

Shri H. N. Mukerjee: In view of the earlier controversies around this matter in the House as well as outside, may I know if Government have no intension of having any prior consultation with members of different political parties before coming to a decision and if not, why not?

Shri Kanungo: No, Sir. We have taken note of the various views which have been expressed in this House and outside and we have placed a motion for the consideration of the House.

Shri Ranga: May I know whether the Government have consulted the Public Accounts Committee and the Estimates Committee, and whether they have also taken into consideration how far their jurisdiction would be upset or abridged by any functions that they would be placing for the proposed committee?

Shri Kanungo: We have not consulted the committees referred to by the hon. Member, and about the contents of the motion the hon. Member would be able to judge when it is before the House.

श्री यशपाल सिंह : क्या मैं यह जान सकता हूँ कि जब डिसेंट्रलाइजेशन की बात कही जाती है तो फिर जो कंसर्निंग स्टेट्स हैं उन की लेजिस्लेटिव प्रसेम्बलीज की कमेटीज क्यों न बनाई जायें ?

प्रध्मस्य महोदय : यह प्रलहदा सवाल है ।

Dr. L. M. Singhvi: Is the Government in a position to give an indication of its own time table, if they have any, in respect of constituting this committee, apart from whether the House accords its sanction or not?

Shri Kanungo: As soon as the House passes this motion for constituting the committee, the committee will be set up.

Shri Ranga: May we have an assurance that the jurisdiction that the Auditor-General at present has to scrutinise the activities and also the accounts of the public sector enterprises, all or some of them, would not in any way be jeopardised and the jurisdiction of the Public Accounts Committee would also not be abridged?

Shri Kanungo: The powers of Auditor-General are statutory powers and they cannot be abridged. Regarding the functions of the committee, they will come up for discussion in this House.

Shri Ranga: He is telling about something that he is going to place before the House.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member wants an assurance that the powers that are being exercised by the Public Accounts Committee and the Estimates Committee and also the Auditor-General would not be abridged. But who can say what decision the House would take? What assurance can the Government give? The House has to take the decision. We have to take the decision here and the hon. Member shall have the option at that time to criticise if there is any abridgement of those powers and say that that should not be done.

Shri Ranga: Should not the House at least have the information whether they have consulted the Public Accounts Committee and the Estimates Committee?

Mr. Speaker: They have said that they have not consulted them.

Hindustan Organic Chemicals Plant

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{ **Shri Morarka:**
Shri Ravindra Varma:
 *672. { **Shri Dighe:**
 { **Shri Baswant:**
 { **Shri Nath Pai:**

Will the Minister of Industry be pleased to state the progress made in setting up the Hindustan Organic Chemicals Plant at Panvel?

The Minister of Industry (Shri Kanungo): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

The work on civil construction as well as arrangement for water supply, power, railway siding and other essentials is in progress. The further implementation is, however, delayed due to the difficulty in obtaining the necessary foreign exchange, particularly for import of plant and equipment from Germany.

Shri Morarka: May I know why foreign exchange was not allocated or earmarked for this project when it was sanctioned?

Shri Kanungo: A huge amount of foreign exchange is necessary, and we came into a very tight position at that time.

Shri Morarka: When is the project expected to fructify now?

Shri Kanungo: I cannot give any firm time about it. All I can say is that we are making our best efforts.

Shri Ravindra Varma: We have been repeatedly told that the Government has been able to secure full foreign exchange requirements upto the third year of the Third Five Year Plan. How is it then being said in this case that the Government is finding it difficult to obtain foreign exchange?

Shri Kanungo: I do not know about other projects, but as far as this project is concerned we find that there is difficulty.

Shri Ramachandra Ulaka: May I know what is the productive capacity of this plant and the total estimated cost of it?

Shri Kanungo: The cost of the plant would be of the order of about Rs. 20 crores ultimately although it is estimated to be Rs. 16.5 crores.

Shri Bhagwat Jha Azad: May I know whether to avoid the difficulty in

securing the necessary foreign exchange the Government is contemplating to enter into any barter agreement with West Germany for the import of plants and equipment which are essential for this project?

Shri Kanungo: That was exactly the original plan, but it has not been successful.

Raw material for Steel Plants

*673. **Shri Himatsingka:** Will the Minister of Steel and Heavy Industries be pleased to state:

(a) the steps taken by Government to improve the raw material position of Steel Plants in the public sector;

(b) the steps taken to economise the use of coal in the steel plants; and

(c) the steps taken to improve the administrative efficiency in the Steel Plants?

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Steel and Heavy Industries (Shri P. C. Sethi): (a) The steps taken include a close liaison between the plants and the railways, introduction of closed-circuit movements of wagons between captive mines and the plants and improvement in the storage of raw materials.

(b) The steps include washing of coals, fuel oil injection and use of sinter in the plants and other technical improvements.

(c) The steps taken to improve the administrative efficiency in the steel plants in the public sector include reorganisation of the Board of Directors of Hindustan Steel Limited, greater delegation of powers by the Ministry to the Hindustan Steel Limited and by them in turn to the General Managers and subordinate officers in the plants.