

U.S.S.R. have shown keen interest in the import of Kashmiri goods produced in Kashmir; and

(b) if so, what action Government of India have taken or propose to take in the matter?

The Minister of Industry (Shri Manubhai Shah): (a) While no statistics are maintained in respect of exports of handicrafts according to the State of their origin in India, it may be stated that the volume of these exports to European countries is indicative of the interest in Indian handicrafts including those from Kashmir

(b) A Government Company under the name Indian Handicrafts Development Corporation (Private) Ltd has been set up to look after the promotion of exports of handicrafts to foreign countries and the Corporation is considering to open Trade Centres abroad. This will give some fillip to exports from Kashmir also

Gift of Re-conditioned Machine Tools from the USA

*1283 { Shri S M Banerjee
Shri Tangamani
Shri Panigrahi

Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state

(a) whether 7,000 re-conditioned machine tools valued at Rs 7 crores are likely to be received in India as gift from the USA,

(b) if so, the scheme under which this gift is being given,

(c) whether this is likely to affect production at the Hindustan Machine Tools, Bangalore, and

(d) if so, to what extent?

The Minister of Industry (Shri Manubhai Shah): (a) to (d) A statement is laid on the Table of the House [See Appendix IV, annexure No 34]

Detention of Transit Traffic at Karimganj

*1284. { Shri D C Sharma:
Shri Raghunath Singh:
Shri Hem Barua:
Shri Liladhar Koteki:

Will the Prime Minister be pleased to state

(a) whether it is a fact that steamers and boats in transit from Calcutta for Karimganj and Silchar have been detained at Fochuganj in Sylhet District, East Pakistan, by the local authorities since the 22nd February, 1950,

(b) if so, the number of steamers and boats separately, detained by the Pakistan authorities,

(c) the reasons for their detention,

(d) whether these have been released, and

(e) what measures have been taken to check the violation of international law by the Pakistan authorities?

The Deputy Minister of External Affairs (Shrimati Lakshmi Menon): (a) Yes, Sir

(b) 3 Stern Wheelers, 4 Launches and 19 Barges were detained by East Pakistan authorities

(c) No reasons were advanced by the Government of Pakistan, but obviously it was intended to put coercive pressure on authorities in Cachar District and the Government of Assam at a time when wanton firing was also being indulged in

(d) and (c) The Government of Assam as well as the Government of India took up this matter with the Government of Pakistan. The blockade was finally lifted by Pakistan from the night of the 10th March and all boats have now been released