

delivery schedules which could not be met by indigenous producers. Some of the imports made in the last two years were against clearances given about four years ago. Production of heavy transformers of 220 K V range commenced at HEL. Bhopal, only two years ago.

"Panickers Reaction"

*1451. Shri Vasudevan Nair: Will the Minister of Steel, Mines and Metals be pleased to state:

(a) the main features of 'Panickers Reaction' and its potentials and applications in Geological Survey of India and in various industries;

(b) its foreign exchange earning potential, if any; and

(c) the steps taken to apply this process?

The Minister of Steel, Mines and Metals (Dr. Channa Reddy): (a) to (c). Panickers reaction claims that ammonium sulphate suitably catalysed converts oxides and similar compounds of metals below 450 degrees centigrade. Its application and potentialities for foreign exchange earning, are yet to be assessed.

World Bank Loan For IISCO for Manufacture of Sheet Piles

*1452. Shri Indrajit Gupta: Will the Minister of Steel, Mines and Metals be pleased to state:

(a) whether M/s. IISCO has been permitted to secure a large World Bank loan for the manufacture of sheet Piles;

(b) if so, the details of the loan and its purpose; and

(c) whether IISCO have given any firm delivery dates for the supply of Sheet Piles?

The Minister of Steel, Mines and Metals (Dr. Channa Reddy): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) In April 1967, Farakka Barrage placed bulk order on M/s. Indian Iron and Steel Co. Ltd., for supply of 5,253 tonnes of sheet piles. Against this 1,000 tonnes are expected to be delivered by October, 1967. The balance quantity will be delivered by October, 1968.

Printing and Sale of Fake Rail Tickets

*1453. Shri Baburao Patel: Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) the parts of the country where gangs of ticket fakers who print fake railway tickets or resell used tickets are active and the names of the prominent members of the gangs who were arrested;

(b) the names and addresses of the printing presses where fake tickets were printed;

(c) the number and amount of fake tickets traced so far; and

(d) the action Government propose to take in the matter?

The Minister of Railways (Shri C. M. Poonacha): (a) to (d). Information will be laid on the Table of the House.

Manufacture of Fire-fighting Hoses

*1454. Shri N. K. P. Salve:
Shri Nathuram Ahirwar:
Shri Nitiraj Singh Chaudhary
Shri G. C. Dixit:

Will the Minister of Industrial Development and Company Affairs be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Jaishree Textile Industry is a Birla Group concern;

(b) whether the said industry was given an industrial licence for the manufacture of fire-fighting hoses for full capacity as was fixed by the Planning Commission;

(c) if so, what was the said capacity;

(d) whether the said industry took licences for the import of flax from Textile Commissioner and also from the Supply Wing of the Ministry of Defence for the manufacture of said hose-pipes;

(e) if so, the quantity of flax permitted to be imported on each licence and the quantity of fire-fighting hoses that could be manufactured from the flax imported; and

(f) the total quantity of fire-fighting hoses actually manufactured?

The Minister of Industrial Development and Company Affairs (Shri F. A. Ahmed): (a) to (f). The information is being collected and it will be laid on the Table of the House.

Congestion at Howrah Railway Station

1455. Shri Samar Guha: Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that over-congestion of in-coming and out-going trains to and from Howrah Station creates problems of delay, dislocation and harassment to the passengers and goods transportation; and

(b) if so, whether Government have any scheme to divert some of the trains, coming and going from Howrah to Sealdah Station?

The Minister of Railways (Shri C. M. Poonacha): (a) and (b). There is no congestion, as such, within the station premises of Howrah which has adequate facilities for dealing with not only the present train services but even for handling more train services in future to meet the growing needs of traffic. There is no scheme, at present, for diverting any of the existing services from Howrah to Sealdah.

Industrial Growth

***1456. Shri Virendrakumar Shah:** Will the Minister of Industrial Development and Company Affairs be pleased to state:

(a) the rate of industrial growth in the first two quarters of the current year and how it compares with the corresponding figures in the previous two years;

(b) whether the declining trend in the industrial growth during the year 1966 is still continuing;

(c) the steps taken to increase the industrial growth; and

(d) how far the average industrial growth so far during the first two years of the Fourth Five Year Plan compares with the target fixed under the Fourth Plan in this respect?

The Minister of Industrial Development and Company Affairs (Shri F. A. Ahmed): (a) The figures of general index of industrial production are available only upto March 1967. These are as follows:

| (Base 1956-100) | |
|---------------------------|-------|
| Average for the year 1966 | 191.6 |
| January 1967 | 197.1 |
| February 1967 | 189.3 |
| March 1967 | 204.2 |

The average index for the first quarter of 1967 recorded a rise of 4.3 per cent over that of 1965 and 3.2 per cent over that of 1966.

(b) Even though there was a fall in production during February 1967, in January and March, 1967 level of production was higher than that of 1966.

(c) The devaluation of rupee in June 1966 was followed up by measures to liberalise imports, particularly in priority industries. Measures were also taken to allocate a larger quantum of foreign exchange to non-priority industries and small scale industries. Some industries were exempted from the need to obtain industrial licences under the Industries (Development & Regulation) Act. Diversification of production was permitted, within limits, in existing industries.