

this statement, the reason given for import against 10 of them is that the item is indigenously not produced and that is why it is being imported. In that case, I would like to know whether the overall picture is one of our being almost totally dependent on foreign sources for our telecommunication equipment and further development. If 10 out of 15 items are indigenously not produced at all uptill-now, it means we will have to depend entirely on the imported sources. I want to know whether government consider that to be a desirable thing from any point of view.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : It is just like Maruti....

SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA : About item no. 8 which says import of crossbar equipment from Japan, when I answered the pointed question in this House some time back regarding phasing out of the production in the ITI factories, what I said was that we were producing strowger and "Penta conta type" crossbar exchanges which were antiquated and gradually will phase them out for which we have drawn up a programme, but in their place more electronic production capacity had to be built up. These exchanges were constructed in a big building and in the first phase certain exchanges were installed ; and this Japanese variety was a part of the expansion of the same exchange ; no new building was contemplated ; no extra expenditure by way of a plan was contemplated, but it was anticipated, even when those exchanges were started, that there will be second phase of expansion in which infrastructure including building etc. were provided.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA : Why do you expand the system which is already obsolete, and as a result of which some 10,000 workers are going to lose their jobs in those two factories ?

SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA : We are absorbing every item that the ITI is producing. Import is not being done at the cost of the indogenous production but because of shortage of production in our ITI factories that some marginal import has to be resorted to. As regards

equipment for which we do not have the indigenous capacity, I have some list before me. In many of these items already negotiations are going on for transfer of technology agreement. For example, item no. 2, which is digital microwave equipment ; already we have floated world tenders. ITI is involved in this ; Baharat Electronics Ltd. is involved in this. We are involving them in productionising these things and they are involved in appraising the offer that has been received ; technically as well as financially they are appraising it. Same is the case with item no. 3. This is digital electronic equipment. ITI again is involved in transfer of technology and we are appraising things. In that way, most of the items that are listed here, we are also taking steps either by developing them by our own or through the transfer of foreign technology to fill in these gaps. We are very much conscious of the point raised by the hon. Member that the item which we are receiving now, importing now and which do not have the indigenous produce has to be productionised here. This is exactly the direction in which we are going.

PROF. N.G. RANGA : The Estimates Committee and some other Committee have to examine this question.

Shifting of LPG Godowns from populated areas

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*167. **SHRI DHARAM PAL SINGH MALIK :**

SHRI ANANTA PRASAD SETHI :

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of LPG godowns are functioning in very thickly populated areas in the capital and other major towns in the country ;

(b) the number of such godowns which are functioning in very thickly populated areas of the capital ;

(c) whether Government propose to shift them to safer places to avoid untowards happenings ; and

(d) if not, the reasons thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF POWER AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRIMATI SUSHILA ROHTAGI) : (a) to (d). A statement is given below :

Statement

(a) and (b). LPG godowns are set up by LPG distributors only after obtaining clearances from administrative and statutory authorities like Fire Department, Explosives Department etc. The Delhi Administration has recently identified four LPG godowns in the capital as being located in densely populated areas.

(c) and (d). Action is in hand by the DDA (Delhi Development Authority) and the respective oil companies for relocation of the godowns identified as unsuitable on grounds of safety in Delhi.

[Translation]

SHRI DHARAM PAL SINGH MALIK : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister what urgent steps are being taken to shift the godowns of L.P.G. so as to avoid any accident ?

SHRIMATI SUSHILA ROHTAGI : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Member has asked a very good question. During the course of review, four L.P.G. godowns were found to be located at such places and it was considered necessary to relocate them. The Lt. Governor had called a meeting on 3rd July in this regard. Of these godowns, alternative places for three has been found and they have since been relocated but one remains to be relocated. Efforts for finding a suitable

place are going on and it is hoped this godown too will be relocated soon.

SHRI DHARAM PAL SINGH MALIK : Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister when did it come to notice of the Government that such and such L.P.G. godowns in the country as a whole are not located at suitable places from safety point of view and by when these L.P.G. godowns would be shifted ?

Have you fixed any time limit for the shifting of four L.P.G. godowns in Delhi ?

SHRIMATI SUSHILA ROHTAGI : Sir, such a review has not been done for the country as a whole as yet. But it must be done and it is under consideration. Their licences are renewed every year after the Director of Explosives collects full information in this regard. Thus, review is made annually but whether it is done in the mid-year also, I do not have information for the country as a whole right now.

SHRI MADAN PANDEY : Is the hon. Minister aware that L.P.G. godowns in Kanpur are located in the heart of the city and the same is also true of other cities? Therefore, I would like to know which agency issues the licences and whether that agency thoroughly examines the suitability of the location from safety point of view taking into consideration the quantum of pressure ? Has such an inspection been done throughout the country ?

SHRIMATI SUSHILA ROHTAGI : As I have said in my reply earlier, such a review has not been done throughout the country, but it must be done. Such information in the case of bottling agency has been received and wherever such cases of densely populated areas have come to our notice, norms have been laid in this respect. Under these norms a minimum distance, may be three metres or six metres, depending upon the pressure of the cylinder, is required to be kept. L.P.G. licence is issued only after all these requirements are duly checked. Still, as pointed out by the hon. Member, we shall pay attention to it from the safety point of view.