

(b) About Rs. 1,25,000/- at a time.

(c) About Rs. 2 lakhs per annum.

Shri S. V. Ramaswamy: May I know the strength of the staff maintained and if the work turned out is commensurate with the expenditure involved?

Shri Kanungo: I could not give the exact figure of the staff, but the cost of the establishment is somewhere round Rs. 85,000 odd. As for judging the work, we have to wait for a fairly long time to judge the results of the promotional work.

Shri Heda: Does this Trade Centre welcome enquiries of the importers in the United States and give them proper contracts in our country?

Shri Kanungo: Yes, Sir.

Shrimati Ila Palchoudhuri: May I know if any attempt is made to popularise our traditional Indian designs in textiles and cloth instead of having our weavers and craftsmen copy European designs?

Shri Kanungo: I am afraid that Indian weavers have not started copying any designs from Europe. As for popularising Indian designs, one of the items which this particular Centre handles is the handloom goods.

Coal Mine Workers

*23. **Shri T. B. Vittal Rao:** Will the Minister of Labour and Employment be pleased to state:

(a) the total wage bill, of the workers in the coal-mines in the country since 1952 to 1956, year-wise;

(b) whether Government propose to provide any other amenities like construction of quarters; and

(c) if so, the number of quarters constructed up to the end of April, 1957?

The Deputy Minister of Labour (Shri Abid Ali): (a) The information is not readily available.

(b) and (c). 4724 houses have been constructed up to the end of April 1957 either directly by the Fund or under the Subsidy and Subsidy-cum-loan schemes.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: Government had decided to construct fifty thousand quarters during the Second Plan period; but during the first year of the Second Plan period not even the land has been acquired. May I know whether these fifty thousand quarters will be constructed during the Plan period at least?

Shri Abid Ali: Already about 4000 houses have been sanctioned under this scheme and we expect that it will be possible to adhere to the programme.

Shri H. N. Mukerjee: We have noted before that a lot of money lapsed on account of the construction of the quarters not being proceeded with. Could the Government tell us what steps are taken to ensure that there will be no such lapse of the moneys granted now?

Shri Abid Ali: No such question arises with regard to this particular scheme because the houses are to be built with the Coal Mines Welfare Fund and this would not lapse.

Sardar A. S. Saigal: May I know whether it is a fact that in Korada coal fields, there is no arrangement for quarters or drinking water and other amenities to labourers?

Shri Abid Ali: If the hon. Member puts a separate question, I will collect the information.

Shri Mohiuddin: Is it a fact that a large number of houses constructed are lying vacant for one reason or another and the workers have not occupied these quarters.

Shri Abid Ali: Only in Luni some houses were not occupied because of some difficulties. Now only 200 houses remain vacant. Arrangement has been made with other departments and it is expected that these houses will also be occupied.

Shri Jaipal Singh: Could we have a break-up of the number of quarters built out of the Fund and the number built under the subsidy scheme?

Shri Abid Ali: 2,153 by the Fund directly and about 1,000 under the subsidy scheme.

Shri V. P. Nayar: In answer to Part (a) of the question regarding the wage bill, the hon. Minister said that the information is not readily available. In the case of ever so many industries, details of wage bills have been given. I want to know how long it will take to give us an idea of the total wage bill, referred to in Part (a) and whether we will be spared the necessity of putting another question on this?

Shri Abid Ali: I have the figure for 1955-56. If that would satisfy the hon. Member, this is from 358 collieries out of 853. The workers employed are 3,21,263 in these 356 collieries. They have paid Rs. 15,40,06,853.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: Under the Payment of Wages Act, these collieries are expected to submit their returns. From the returns, we can calculate how much it is. What is the difficulty in getting the figure?

Shri Abid Ali: The difficulty is, they have not submitted the returns.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: May I know whether any collieries have been prosecuted for violation of the Payment of Wages Act, for not submitting returns?

Shri Abid Ali: Notice.

Shri B. C. Bose: May I know whether it is a fact that the Coal Mines Welfare Fund has now decided to construct houses at its own cost and if so, what is the bottle-neck in constructing more houses?

Shri Abid Ali: First, non-availability of land and secondly, steel and cement difficulties.

Mr. Speaker: The question list is over. I shall come back to those hon. Members who were absent at the time

when they were called. **Shri D. C. Sharma:** again absent. Then, there is a Short Notice Question in the name of **Shri Kasliwal.**

SHORT NOTICE QUESTION

Indian Officials held by Lahore Police

S. N. Q. No. 1. Shri Kasliwal: Will the **Prime Minister** be pleased to state:

(a) whether the P.T.I. report from Karachi appearing in the *Hindustan Times* dated the 10th May, 1957 to the effect that two senior officials attached to the Indian Deputy High Commission at Lahore were insulted, handcuffed and kept in police custody is correct; and

(b) if so, for what reasons?

The Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs (Shri Jawaharlal Nehru): (a) and (b). The Press report is in the main correct. The facts, as ascertained by us, are as follows:

On the night of May 7, five Indian nationals were arrested at 11 p.m. in Lahore by the local police on a baseless charge of creating nuisance in a public place. They were abused, handcuffed and manhandled, kept under police custody for a period of about six hours and subjected to needless medical examination on a baseless charge of being under the influence of alcohol. Of the five innocent victims, three were Indian Railway officials undergoing training at the United Nations Training Centre at Walton; the other two were diplomatic officers serving as Attaches in the Deputy High Commission for India.

Two other officers of the Deputy High Commission who came to know of the incident contacted them in the Mayo Hospital at 3 a.m. on the morning of 8th May. They informed the Sub Inspector that two of the persons arrested had diplomatic status. The Sub Inspector professed ignorance about their status and identity and gave an assurance that after consulting his superior he would immediately release them from custody. The Sub