

Shri Warrior: The PTI had reported on June 27 that about 2000 workers were involved and 10 ships were affected.

Mr. Speaker: What is the information he seeks?

Shri Warrior: If that is so, why has he given this information?

Mr. Speaker: Should he contradict PTI?

Shri Warrior: I want to know whether the Minister had taken the trouble to check up the information in view of the press report.

Shri Raj Bahadur: I may assure the hon. House as well as the hon. Member that we take all possible care to check up information.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: PTI may be wrong.

Shri Raj Bahadur: In case our information is found to be wrong, we come to the House and apologise and give the correct information.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: I want to know whether only 9 ships have settled the question of wages and whether any more agreement is being arrived at between the other ships and the workers there.

Shri Raj Bahadur: This is between the Union on the one hand and the home trade shipowners on the other. So the vessels owned by the home trade shipowners are covered. As the hon. Member might know, the strike was not aimed at, or did not affect, the ships owned by the Scindia Steam Navigation Company, Gill Amin Company and the Bombay Steamship Company. So they must have their own arrangements or settlements in regard to these matters.

Shri Rameshwar Tantia: Does not the strike come within the meaning of a strike in an essential service? If so, what action do Government propose to take against the strikers?

Mr. Speaker: Shri Kunhan.

Shri Kunhan: What steps have been taken to have the Union recognised by the companies?

Shri Raj Bahadur: It is not for us to take any step. It is a bi-partite matter between the home trade shipowners and the Union. One of the demands of the Union was that it should be recognised as the sole representative of the workers. I think ultimately they got it.

Shortage of Wheels and Axles on Indian Railways

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*646. { **Shri Subodh Hansda:**
Shri S. C. Samanta:
Shri B. K. Das:
Shri M. L. Dwivedi:
Shri Yallamanda Reddy:

Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state

(a) whether it is a fact that there is shortage of wheels and axles on Indian Railways;

(b) if so, what steps Government propose to meet the shortage from indigenous production;

(c) whether it is also a fact that Railways have placed orders on a Hungarian firm for supply of axles and wheels; and

(d) if so, the number of such wheels and axles to be imported from the firm?

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Railways (Shri S. V. Ramaswamy): (a) to (d). A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

(a) & (b). There is no significant shortage of wheels and axles on Indian Railways. The present indigenous capacity, however, is inadequate and the shortfall in the requirements is met by imports. Self-sufficiency will be achieved when Durgapur Wheels and Axles plant attains full production.

(c) Yes.

(d) 41599 tyres and 11510 axles have been ordered on the Hungarian firm.

Shri Subodh Hansda: From the statement, I find that there is no significant shortfall of axles and wheels; at the same time, it is stated that the indigenous capacity for production of these axles and wheels is also inadequate. Am I to understand that the number of tyres and axles which have been ordered from abroad is the net shortfall or is there any more shortfall?

Mr. Speaker: Is the number that has been asked to be imported from Hungary to make up the shortfall?

Shri S. V. Ramaswamy: The position is this. We have assessed the requirements. There is indigenous capacity inside the country. The capacity is not able to cope fully with the requirements of the plan project. To meet the immediate requirements, we have placed orders abroad. That is the position.

Shri Subodh Hansda: May I know whether the cost of these axles and wheels that have been ordered from Hungary will be paid in foreign money or by Indian money?

Shri S. V. Ramaswamy: So far as the Hungarian order is concerned, they have accepted payment in non-convertible rupees.

Shri S. C. Samanta: May I know whether we have to import any raw materials for the indigenous production of axles and wheels in our country?

Shri S. V. Ramaswamy: No, Sir, There is no question of import of raw materials.

Shri A. P. Sharma: Is it a fact that there is acute shortage of couplings and on account of this on the South Eastern and Eastern Railways a good number of wagons are rendered idle?

Shri S. V. Ramaswamy: That does not arise out of this.

Mr. Speaker: We are only on axles and wheels on this question.

Shri Bhagwat Jha Azad: The statement says that we are importing part of our requirements. May I know what percentage of our requirements is still imported from outside?

Shri S. V. Ramaswamy: I could not work out the percentage, but I could give the figures if they are required.

श्री म० ला० द्विवेदी : उत्तर के साथ जो ब्यान रखा गया है, उस में यह लिखा है कि दुर्गापुर व्हील्स एंड एक्सलज प्लांट में जब फुल प्राडक्शन होगी, तो इस सम्बन्ध में हमारी कमी पूरी हो जायगी। मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि इस वक्त उस प्लांट की कैपैसिटी क्या है और जब वह पूरी ताकत पर काम करने लगेगा, तो उस समय उस की प्राडक्शन कितनी होगी।

Shri S. V. Ramaswamy: Actually, it falls under the Steel Ministry, but I shall answer it. The full capacity in the first phase is rated at 45,000 wheel sets per annum, but they have just started production. They have been able to produce 300 wheels so far and 2,000 axles. When the full production is taken up, the Durgapur plant will be able to supply us with the required 75,000 wheel sets.

श्री सरजू पाण्डेय : क्या मैं जान सकता हूँ कि हंगरी की इस फर्म के साथ जो सौदा किया गया है, क्या उस के लिए टेंडर इन्वाइट किये गए थे ?

Shri S. V. Ramaswamy: It was by global tender.

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Shri M. L. Dwivedi:
Shri S. C. Samanta:
Shri B. K. Das:
Shri Subodh Hansda:

Will the Minister of Irrigation and Power be pleased to state: