

gested the association of Commonwealth countries with the ECM and that some of the ECM countries have resented that, saying that any and every Commonwealth country cannot join ECM. If so, what is the Government's reaction to that?

Shri Morarji Desai: As I said, these are delicate negotiations. It is not possible for me to give any information about these matters at this stage.

Mr. Speaker: Next question.

Shri Hem Barua: Sir, on a point of order. The Finance Minister will not even give the reaction of the Government, and he says that these are all delicate negotiations and cannot be divulged. I just wanted to know whether the U.K. has suggested the association of Commonwealth countries in the ECM—which U.K. has let out in the papers. And he can say 'yes' or 'no'. I do not understand this. Possibly . . .

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member thinks that the information which he is asking has already been divulged in the papers. If he has that, then there is no need to ask for that information. And if he has not that information and the information has not been divulged, and if the Government thinks that it is at a delicate stage at this hour and it is not advisable to disclose it, then probably we should have patience and wait for some time. When those negotiations have progressed to a certain extent, then the information would be given.

Shri Hem Barua: Are we to understand that the U.K. press reports are correct, in the face of the silence of the Government?

Mr. Speaker: Is it necessary that the Government should commit itself whether they are right or wrong? If it comes from other sources, that has a different importance; if it comes from the Government, that might have a different significance. Next question.

Shri Hem Barua: May I put another supplementary?

Mr. Speaker: I have passed on to the next question.

Shri Raghunath Singh: I stood up thrice. My name is also there.

Mr. Speaker: It is not necessary that every Member . . .

Shri Raghunath Singh: That was the convention.

Mr. Speaker: . . . whose name has been clubbed must be called.

Iron Price

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

(a) the steps taken upto April, 1962 to control the rising prices of iron and to wipe out the black marketing trend on prices; and

(b) how long it would take the country to become self-sufficient in view of the present production of iron?

The Minister of Steel and Heavy Industries (Shri C. Subramaniam):

(a) Apart from the recent increase due to the new excise duties, the controlled sale prices of most categories of iron and steel have remained stationary since 1957.

Increasing availability of most categories of steel is reducing mal-practices. Black marketing would amount to a violation of the Iron & Steel Control Order and be punishable under the Essential Commodities Act; and the State Government law enforcement authorities are competent to take cognizance of such offences.

(b) By 1965-66, it is proposed to set up a capacity to produce annually 10.2 million tons of steel ingot and 1.5 million tons of pig iron for sale, which would largely meet the requirements of the country at that time.

श्री बाल्मीकी : इस संबंध में कितने व्यापारियों को सजाएं दी गयी हैं और सब से ज्यादा किस राज्य में दी गई है ?

Mr. Speaker: How many were punished and which is the State that has the highest number of offenders?

Shri C. Subramaniam: I do not have that information.

श्री बाल्मीकी : पब्लिक सेक्टर और प्राइवेट सेक्टर में उत्पन्न हुए लॉट्टे की कीमतों में कितना अन्तर है ?

Shri C. Subramaniam: No. It is a common price for all the steel.

Shrimati Renu Chakravarty: May I know whether the attention of Government has been drawn to a information given in the *Capital* that one of the reasons why the share market has boomed is that there is going to be an immediate increase in the retention price of steel?

Shri C. Subramaniam: Does the hon. Member want me to contribute to that speculation further by making an answer?

Shri Sham Lal Saraf: Is the Government aware that at the time when these steel and other quotas are allotted to the parties, whether stockists or non-stockists, at times it has been seen that the allotments are not available on the spot and that results in increase of demand in the market and that results in blackmarketing? Has the Government taken any steps to look into that?

Shri C. Subramaniam: That is because of scarcity of certain categories. The hon. Member may know that in respect of most of the categories we have sufficient materials now. But, there are certain scarce categories in which these difficulties arise. It is our hope to increase production of these categories also.

Shri D. N. Tiwary: May I know whether any direction has been sent or whether the Government receives

a report on the prosecutions launched in the States, because it is a Central subject? May I know whether the Government has sent any direction to get information from the States regarding the number of prosecutions launched and the number of punishments awarded?

Shri C. Subramaniam: I do not have that information here. If the hon. Member is interested, certainly I can gather that information and make it available.

Shri D. N. Tiwary: I want to know whether any direction has been sent to send reports.

Shri C. Subramaniam: I do not have that information.

Mr. Speaker: He has not got the information just at present.

Shri Kamalnayan Bajaj: While the steel price in the private sector and the public sector is the same, may I know whether the cost of production in the public sector is comparatively favourable with the private sector and if not, whether we are selling under cost in the public sector?

Shri C. Subramaniam: I would respectfully submit that this does not arise. Still, I would answer. In the public sector projects, we have not gone into full production yet. Therefore, it will not be possible to compare the cost of production at this stage as between the public sector cost and the private sector cost.

Mr. Speaker: The Question-hour is over.

SHORT NOTICES QUESTION

Breach in Ankleshwar Pipeline

+
SNQ. 6. { **Shri Yajnik:**
 Shri P. R. Patel:

Will the Minister of **Mines and Fuel** be pleased to state:

(a) whether the pipeline connecting Ankleshwar oil fields to the