

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Steel and Mines (Shri Thimmaiah): (a) The number of coal seams in respect of which reserves have been proved in the Ramgarh coalfield is about 18.

(b) The proved reserves are estimated at 156 million tonnes.

(c) The National Coal Development Corporation proposes to develop certain areas of the Ramgarh field during the Fourth Plan. The Project report in respect of one area is ready, and the project is presently under consideration. In other areas prospecting is in progress.

Shri P. C. Borooah: May I know whether this coal mine is to be worked in the public sector or the private sector?

Shri Thimmaiah: It will be worked in the public sector.

Shrimati Lakshmikanthamma: May I know whether this coal is . . .

Mr. Speaker: Order order. I did not call her name. How did she begin to put her question?

Shrimati Lakshmikanthamma: You said 'yes'.

Mr. Speaker: All right. Shrimati Lakshmikanthamma.

Shrimati Lakshmikanthamma: May I know whether this coal is expected to be of high quality or of inferior quality?

Shri Thimmaiah: It is of Grade I and II.

श्री यशपाल सिंह : क्या यह काम थर्ड फ़ाइव-यीयर प्लान में पूरा हो जायेगा, इस पर कितना खर्च होगा और फ़ारेन कोलेबोरेशन से कितनी इमदाद मिलेगी ?

Shri Thimmaiah: This will be taken up during the fourth Plan. This project will be commissioned by 1968-69 as per the present schedule.

Indian Trading Houses Abroad

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*578 { **Shri Surendra Pal Singh:**
Shri D. C. Sharma:
Shri Rameshwar Tantia:

Will the Minister of Commerce be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government were considering a proposal to set up Indian trading houses on the pattern of big department stores in certain key centres abroad;

(b) if so, the salient features of this scheme; and

(c) when a final decision is expected to be taken in the matter?

The Minister of Commerce Shri Manubhai Shah: (a) to (c). Yes, Sir. The Board of Trade at its meeting in Madras on 7th December endorsed a suggestion that two or three Trading Houses should be set up at suitable locations in Asian countries with the assistance of Consortia of Indian exporters and the various Export Promotion Councils. Further action on this recommendation is under consideration.

Shri Surendra Pal Singh: May I know what will be the criteria for selecting the places where these Trade Houses will be set up? Will they be established in those regions where our balance of trade is adverse or all over the world?

Shri Manubhai Shah: We shall go by (i) whether there is a free trade area in that particular place, so that we can take advantage of the facilities of a free trade zone, (ii) whether those are the areas which can cater to the widest possible neighbouring countries like Hongkong, Penang or Singapore or other suitable places and (iii) whether Indian products are sufficiently known in that area in order to bring immediate results.

Shri Surendra Pal Singh: We have seen press reports that a foreign team

of trade experts has come here to study our export efforts and suggest improvements. May I know whether this question has been referred to them and if so, what has been their reaction?

Shri Manubhai Shah: This is a specific proposal. We are taking various measures for promoting exports. We do not depend upon any particular team to look into these things.

Shri Basappa: Is Government aware of the fact that the big departmental stores are very popular all over Europe and one of the reasons of their popularity is that the prices of all articles are put up on those stores?

Shri Manubhai Shah: That is so; that is one of the reasons why we follow the approach of departmental stores. We have called it Trading House, but it will be modelled on the pattern of the departmental stores and the prices there also will be tagged on as uniformly as possible.

Shri D. C. Sharma: May I know how long it will take to finalise the scheme and by what time the stores will get going?

Shri Manubhai Shah: I at least expect one store in 1965, if not more.

Shri Hem Barua: May I know if it is a fact that Government have learnt very useful lessons in planning their sales from their sales experience at the New York World Fair, where the Indian sales fell much short of our own target of Rs. 10 crores which was expected, and if so, do Government propose to overcome this lacuna in planning by opening these Trading Houses abroad?

Shri Manubhai Shah: The assumption of the hon. Member is entirely incorrect. The New York World Fair has exceeded all our expectations. There was no target of Rs. 10 crores ever planned. It was supposed to be sale across the counter of a very minimal nature. We have sold more than Rs. 2.6 crores worth of goods in one

half session. Another session is to follow. We have received trade enquires worth about Rs. 20 crores. I wonder whoever suggested to the hon. Member that either we have failed or our experience has to be learnt. On the contrary, it has opened our eyes to the new possibilities by participating in such fairs.

Shri Sham Lal Saraf: While contemplating this idea of opening departmental stores, may I know if the Government are thinking at the moment of retail trade only and not wholesale trade? If it is otherwise, may I know how Government intend to do wholesale trading in those countries?

Shri Manubhai Shah: Here our intention is not to go in for retail trade at all, because very few countries in the world allow foreign trading in retail. It will be in conjunction and cooperation with the local departmental stores agencies. We supply the goods wholesale and they do the retailing.

Employees of Railway Electrification Project, Moghalsarai

*560. **Shri Ananda Nambiar:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a large number of Casual workers of the Railway Electrification Project, Moghalsarai have gone on an indefinite hunger strike for grant of their pressing demands;

(b) whether an increase of 50 paise in their daily wages and grant of fair price shop concession are some of their main demands; and

(c) the steps taken to avoid the stoppage of work and the consequent delay in the electrification?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Railways (Dr. Ram Subhas Singh): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) There is no stoppage of work.