

Mr. Speaker: The Question hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Bank Payments Abroad

*215. { Shri H. N. Mukerjee:
Shri M. Elias:

Will the Minister of Finance be pleased to state:

(a) the payments made through foreign banks by the Indian High Commission in the U.K. and the Indian Embassy in the U.S.A. during 1956-57; and

(b) whether Government have considered the advisability of payments abroad being made through Indian banking agencies?

The Deputy Minister of Finance (Shri B. R. Bhagat): (a) The High Commission of India in the U.K. makes remittances through the Reserve Bank of India, London. The amounts of payments made by the latter, through foreign banks are as follows:

- (i) January-June 1956: £9,236,600
(Rs. 12,31,54,667)
- (ii) July-December 1956: £9,274,876
(Rs. 12,36,65,013)
- (iii) January-June 1957: £30,806,461
(Rs. 41,07,52,813)

The details of such payments made by the Indian Embassy, Washington, as available at present, are as follows:

- (i) January-June 1956 \$2,434,605.98
(Rs. 1,15,93,361.81)
- (ii) July-October 1956 \$1,878,904.22
(Rs. 89,47,162.94)

(b) Yes, Sir. It is Government's policy to utilise and encourage Indian banking agencies for remittances abroad as far as possible.

Kargali Coal Washery Plant

*216. Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: Will the Minister of Steel, Mines and Fuel be pleased to state:

(a) whether the coal washing plant, at Kargali will be commissioned in January, 1958 as originally scheduled;

(b) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(c) when the plant will work to its full capacity?

The Minister of Steel, Mines and Fuel (Sardar Swaran Singh): (a) No.

(b) Owing to difficulties met with in the foundations of the Washery and also in obtaining some imported machinery, the delay has occurred.

(c) The plant is expected to work to its full capacity by July, 1958.

Congestion at Indian Ports

*220. Shri Raghunath Singh: Will the Minister of Finance be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that due to some provisions of the Sea Customs Act and procedural formalities the difficulties of traders have increased adding to the congestion at ports; and

(b) if so, whether the Indian Merchants' Chamber, Bombay have submitted any memorandum or drawn the attention of the Government to these facts?

The Deputy Minister of Finance (Shri B. R. Bhagat): (a) No, Sir. On the contrary, the tendency has been towards simplification of Customs procedures and formalities in order to cope up with the increased volume of traffic and to help alleviate congestion at the ports. Over and above the departmental arrangements that exist for a continuous review of such procedures, a Customs Reorganisation Committee has also been at work since the last many months reviewing, in consultation with the trade and other interested organisations, the procedures now in force in the Custom Houses.