

way Minister has already written to the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh about Shahdara-Saharanpur railway line giving certain suggestions but the reply is still awaited. At this stage I am not in a position to say anything more.

श्री हेम राज : अन-इकानामिक लाइन्स के बारे में जो रिपोर्ट दी गई थी, उसमें एक सिफारिश यह भी थी कि जहाँ-जहाँ नेरो-गेज लाइन्स हैं उनको डीजलाइज कर दिया जाय, क्योंकि वहाँ पर कोयला नहीं पहुँच पाता है, बहुत देर से पहुँचता है और जाया भी जाता है। मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या फोर्थ फाइव ईयर प्लान में नेरो-गेज लाइन्स को डीजलाइज कर दिया जायेगा और कांगड़ा वली रेलवेज में डीजल इंजिन लगा देंगे ताकि वहाँ पर माल वगैरहा जल्द पहुँच सके ?

MR. SPEAKER : May I request the hon. Members not to make efforts to enlarge the scope of the question. If I say so to a Member, the Minister is ready with the replies; they also do not listen to me. The question is about the number of narrow-gauge engines, passenger coaches, wagons; but now questions are asked about the narrow-gauge railway lines.

SHRI HEM RAJ : I am asking about the dieselisation of the narrow-gauge lines... (Interruption)

MR. SPEAKER : Order, order. He is now taking it to himachal Pradesh.

SHRI SURENDRANATH DWIVEDY : Sir, you have said just now that Members are widening the scope of the question. Apart from that, I want to know whether it is proper for an hon. Member, who had been holding this portfolio as a Minister, to raise this question himself—the problems which he himself had to go into. As an ex-Minister, can he put that question, in the light of the oath of secrecy he had taken ?

MR. SPEAKER : I had said that the oath has become very old now. He is already the leader of the Opposition.

DR. RAM SUBHAG SINGH : Even here in the House, as a Minister, I had announced that no railway would be allowed to be closed, and that even in regard to the Shahdara-Saharanpur railway, an engineering survey could be made to convert it into a broad-gauge line. But the present Government are violating it due to their *sadachar*.

MR. SPEAKER : It is not a debate between an Ex-Minister and the present Minister. Kindly answer the question.

SHRI HEM RAJ : I asked about dieselisation.

SHRI R. L. CHATURVEDI : As far as the dieselisation question is concerned, and about the particular line referred to by the hon. Member, I said that diesel rail cars will be provided whenever feasible, as soon as they are ready.

श्री प्रकाशवीर शस्त्री : अध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं इस प्रश्न के भाग (ख) के संबंध में पूछना चाहता हूँ। सीभाग्य से उस समय श्री रोहन लाल चतुर्वेदी रेल उपमंत्री थे और उन्होंने इसी सदन में आपवासन दिया था कि शाहदारा-सहारनपुर नेरो गेज लाइन को बड़ी लाइन में बदलने के लिए रेल मंत्रालय सर्वे कर रहा है तो यह सर्वे पूर्ण हो गया है या नहीं ?

दूसरे, वह रेलवे लाइन साढ़े चार महीने से बन्द पड़ी है। तो क्या वे इसी प्रतीक्षा में हैं कि उस क्षेत्र से संबंधित लोग रेल मंत्री के घर पर आकर सत्याग्रह करें, तभी चतुर्वेदी जी उसका जवाब देंगे ?

श्री रोहनलाल चतुर्वेदी : पहले यह कहा गया था और इसका सर्वे हम करा भी रहे हैं लेकिन अभी उसका एग्जैमिनेशन पूरा नहीं हुआ है।

Import of Steel

*584. **SHRI S. K. TAPURIAH :** Will the Minister of STEEL AND HEAVY ENGINEERING be pleased to state :

(a) whether the industry has pressed for import of steel on a selective basis;

(b) the total quantity of availability of steel in the country and requirement of steel by the industry; and

(c) the gap in demand and supply and how it is likely to be filled up ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND HEAVY ENGINEERING (SHRI MOHD. SHAFI QURESHI) : (a) to (c). A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) The import policy for iron and steel is always framed on a selective basis. Requests from individual or groups of industries are also generally for those categories of steel required by them.

(b) According to the report of the Steering Group the domestic requirements in 1970-71 were estimated to be of the order of 5.5 million tonnes. Availability is likely to be about 5.0 million tonnes. On account of the spurt in demand subsequent to the Report of the Steering Group, the requirements may be somewhat higher than then estimated.

