing programmes of the State Governments, but they do not finance directly irrigation projects which require very long-term loans.