

Shri A. Steedharan: My question was specific, whether any private sector company has applied for a licence and, if so, what is the reaction of the Government to that?

Shri F. A. Ahmed: It has not been received.

Shri Mangalathumadam: In view of the fact that titanium products are earning precious foreign exchange and also in view of the fact that the raw materials are available in abundance in Kerala for producing titanium, will the Government of India treat the project as a special case and give immediate financial assistance to this project for expansion.

Mr. Speaker: It has already been answered.

Shri Vasudevan Nair: The expansion of this plant is hanging in the balance for so many years due to lack of funds and the State Government is naturally in very difficult financial position. So, I would like to know whether the Ministry of Industrial Development will persuade the Finance Ministry to give a major part of the Rs. 6 crores, which is needed for expansion, from the Central funds itself so that the expansion can definitely take place within the Fourth Plan period itself?

Shri F. A. Ahmed: I may repeat what I said earlier, that the expansion of this project will require nearly Rs. 625 lakhs and the company have proposed that an amount of Rs. 450 lakhs may be covered by additional equity capital to the extent of Rs. 186 lakhs and by medium-term loans to the extent of Rs. 264 lakhs. The Kerala Government have proposed during the discussion that out of Rs. 186 lakhs of equity capital to be floated, they will contribute Rs. 36 lakhs and expect the Central Government to contribute Rs. 150 lakhs. This matter is under consideration and already a provision of Rs. 30 lakhs has been made during the current year's budget.

Shrimati Lakshminathanamma: Since Kerala is industrially a backward State and this project has good prospects, will the Government sympathetically consider the proposal for its expansion?

Shri F. A. Ahmed: Yes, Sir.

Shri S. S. Kothari: Will the hon. Minister kindly explain the policy of the Central Government in regard to investment in State projects?

Shri F. A. Ahmed: This is a public sector project where both the Central and State Governments are participating.

Self-sufficiency in Newsprint

*1302. **Shri Bishwanath Roy:**
Shri M. Meghaachandra:

Will the Minister of Industrial Development and Company Affairs be pleased to state:

(a) whether India will become self-sufficient in the matter of newsprint by the end of the Fourth Five Year Plan; and

(b) if not, the steps under consideration to achieve self-sufficiency in this regard?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Industrial Development and Company Affairs (Shri Raghunath Reddi): (a) and (b). It is not possible to say with certainty at this stage that India will become self-sufficient by the end of the Fourth Five Year Plan. However, in addition to the expansion scheme of NEPA Mills, which is under implementation, two more schemes one in Public Sector and one in Private Sector with an initial total capacity of 75,000 to 1,00,000 tonnes per annum are under examination by the Government and if they materialise then the country hopes to achieve near self-sufficiency.

Shri Bishwanath Roy: May I know the time by which the plants which are going to be set up will start production?

The Minister of Industrial Development and Company Affairs (Shri F.A. Ahmed): So far as the expansion of the NEPA mills is concerned action has already been taken and we hope that newsprint out of expansions unit will be manufactured by 1969.

granted provisional registration for manufacture of various types of Surgical Instruments. An application from another unit for registration with Directorate General of Technical Development is under examination. It is expected that major portion of the requirements of surgical instruments would be manufactured in the country in about five years period. Some imports may, however, continue particularly of highly specialised and sophisticated types for which there may not be large demand in numbers to undertake the economic manufacture thereof.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Surgical Instruments

*1296. **Shri Onkar Singh:**
Shri Onkar Lal Berwa:

Will the Minister of Industrial Development and Company Affairs be pleased to state:

(a) the amount spent for the import of surgical instruments in terms of foreign exchange; and

(b) the steps taken for attaining self-sufficiency in surgical instruments?

The Minister of Industrial Development and Company Affairs (Shri F. A. Ahmed): (a) The value of imports of certain surgical instruments for the past three years is given in the table below:—

1964-65	Rs. 61.79 lakhs
1965-66	Rs. 79.74 lakhs
1966-67 (upto Feb. 67)	Rs. 54.11 lakhs

(b) A Surgical Instruments Plant has been set up at Madras in the Public Sector with Russian assistance. The project was commissioned to operate from 1st September, 1965. This factory has a licensed capacity of 2.5 million pieces of about 25 types of surgical instrument of broad categories. There are some units in the Small Scale Sector producing a variety of surgical instruments. Two units in the private sector have been

Import of Heavy Soda Ash by S.T.C.

*1297. **Shri Onkar Lal Berwa:**
Shri Onkar Singh:

Will the Minister of Commerce be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the State Trading Corporation is contemplating to import 10,000 tonnes of heavy soda ash at a time when indigenous material is available in plenty; and

(b) if so, why this is being done despite tight foreign exchange position?

The Minister of Commerce (Shri Dinesh Singh): (a) and (b). STC has made arrangements for the imports of 6000 tons only. No further imports are proposed at present. Even though indigenous production is satisfactory, some marginal imports to serve as buffer stock have been considered necessary.

Expansion of Railway Yards on S.E. Railway

*1298. **Shri Chintamani Panigrahi:**
Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to expand the Cuttack and other Railway yards on the South-Eastern Railway to enable them to handle the off-take of the Paradeep Cargo;