

steady and the prices in India have been made to fall on account of the slump, the margin of profit enjoyed by the European interests has increased.

Shri Karmarkar: I should like to find that out.

Shri R. K. Chaudhury: Is the hon. Minister now in a position to answer my question, namely, that the retail price of tea in India is much higher than the retail price of tea in the United Kingdom?

Shri Karmarkar: I should still like to have notice.

Shri A. C. Guha: May I know if Government have received any complaints that the conditions under which Indian tea is auctioned in London are not favourable and are discriminatory?

Shri Karmarkar: I have no ready information on that point. I shall find out if there are any complaints received.

Mr. Speaker: The questions are more or less in the nature of giving information, rather than asking for information.

Shri A. C. Guha: We simply draw pointed attention to certain state of affairs.

Shri Sarmah: Will Government be pleased to instruct the Tea Enquiry Committee to go into this alleged matter of collusive bidding in Calcutta?

Shri Karmarkar: I said I shall try to find out.

The Minister of Finance (Shri C. D. Deshmukh): Sometimes these representations are addressed to the Finance Ministry. About two days ago I received a representation in which it is alleged that by some arrangement of sales in England an attempt is made to transfer the burden of the subsidy from England to India. I have sent that representation to the Commerce and Industry Ministry for investigation and I shall have a chance of asking the official committee to enquire into this particular allegation.

ACCIDENT IN SINGARENI COLLIERIES

***1889. Shri Vittal Rao:** Will the Minister of Labour be pleased to state:

(a) the causes of the accident that occurred in the Singareni Collieries, Kothagudium on 2nd June, 1952;

(b) how many were injured and the number died subsequently;

(c) whether any enquiry, official or non-official, was held; and

(d) if the answer to part (c) above be in the affirmative, what are its findings?

The Minister of Labour (Shri V. V. Giri): (a) The accident occurred as a result of a cage filled with men striking against the pit bottom.

(b) Twenty-four persons were injured. No report has been received of any person having died subsequently.

(c) An enquiry was held by a Junior Inspector of Mines.

(d) *Prima facie* it appears the winding engine driver caused the accident either wilfully or by negligence. The matter is however under investigation.

Shri Vittal Rao: May I know the circumstances under which the carrying capacity of the cage was exceeded?

Shri V. V. Giri: Those circumstances are being investigated. The general rule seems to be that ten alone should get into the cage; but 25 got into it.

Shri Vittal Rao: Are Government aware that this is the second accident within the course of two months?

Shri V. V. Giri: I take the information from the hon. Member.

Dr. Jaisoorya: Did I hear the hon. Minister to say that a Junior Inspector of Mines is investigating into the matter?

Shri V. V. Giri: Yes.

Dr. Jaisoorya: Why?

Shri V. V. Giri: Because he alone was available.

Shri Vittal Rao: Was the winding engine driver technically qualified for the job, or was he promoted to this job on account of his anti-trade union activities?

Shri V. V. Giri: He was technically qualified.

Shri Sarangadhar Das: May I know if adequate compensation has been given to the injured persons in accordance with the Workmen's Compensation Act?

Shri V. V. Giri: Yes, of course.

JUTE PLANTS

***1891. Shri L. N. Mishra:** Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state:

(a) the results that the substitution of the old jute plants by modern ones

will bring in quantity and quality of production of jute;

(b) the estimated cost of such substitution; and

(c) the countries from where the modern type plants are to be imported?

The Minister of Commerce and Industry (Shri T. T. Krishnamachari):

(a) Modernisation is not so much intended to increase the total output or to improve the quality as to reduce the cost of production in order to compete with modern mills in other countries.

(b) As no scheme has yet been finalised it is not possible to give any precise estimate of cost of modernisation. It may be of the order of Rs. 70 or 80 crores over a period.

(c) Imports are expected to be from countries in the sterling area.

Shri L. N. Mishra: Is it a fact that the Chief Controller of Exports who has recently visited the Continent has recommended the modernisation of Indian jute industry, if we are to maintain our semi-monopolistic position in the world markets?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: I laid on the Table of the House a copy of the report of Mr. Jha in answer to question No. 1705, dated the 11th July 1952. If the hon. Member reads it he will find some kind of confirmation of his views on the subject.

Shri L. N. Mishra: Do Government propose to have diversified location of the jute industry in India and if so, do they propose to have one such mill in Bihar?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: If the hon. Member means diversification in regard to new units, that will be the policy; we would like to have them diversified, as far as possible. So far as the present units are concerned, the question would not arise.

Shri Kelappan: When placing orders for plants do we get quotations from different countries?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: Governmental interference in this matter would arise only when private industry asks for licenses and under the new Industries Control and Regulation Act. As a matter of fact it is largely a matter of discretion so far as private enterprise is concerned. But Government would certainly see that the foreign exchange position is not worsened by diverting these orders to dollar or hard currency areas

Shri R. K. Chaudhury: May I know if the Government is still carrying on the policy of expansion of jute cultivation even by substitution of food crops?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: I think the question should be appropriately directed to the Food and Agriculture Ministry.

Mr. Speaker: It does not arise.

Shri L. N. Mishra: In view of the pressing demand and the restricted supply position, do Government propose to place orders for such plants at an early date?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: In reply to a question on a previous occasion I have said that the matter is under investigation. Government have not yet come to any final decision in this matter, nor does private industry seem to be very eager at the moment.

UNDERGROUND TELEPHONE CABLE

*1892. **Shri N. P. Sinha:** Will the Minister of Works, Housing and Supply be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Inspector appointed by the Government of India to inspect the underground telephone cables purchased by India in Japan has submitted any report of his inspection;

(b) if so, whether a copy of it can be laid on the Table; and

(c) how many mile-length of such cable was purchased and for what price?

The Deputy Minister of Works, Housing and Supply (Shri Buragohain):

(a) and (b). Yes, Sir. The Inspector submitted test certificates on all the cables inspected by him during the manufacture. These are, however, of technical nature and lengthy, being in 88 sheets. It seems therefore unnecessary to place them on the Table of the House.

(c) 687 miles length of cable were purchased at a total cost of Rs. 81,90,413.

Shri N. P. Sinha: Is it a fact that the Inspector inspected these cables only after they were despatched to India?

Shri Buragohain: That is not so. Although the Inspector was supposed to inspect the cable during manufacture, in fact, however, when he arrived there he found that most of it had already been manufactured.

Shri N. P. Sinha: May I know if there was any stipulation in the contract that the concern would replace the cables if they did not work well?