

Accidents and derailments

4911. SHRI NARENDRA SINGH MAHIDA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Railway accidents or derailments that took place in the country during the last six months;

(b) the number of such accidents that took place in Gujarat State separately during the above period;

(c) the loss of Railway property, human life, etc. in the above accidents; and

(d) what steps are being taken to minimise the accidents?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (DR. RAM SUBHAG SINGH): (a) During the period 1st February 1969 to 31st July 1969, there were 492 train accidents in the categories of collisions, derailments, trains running into road traffic at level crossings and fires in trains on the Indian Government Railways.

(b) As States do not constitute administrative units for the Railways, information about train accidents is not compiled State-wise but Railway-wise;

(c) The cost of damage to railway property was estimated at approximately Rs. 66,46,241.00. In these accidents, 236 persons were killed.

(d) As the largest single factor responsible for accidents is failure of railway staff, Safety Organisations set up on the railways have been engaged in inculcating safety consciousness amongst staff connected with the running of trains and in ensuring that they have a proper understanding of the prescribed safety rules. Further, spot checks are made to see that staff do not violate the safety rules and in-

dulge in short-cut methods. Inquiries are held into all accidents and those held responsible are given deterrent punishments. In addition, if an inquiry reveals any other shortcomings or lapses, action is taken to see that they do not recur. Technological improvements in the shape of improved signalling and interlocking, track circuiting, etc. have also been made to the extent feasible. As a result of these measures, the incidence of train accidents has been declining.

Agreement between M/s. Guha and Co. of West Bengal and South Eastern Railway for Supply of Wooden Sleepers to Railways

4912. SHRI G. S. MISHRA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the purchase agreement reached between M/s. Guha and Co. of West Bengal and the South Eastern Railway for supply of wooden sleepers to the Railways;

(b) the total estimated value of the purchase, mode of inviting quotations, the number of offers received and their rankings;

(c) the names of the past suppliers who have quoted against this demand of the railways, their rates, discount, delivery schedule and their past performance; how they stand in the ranking of the total number of offers received; and

(d) the reasons for awarding this contract on the monopoly basis to M/s. Guha & Co., West Bengal, when they are new in the field and their financial standing to execute such a big order is not known?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (DR. RAM SUBHAG SINGH): (a) In June 1969, orders were placed for the supply of wooden sleepers with

M/s. B. N. Guha & Co. of West Bengal. The details are as follows:—

(i) Quantity ;	Numbers
B.G.	1,20,000
M.G.	30,000
N.G.	15,000
Specials .	75,000 cft.
(ii) Total approximate value	Rs. 110 lakh ^s
(ii) Delivery	31.10.1971

(b) Total value of all the purchase orders for supply from Madhya Pradesh forests issued in 1969 is about Rs. 125 lakhs. Mode of inviting quotations was by open tenders. The number of offers received against this tender was three only. One firm withdrew, leaving only the two other firms. Their initial ranking was as follows:—

Lowest—M/s. M. H. Sahasrabudhe & Co.

Highest—M/s. B. N. Guha & Co. Besides this, two Government undertakings also offered to supply sleepers.

Negotiations were carried out with the three willing firms for reduction in rates before the final offers were accepted.

(c) The past performance of parties except M/s. B. N. Guha & Co. is not known as the Railways were being supplied sleepers directly by the Madhya Pradesh State Forest Department on Government to Government basis.

(d) As open tenders were invited there is no question of monopoly basis. Further Rehabilitation Industries Corporation Ltd., and M/s. M. H. Sahasrabudhe & Co., were also awarded contracts amounting to Rs. 12.3 lakhs and Rs. 3.13 lakhs, respectively.

M/s. B. N. Guha & Co., are not new in the field. A contract for the supply of sleepers valued at about Rs. 63 lakhs was placed with them in March, 1968 which is more or less completed.

Import of Capacitors

4913. SHRI R. K. BIRLA: Will the Minister of INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT, INTERNAL TRADE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that power capacitors even upto 33 KV are imported when the capacitor industry has surplus capacity to manufacture the same;

(b) if so, the total power capacitors of each type imported from April, 1968 to March, 1969 and the amount spent on their import and the country from which they were imported;

(c) whether there is a demand for banning the import of capacitors; and

(d) if so, the reaction of Government thereto and the step taken in this direction?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT, INTERNAL TRADE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI F. A. AHMED): (a) Imports of capacitors upto 11 KV ratings are not permitted. Imports of capacitors of higher ranges have been permitted as indigenous capacity for manufacture of high Voltage Capacitors has not yet been developed to the extent required.

(b) Information is given in the Statement laid on the Table of the House. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-1834/69]. Statistics of import of capacitors are not maintained type-wise.