

- (b) if so, what are their demands; and
 (c) the steps taken by Government to settle the dispute ?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL, MINES AND METALS (DR. CHANNA REDDY):

(a) It is a fact that one of the Unions in the Durgapur Steel Plant, viz., the Hindustan Steel Employees Union (Supported by AITUC) served a strike notice on the Management on 12 February 1968 indicating their intention to go on strike for a day on 27th February 1968 or any day thereafter within the course of six weeks.

(b) The main demand made in the strike notice was the immediate withdrawal of the lay-off of the Merchant Mill workmen so that they could resume work.

(c) At the tripartite conciliation proceedings held finally on 11 March 1968 by the Joint Labour Commissioner, West Bengal Government, the Hindustan Steel Employees Union expressed regret for the incidents leading to the fall in production in the Merchant Mill from 31 December 1967 and culminating in lay-off of the Merchant Mill workers, assured resumption, restoration and maintenance of normal work and withdrew the strike notice. On their part, the Management agreed to allow the laid off workers of the Merchant Mill to resume work from 13 March 1968 and to withdraw the suspension orders on and allow twenty-one suspended workers of the Merchant Mill to resume duties without prejudice to their proceeding with the enquiry into the charge sheets given to these workers as per rules. The conciliation officer assured that the other industrial disputes referred to in the Charter of Demands of the Union dated 12 February 1968 will be taken up for conciliation.

SUPPLY OF COKE AND COAL TO RAILWAYS

*710. **SHRI JYOTIRMOY BASU :**
 Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the Railway Board have decided not to open tenders invited in January, 1968, for the supply of Coke and Coal to the Railways for the current year.

(b) if so, the reasons therefor:

(c) whether it is fact that all the private coalfield owners have combined to submit prices at higher rates; and

(d) if so, the action taken by Government in the matter ?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C. M. POONACHA) : (a) The tender has been cancelled.

(b) to (d). Do not arise.

TRAVELLING CONCESSION TO RAILWAY EMPLOYEES

*711. **SHRI LOBO PRABHU :**
SHRI GADILINGANA GOWD :
SHRI N. SHIVAPPA :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that when a Railway employee chooses to travel by a higher class, he pays only one-third of the difference with the result that there is congestion in the compartment causing inconvenience to other passengers;

(b) when Railway staff cancel their journeys, whether they are asked to pay the ordinary cancellation fees, as they cause loss to the Railways by preventing alternative travellers; and

(c) if no, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C. M. POONACHA) : (a) No, Sir; only gazetted officers holding first Class 'A' passes are allowed to travel in Air-conditioned class on payment of 1/3rd the difference between the first Class and A.C.C. fares;

(b) and (c). Railway employees who cancel or require change of reservation made, on privilege passes, within 24 hours before the scheduled departure of the train, as well as those who do not cancel the reservations nor utilise the accommodation reserved are required to pay charges according to a prescribed scale.

SMALL CAR PROJECT

*712. **SHRI TULSHIDAS JADHAV :**
 Will the Minister of INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the recommendations of the Pande Commission set up in 1962 have been accepted by Government in respect of Small Car Project; and

(b) if so, the main features thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI F. A. AHMED) : (a) and (b). The Hon'ble Member is perhaps referring to the Pande Committee set up in 1960 to examine the feasibility of manufacture of a low cost car in the country. The Report of this Committee was received in 1961. The Committee had expressed the view that it was possible to produce a car at about Rs. 5,100 ex-factory at a level of a production of 50,000 cars a year and at about Rs. 6,150 ex-factory at level of production of 20,000 cars a year, in both cases exclusive of excise duty. It had also recommended that the offer of M/s. Renault of France for taking up the manufacture of their "Dauphine" model car in the country was the most attractive both on technical and on economic grounds. In 1962, as stated in the statement made in the Lok Sabha on 9th August, the consideration of the low cost car project was deferred until more propitious conditions developed in regard to not only money resources but also physical resources like building materials, steel, power and transport.

MOTOR CAR QUALITY ENQUIRY COMMITTEE'S REPORT

*713. **SHRI D. N. DEB :**
SHRI N. SHIVAPPA :
DR. M. SANTOSHAM :
SHRI A. DIPA :

Will the Minister of INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 33 on the 13th February, 1968 and state :

(a) whether Government have since taken any decision on the Report of the Motor Car Quality Enquiry Committee, 1967; and

(b) if so, the broad features thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI F. A. AHMED) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A copy of the Report of the Pande Committee together with Government Resolution thereon containing the decisions of Government on the various recommendations made in the Report was laid on the table of the Sabha on 16-2-1968.

PANNA MINES IN M.P.

*714. **SHRI MAHANT DIGVIJAI NATH :** Will the Minister of STEEL, MINES AND METALS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are undertaking the planned production of diamonds in the Panna mining area in Madhya Pradesh;

(b) if so, when the planned production will start;

(c) the expected annual production of diamonds and the foreign exchange to be earned thereby; and

(d) the cost of machinery installed there ?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL, MINES AND METALS (DR. CHANNA REDDY) :

(a) to (c). The National Mineral Development Corporation are developing mines at Majhagawan and Ramkheria in Panna for the production of 12,000 and 11,250 carats of diamond per annum respectively which are expected to be commissioned by July 1968 and January, 1969 respectively. It is not possible to estimate the foreign exchange earnings from the sale of these diamonds.

(d) The plant and machinery at these mines are expected to cost Rs. 31.40 lakhs.

MECHANISATION OF FOOTWEAR INDUSTRY

*715. **SHRI D. N. PATODIA :** Will the Minister of INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the demand of Indian footwear abroad has declined considerably;

(b) whether it is also a fact that non-mechanisation of the industry is one of the reasons for this decline;

(c) if so, the efforts so far made or which are being made to provide adequate funds for the mechanisation of the industry; and

(d) the extent to which the efforts have borne fruits ?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI F. A. AHMED) : (a) There has been some decline in the export