

SHRI B. K. DASCHOWDHURY:

From the facts stated in reply to the question I find that there are two parts. On the basis of the application submitted by the particular firm at Poona, an *ad interim* injunction was issued by the court. Subsequently that was vacated. The second part is that before the Commission also there are long list of complaints which has been declared as a matter of *sub judice*. Therefore, I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to what happened and what basis the injunction was vacated against the firm? What are the findings of the court?

SHRI H R. GOKHALE: *Ad Interim* injunction is granted by courts, judicial or *quasi-judicial*, in *prima facie* cases. They must have probably decided that there was a *prima facie* case but I won't vouchsafe that. If possible, I can obtain a copy of the order and place it before the House.

Production of Vitamin 'C'

*414. **SHRI H. M. PATEL:** Will the Minister of **PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS** be pleased to state:

(a) What is our present bulk production of Vitamin 'C', separately in the public and private sectors;

(b) what is the installed capacity and the actual production per annum;

(c) to what extent does the indigenous production fall short of the country's estimated requirements today and is expected to fall short during each of the next four years; and

(d) what steps are being taken for ensuring that the indigenous capacity is expanded so as to cover the country's requirements?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI SHAH-NAWAZ KHAN): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) Details of installed capacity for manufacture of Vitamin C and its actual production during 1973 are given below:—

(figures in tonnes)

S. No.	Name of the Party	Licensed Capacity	Installed Capacity	Actual Production in 1973
Public Sector				
1	Hindustan Antibiotics Ltd.	125	125	Nil (Trail production started in 1973. They are yet to report commercial production)
Private Sector				
1	Sarabhai M. Chemicals	120	N.A.	261
2	Suneeta Vitamins and Chemicals Ltd.	125	Under installation	Nil

(c) Production of Vitamin C in the country during the year 1973 was 261 tonnes and imports during 1972-73 & 1973-74 were 280.63 tonnes and 306 tonnes respectively. During the year 1974-75 a quantity of 270 tonnes have been planned for imports through S.T.C. No estimates of shortfall of production of Vitamin C during the next four years have been made as the quantity to be imported will depend upon the indigenous availability.

(d) Task Force on Drugs and Pharmaceuticals set up by the Planning Commission has assessed the 1978-79 demand of Vitamin C at 900 tonnes. HAL a Public Sector undertaking propose to expand their capacity to 250 tonnes per annum during the 5th plan period.

Application of M/s. Sarabhai M. Chemicals for expansion of capacity upto 480 tonnes is being processed.

A letter of intent for a capacity of 150 tonnes per annum of Vitamin C has been granted to Shri D. R. Gandhi for the establishment of a new unit. The proposal of M/s. Goenka & Co. for the grant of an industrial licence for a capacity of 125 tonnes of Vitamin C is being processed.

SHRI H. M. PATEL: Will the hon. Minister please explain why they are still resorting to imports of such a large quantity when the existing capacity could be increased?

(a) When will the Hindustan Antibiotics be in a position to produce it? When will the Government take a decision on Messrs. Sarabhai Chemicals' application for an extension of its capacity upto 480 tonnes?

(b) A letter of intent had been given to M/s. D. R. Gandhi for 150 tonnes. When is it likely to go into production?

(c) The proposal of Shri Goenka is now under process. When will Government take a decision and when will the company start erection of the plant? In other words, when will further indigenous capacity be established? By what date do they expect to establish the indigenous capacity in each of the case?

SHRI SHAHNAWAZ KHAN: As far as Hindustan Antibiotics Ltd., is concerned, the hon. Member knows probably that they are working on the technology of the National Chemical Laboratory. There has been some delay. The plant is complete. We are already producing such things. I have every hope that within the next six months or so, they will go into actual production of Vitamin 'C'.

As regards Sarabhai Chemicals, they have submitted an application for further expansion of the capacity to 480 tonnes. That is receiving the attention of the Government.

SHRI H. M. PATEL: You are importing today 306 tonnes. You expect the import demand in the country to rise to 900 tonnes. Today, the indigenous production is only of the order of 260 tonnes. That means you want to import further.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Patel, you have the second chance to get up. Let the Minister complete your first part of the question. Please do not interrupt him when he is replying.

SHRI H. M. PATEL: I do not mind provided he gives a correct answer.

SHRI SHAHNAWAZ KHAN: The matters are now before the licensing committee. I am sure that they are fully apprised of this situation. They

will not take long. Now, a certain procedure has been streamlined. I can assure you that there are no undue delays. I have every hope that a decision will be taken very soon in this matter. We feel confident that by the end of the Fifth Five Year Plan we hope we shall be in a position to meet the full requirements of the country in Vitamin 'C'.

SHRI H. M. PATEL: My second supplementary is this. Will the Minister please indicate what is the cost—what is the foreign exchange cost—for importing, say, hundred tonnes of Vit. C? If they have to import 600 tonnes, how long will it take for the Sarabhai Chemicals who are to-day producing 260 tonnes to increase their capacity? And how long will it take for the people who are producing this, such as Shri Gandhi and Shri Goenka who have not done any production before? They might take more time because of that. How long will it take for Messrs. Sarabhai Chemicals to increase their production if permission is given to them? Will Government please consider whether, if they have given permission, they can produce? If so, will it not save a considerable amount of foreign exchange? This is the import of my question. Now, will they tell us what is the cost of Vitamin 'C' which they import? What is the amount of foreign exchange involvement today and what will it be in future?

SHRI SHAHNAWAZ KHAN: In 1973 we imported 300 tonnes of Vitamin 'C'. The cost of that was Rs. 112 crores. I entirely agree with him that Sarabhai's who are already producing Vitamin 'C' would be in a position to produce it quickest of all the units which are being licensed.

SHRI H. M. PATEL: When did they apply?

SHRI SHAHNAWAZ KHAN: Sarabhai's applied some time in June 1973.

SHRI H. M. PATEL: You say the licensing procedures have been improved and they can expedite. It is now more than a year when they applied. When did the others apply?

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Patel, you want to settle everything here and now.

SHRI K. S. CHAVDA: If you look at the statement in the last column the actual production by HAL in 1973 is 'nil'. Assurance had been given in the Consultative Committee of the Ministry of Petroleum and Chemicals and also on the floor of the House that HAL is going to produce Vitamin 'C' before 1972. I would like to know what are the reasons for not implementing that assurance?

SHRI SHAHNAWAZ KHAN: As I said they were trying to produce Vitamin 'C' in cooperation with the National Chemical Laboratory. There were technological problems and that had delayed it.

Plan to put off opening of New Railway Lines

*416. SHRI MOHINDER SINGH
GILL:

SHRI NAWAL KISHORE
SHARMA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether due to the present economic crisis, the Railways have been asked to put off its programmes of opening new lines and even some pruning has been done in the original outlay of Rs. 100 crores; and

(b) if so, what other works have been postponed due to such instructions of Planning Commission?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE
MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI
MOHD. SHAFI QURESHI): (a)
No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.