

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto; and

(c) the steps Government propose to take to stabilise the price of rubber?

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Commerce (Shri Shaif Qureshi): (a) and (b). Yes, Sir. There has been an increase in our production of natural rubber but the increase still left a deficit of 30,000 tonnes in the overall requirement of the manufacturing sector which had to be met by imports. In the context of the ruling prices of imported and indigenous rubber, it will not be correct to assume that there has been a real decline in the prices of indigenous natural rubber. The acute shortage of rubber in the country in 1966, caused by restricted imports and an accident in the synthetic rubber factory, led to an abnormal rise in local prices; this abnormality in the rise has now disappeared.

(c) The Tariff Commission has been asked to recommend to Government the fair price of indigenous natural rubber. Their Report is expected in May 1967. Further action with a view to stabilisation of rubber prices will be considered on receipt of their recommendations.

Level Crossings and Over-Bridges in Delhi

185. Shri Balraj Madhok: Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) the total number and location of the level crossings falling in the urbanised part of the Union territory of Delhi;

(b) the number of over-bridges built so far and the location thereof; and

(c) whether Government propose to build any more over-bridges and if so, the details thereof?

The Minister of Railways (Shri C. M. Poonacha): (a) to (c). A statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-172/67].

Prices of Automobiles

*186. Shri Ramachandra Ulaka: Shri Dhuleshwar Meena:

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

(a) whether Government have taken any steps to cut down the prices of automobiles and streamline the automobile ancillary industry; and

(b) if so, the main features thereof?

The Minister of Industrial Development and Company Affairs (Shri F. A. Ahmed): (a) and (b). At present there are more than two hundred firms engaged in the manufacture of one or more of the ancillary items for automobiles. Generally speaking, almost all the major items are now manufactured indigenously. In view of the progress already made licensing of new units for the manufacturer of automobile ancillary industries except for truck mounted equipment is now banned. Existing units are, however, permitted to expand or diversify production to enable them to achieve economic levels of production.

In order to encourage the ancillary manufacturers to take up the manufacture of automobile ancillary items, a clear demarcation has been made between the responsibility of the main manufacturers and the ancillary manufacturers, and most of the important ancillary items are reserved for development by the ancillary manufacturers.

Both the vehicle and ancillary manufacturers have also been asked to standardise the components to the utmost extent practicable, without prejudice to quality and performance.

Import of Rubber

*187. Shri Vasudevan Nair: Will the Minister of Commerce be pleased to state:

(a) whether licenses were issued for the import of rubber during the last six months;

(b) if so, the number thereof and the quantity involved;