(c) In order to meet the gap between availability and requirements during the year, Government adopted the following measures :

(i) Tackling the bottlenecks in internal production with a view to removing them as early as possible ;

(ii) Regulating exports ;

(iii) Taking up various import programmes over and above the normal import policy. These include :

(a) Ad-hoc increase in the import licences already held by actual users.

(b) Special clearance of imports by actual users of certain categories. Up to 50% of their total consumption in 1969-70; as well as full import of all categories of mild steel against confirmed export orders; and

(c) Arranging bulk imports by public sector undertakings.

SHRI S. K. TAPURIAH : Sir, I come straight to the question. Because of the shortages in steel, the Government about six weeks back announced a policy that the manufacturers would be allowed to import billets and other similar items on the basis of 50 per cent of their previous year's consumption. Though six weeks have passed, no decision has been taken by the Government either—

Mr. SPEAKER : How does it arise from this question ?

SHRI S. K. TAPURIAH : It arises from this question. This is about the import of steel. The Government has taken a policy decision but licences are not being issued.

MR. SPEAKER : I am asking you to put your question straight.

SHRI S. K. TAPURIAH : I am asking the question, Sir. Since the policy decision has already been taken about six weeks back, what are the hurdles that are coming in the way of issuing import licences for these items which you had announced, and by what time do you expect that the licences will be issued ?

SHRI MOHD. SHAFI QURESHI : Under the new liberalised import policy, the licences which will be issued on the basis of the consumption of 1969-70, are being processed and a decision will be taken very soon.

SHRI S. K. TAPURIAH : Sir, I wish the Minister had been clear. My question was, when the policy was announced about six weeks back, why the issue of licences is being delayed and by what time will they issue them.

My second question is this. Even in the past, in the case of imports having already taken place about six months back, about 60,000 tonnes of steel sheets were imported, and about 20,000 tonnes are still lying unallotted and unallocated. While there is shortage, what are the reasons that the steel which has already come into the country is not being allocated speedily, and why it is allowed to be rusting and not allocated to the starving industry?

SHRI MOHD. SHAFI QURESHI : The hon. Member is asking a rather very vague question, because the various categories of steel are required by different persons. The automobile industry requires one type of steel; the export engineering industry requires one type of steel. There are certain categories of steel which have not been lifted. But the requirements of the industry as such are fully met. With regard to imports, I have already said that these are being considered by Government and a decision will be taken very soon, in another 10 to 15 days.

SHRI S. K. TAPURIAH : He said the question is vague. Every single tonne of steel imported was on the basis of indent given by the industry on their requirement. Therefore, where does the question of not lifting them arise? What action are you taking?

MR. SPEAKER : Has the Minister got anything to add?

SHRI MOHD. SHAFI QURESHI : I have already given the reply.

SHRI N. K. P. SALVE : May I know from the very highly able and personable minister whether recently liberal imports have been allowed to the steel tube industry on the plea of the industry that they are going to export a large tonnage abroad, without taking any firm undertaking from them that such exports if not made by them will be punitive? If this sort of thing is allowed without taking any bank guarantee, there will be frauds perpetrated of the type of Aminchand Pyarelal. The industry has been allowed to make large imports without the ministry taking any commitment from these people

which could be enforced in case the industry failed to fulfil the export commitments.

SHRI SURENDRANATH DWIVEDY : We know that innuendos and insinuations are not allowed in supplementaries. Is coaxing allowed?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND HEAVY ENGINEERING (SHRI B. R. BHAGAT): It is true, to meet the scarcity of steel, liberal imports have been allowed. They have not actually come, but licences have been given. So far as the tube industry is concerned, the Ministry of Foreign Trade said that there are certain parties which are facing court cases outside for failure to honour their export commitments. I order to help them in their hardship against court cases, the ministry said that a certain amount of steel import should be given to them, so that they are able to meet their commitments. Licences have been given in those cases. There is no question of not honouring commitments and not taking any guarantee.

SHRI N. K. P. SALVE : I seek your protection, Sir. What precautions have been taken to ensure that in the case of failure of exports they will be punished? What about a specific answer to a specific question? I seek your protection.

MR. SPEAKER : I seek protection from you. Please sit down.

SHRI B. R. BHAGAT : I think I have given a very specific answer. But if he wants the terms of the licence, that is issued by the Ministry of Foreign Trade and they will be able to give the details.

Amalgamation of Sick Industries with Healthier Units in West Bengal

*585. **SHRI RAMKISHAN GUPTA :**
SHRI V. NARSIMHA RAO :

Will the Minister of **INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNAL TRADE** be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and