

acid are making representations to the Government so that Chilean nitrate can be imported. Even after the devaluation, the prices of Chilean nitrate were much lower than the price of sodium nitrate. May I ask the hon. Minister whether in view of the suffering undergone by the small-scale industries producing nitric acid, he would take steps to obviate the difficulties of the small-scale manufacturers?

SHRI F. A. AHMED: As I have already pointed out, if we had free foreign exchange at our disposal we would have certainly preferred to import them from Chile to meet our present requirement. It is used by the Defence Department, also by our laboratories. Our requirement was very small and we are importing that small quantity through the STC. It is not possible for us to bring it from Chile because of the foreign exchange.

MANUFACTURE OF PHOTO PROCESSING EQUIPMENTS IN INDIA

*544. **SHRI N. R. DEOGHARE:** Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 9105 on the 30th April, 1968 and state:

(a) the essential components and equipments of Photo Processing Equipments which are not manufactured in India;

(b) the components for which indigenous production is not sufficient to meet internal demand;

(c) whether Government have laid out any plan for manufacturing the essential components in India and thus increasing indigenous production; and

(d) if so, when it is likely to be implemented?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI MOHD. SHAFI QURESHI): (a) and (b). A full list of components and equipments for which there is no indigenous manufacture or which are not manufactured in sufficient quantities to meet the internal demand, is not available.

(c) and (d). It is Government's policy to encourage the manufacture of all essential components as far as possible but there is no laid out plan at present.

SHRI N. R. DEOGHARE: The components which are not available are not manufactured in the country. Would the Government of India issue licences liberally for those parties to import them?

SHRI MOHD. SHAFI QURESHI: Licences are given to the established importers on a quota of two per cent as and when they apply for the other components.

SHRI N. R. DEOGHARE: Has anybody applied for a licence?

SHRI MOHD. SHAFI QURESHI: There are so many people who have applied for a licence.

SHRI SONAVANE: The hon. Minister says that licences are given to established importers. I want to know why consumers' firms are not allowed to import these things so that they can save the intermediary's commission or profit that goes to the established importers and also sell them to the consumers at cheaper prices.

SHRI MOHD. SHAFI QURESHI: Actual users are also issued licences.

EXPANSION OF ALLOY STEEL PLANT, DURGAPUR

*545. **SHRI N. R. LASKAR:**
SHRI CHENGALRAYA
NAIDU:

Will the Minister of STEEL, MINES AND METALS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a proposal for the expansion of the public sector Alloy Steel Plant at Durgapur from 100,000 tonnes capacity to 300,000 tonnes capacity;

(b) if so, whether Government are not at present agreeable to this proposal; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor?