

in April, 1969 by about Rs. 150/- per tonne. Since then the paper industry has been asked not to increase the prices further without prior consultation. However, of late there have been increases reported in the price of certain varieties of paper. In order to meet the situation a Crash Programme to augment the production of existing units has been organised. Licences for expansion of existing capacities have also been granted. New Capacities both under Public and Private sectors have also been approved. The Adhoc Committee on Paper Industry is also trying to discipline the production pattern, prices and distribution of paper.

Setback to Industrial Development in West Bengal

*736. SHRI SAMAR GUHA: Will the Minister of INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNAL TRADE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that during the rule of two United Front Governments in 1967 and 1969, different policy matters as also labour troubles caused serious setback to fresh investment, expansion and growth of industries in West Bengal;

(b) if so, whether Government had set up any Committee of Economic Industrial Experts to go into the causes of such setback;

(c) if not, whether Government now propose to draw out a plan of economic recovery of West Bengal after making a realistic appraisal of the economic crisis facing the State; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNAL TRADE (SHRI DINESH SINGH): (a) to (d). In the last 2-3 years, a number of factors including difficult labour-management relations and recessionary conditions certain industrial sectors have contributed to a slowing down of industrial growth in West Bengal. The State Government have, from time to time, made a number of appraisals to examine the reasons for the slowing down of industrial growth and to take remedial measures. In particular,

the situation in textile mills as well as the problems involved in the revival of sick and closed mills have been gone into by departmental committees. The Government of West Bengal have been reviewing the position and taking certain steps to create conditions for a more stable and rapid industrial growth. Recently, a package of incentives for industrial growth has been announced by the West Bengal Government. Certain schemes for financial assistance for the reconstruction of sick and closed units are also under consideration.

Distribution of Molten Slag to Firms by Hindustan Steel Limited

*737. SHRI S. KUNDU: Will the Minister of STEEL AND HEAVY ENGINEERING be pleased to state:

(a) whether distribution of molten slag to different firms had been completed recently by the Hindustan Steel Limited;

(b) if so, to which firms the slags have been distributed and the nature of contract entered with them;

(c) whether Industrial Development Corporation of Orissa tendered for the molten slag and if so, whether they were granted the contract; and

(d) if not, the reason thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND HEAVY ENGINEERING (SHRI B. R. BHAGAT): (a) Yes, Sir. Arrangements for the sale of molten slag from Rourkela Steel Plant and Durgapur Steel Plant have been recently made by Hindustan Steel Limited.

(b) Contract for the supply of slag from Durgapur Steel Plant has been entered into with M/s. Birla Jute Manufacturing Company. The contract is for the supply of 4,00,000 tonnes of molten slag per annum and the duration of the contract is 40 years. For the slag from Rourkela, a letter of intent has been issued to M/s. Orissa Cement Limited, Rajgangpur. The finalisation of the contract is under discussion.

(c) and (d). Industrial Development Corporation, Orissa had tendered for the purchase of molten blast furnace slag from Rourkela Steel Plant but they subsequently withdraw their offer.

Dharna before the Prime Minister's House by Unions affiliated to All India Railwaymen's Federation

*738. SHRI S. M. BANERJEE : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Unions affiliated to the All India Railwaymen's Federation staged a dharna before the Prime Minister's House in November, 1970 ;

(b) if so, what are their demands ; and

(c) whether Government are considering their demands ?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NANDA) : (a) and (b). A section of the Railway employees, under the auspices of the All India Railwaymen's Federation staged a squatting demonstration outside the residence of the Prime Minister at New Delhi in November 1970 to protest against the inadequacy of interim relief granted to the Central Government employees including Railway employees.

(c) The rates of interim relief granted are based on the recommendations of the Third Pay Commission, who had carefully examined the question. Government have already considered all factors while accepting the commission's recommendations

Liberalisation of Licensing Policy

*739. SHRI N. K. SOMANI : Will the Minister of INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNAL TRADE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have decided to liberalise the licences over and above the targets and capacity of the non-core industries in the country ; and

(b) if so, the steps being taken to make the raw material available to such industries ?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNAL TRADE (SHRI DINESH SINGH) : (a) and (b). As part of the changes in licensing policy, Government have announced that in the middle sector involving investments ranging from Rs. 1 crore to Rs. 5 crores, licence applications of parties other than undertakings belonging to the Larger Industrial Houses shall be given special consideration and shall be issued liberally, except where foreign exchange implications necessitate careful scrutiny. Government has also dispensed with the 'banned list' as an experimental measure. In view of the fact over a wide area of industrial activity, accurate demand estimates cannot be made, Government do not propose to go by strict capacity considerations in considering applications for industrial licences. The raw material allocation to new units licensed will be made, as and when they apply in the normal course, in terms of the import policy prevailing, subject to the facilities or constraints laid down for such units under the import licensing procedures.

Shortage of Paper

*740. SHRI KANWAR LAL GUPTA : Will the Minister of INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNAL TRADE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is an acute shortage of paper, particularly, white printing paper ;

(b) whether the nomenclature of the white printing paper has been changed to get more price ;

(c) how much paper has been exported in the last two years ; and

(d) to what extent the manufacturers have fulfilled the commitments made by them before the former Minister of Industrial Development ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNAL TRADE (SHRI M. R. KRISHNA) : (a) A shortage does exist in the supply of white printing paper.