

nected therewith would be available to export industries at international prices; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Steel, Mines and Metals (Shri P. C. Sethi): (a) Control over all varieties of iron and steel has already been lifted with effect from the 1st May, 1967. Government had adopted the policy of progressive decontrol since 1964, and control was gradually lifted over various categories of iron and steel as the supply improved. Government felt that a stage has now come when it would be possible to lift control over all varieties of steel and transfer the responsibility of distribution and pricing of all categories of iron and steel produced by the main producers to the Joint Plant Committee. In a situation of decontrol, Government felt that the demand will be rationalised and there will be better utilisation of the material. The Joint Plant Committee is also taking steps to ensure that the supply of items, which were in short supply, is improved.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) A copy of the scheme of supplying steel at international prices to the engineering export industries, as announced by the Joint Plant Committee, is placed on the Table of the House. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-407/67].

Locomotive Workshop, Perambur

545. Shri S. E. Damani: Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that two vertical type centrifugal casting machines were imported for the Iron Foundry of the Locomotive Workshop, Perambur in 1954;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the same could not be put to productive use; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor?

The Minister of Railways (Shri C. M. Poonacha): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir. But after certain modifications it has been possible to put one in use and modification of the other is in hand.

(c) The difficulties experienced were in respect of extraction of castings, chilling effect on castings and motor burning out.

Ex-gratia Pension to Retired Railway Employees

546. Shri Ram Charan: Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Railway employees retired before April, 1957 who have been allowed ex-gratia pension with effect from January, 1967;

(b) the number of such employees who have been paid pension; and

(c) if all of them have not been paid the pension, the reasons therefor and the action taken to accelerate regular payments?

The Minister of Railways (Shri C. M. Poonacha): (a) to (c). The information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the Sabha.

Mass Casual Leave by NCDC Employees

547. Shri P. K. Ghosh:
Shri Manibhai J. Patel:

Will the Minister of Steel, Mines and Metals be pleased to state:

(a) whether the employees of the National Coal Development Corporation Ltd., Ranchi went on mass casual leave on the 17th April, 1967 afternoon and on the 18th April, 1967; and

(b) if so, the grievances of the employees and the action taken by Government thereon?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Steel, Mines and Metals (Shri P. C. Sethi): (a) Yes, Sir. Only the Headquarter employees of the National Coal Development Corporation