

12 aircraft from USSR. There are no problems regarding spare parts and engine overhauling and the serviceability of the aircraft is satisfactory. The normal steps for maintenance are being taken which are keeping the aircraft serviceable.

#### Price of Coal before and after Nationalisation

5021. SHRI BIJOY SINGH NAHAR: Will the Minister of ENERGY be please to state:

(a) the price of coal before and after nationalisation of coal mines in India; and

(b) steps Government propose to take to reduce the price of coal?

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY (SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) The average coal price before nationalisation was Rs. 37.42 per tonne. The average price during the period 1-4-74 to 30-6-75 was Rs. 47.42 per tonne. Since 1-7-75 the average price is Rs. 64.92 per tonne.

(b) The price of coal is fixed by Government after taking into account the cost of inputs such as labour wages, materials, equipments and overheads. The Coal Companies have been advised to observe maximum economy in expenditure and to achieve higher levels of productivity to lower costs of production.

#### Conditions governing the declaration of a district as Backward District

5022. SHRI V. S. ELAN CHEZHIAN: Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to state:

(a) the conditions governing the declaration of a district as backward district for entitlement to Central assistance;

(b) whether Government propose to treat Pudukotiah district to Tamil Nadu as backward district; and

(c) if so, particulars of the assistance proposed to be rendered for development of the District?

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI MORARJI DESAI): (a) to (c). There is no scheme for declaring a district as "backward" for entitlement to Central assistance. Certain incentives are, however, being offered for promotion of industries in selected "industrially backward" districts. The following criteria were recommended as guidelines to the State Governments and the Administrations of Union Territories for the identification of industrially backward districts to qualify for concessional finance from the all-India term-lending institutions:

(i) *Per capita* foodgrains/commercial crops production depending on whether the district is predominantly a producer of foodgrains/cash crops. (For inter-district comparisons conversion rates between foodgrains and commercial crops may be determined by the State Government on a pre-determined basis where necessary).

(ii) Ratio of population to agricultural workers.

(iii) *Per capita* industrial output (gross).

(iv) Number of factory employees per lakh of population or alternatively number of persons engaged in secondary and tertiary activities per lakh of population.

(v) *Per capita* consumption of electricity.

(vi) Length of surfaced roads in relation to population or railway mileage in relation to population.

2. On this basis 247 districts have been selected as "industrially backward" and are eligible for concessional finance. Industries in these districts are also eligible for certain income-tax reliefs for a specified period.

3. Out of these districts, 101 districts/'areas' (@6 districts/'areas' from each of the States identified as industrially backward and 3 districts/'areas' from each of the other States and Union Territories) have been selected to qualify also for the Central Scheme of Investment Subsidy. Further, applications from small scale industries in these selected districts/'areas' for import of raw materials and components, and also for machines on hire-purchase terms, are considered on a priority basis under the current Import Policy and under the hire-purchase scheme of National Small Industries Corporation.

4. Pudukotiah (Pudukkottai) district of Tamil Nadu State has already been selected as industrially backward to qualify for concessional finance. Further, one of the 3 'areas' of Tamil Nadu State selected to qualify for the Central scheme of Investment Subsidy includes 4 Talukas of Pudukkottai district, (viz., Pudukkottai, Thirumayam, Alamgudi and Kulathur Taluks).

**News Item captioned "Electronics Licensing: MNCS by passing curbs"**

5023. SHRI G. M. BANATWALLA: Will the Minister of ELECTRONICS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to the front page report in the newspaper "The Economic Times" dated the 14th July, 1977 by its special correspondent under the caption "Electronics licensing: MNCS by passing curbs" regarding serious loopholes in the licensing rules which multinational companies exploit to the detriment of small-scale units; and

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto?

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI MORARJI DESAI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Two cases have come to notice and show-cause notices are being issued in both cases.

**Purchase of Satellite**

5024. SHRI MOHAN LAL PIPIL: Will the Minister of SPACE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of India have recently decided to purchase a satellite; and

(b) if so, the estimated cost thereof, the purpose it is likely to serve and the country from which it is proposed to be purchased?

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI MORARJI DESAI): (a) Yes sir. Government has approved implementation of the Indian National Satellite (INSAT) System.

(b) The total cost of the project has been estimated at Rs. 173 crores. Initially the system will be used mainly for telecommunications and meteorology. The choice of a Satellite, cost and from where it is to be purchased are yet to be finalised.

**Bridge over Ganga River**

5025. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the late Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri had laid foundation stone of a bridge over Ganga river at Allahabad in 1965 and the estimated cost was Rs. 3.75 crores;

(b) whether an expenditure of more than 2 crores of rupees has been shown thereon upto 31st March, 1970 by the department;

(c) whether no work had been started for the construction of the bridge upto 31st March, 1970 and construction work was not completed till now and an expenditure of more than 7 crores of rupees has already been incurred thereon;