

Shrimati Ba Falchoudhuri: Is it a fact that divers from the Indian Navy dived for some time to clear the stones and silt and that it was an operation involving a great amount of risk?

Shri Hathi: I have no information.

Shri T. N. Singh: May I know whether the schedule of construction has been revised from time to time, and whether the schedule to which reference is being made is the fifth, fourth or the third?

Shri Hathi: The detailed schedule for concreting is not revised.

Hamira Sugar Mills, Kapurthala

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*425. { **Dr. Ram Subhag Singh:**
 Ch. P. S. Daulata:

Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the Hamira Sugar Mills in Kapurthala (Punjab) will not be run during the forthcoming crushing season;

(b) if so, the causes thereof; and

(c) arrangement made for the crushing of sugarcane grown in the area served by that mill?

The Deputy Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri A. M. Thomas): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Mill is reported to have sustained a loss of Rs. 16 lakhs during the two years of its working *viz.* 1955-56 and 1956-57, on account of low recovery.

(c) The Punjab Government have been advised to divert the sugarcane grown in the area served by the Hamira Mills to neighbouring factories.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: May I know whether the decision to close down the mill was made known to the cultivators at the time of sowing sugarcane?

Shri A. M. Thomas: There was a mill working there from 1942 till 1954. That mill of 2,000 tons capacity could not work economically, and another factory with 500 tons capacity was set up there. That also could not work economically, and in 1957, that is in the current year, the State Government was informed that the management could not proceed with the working of that factory because it was incurring a huge loss, and the Government of India was also informed. The Government of India sent its own engineer there, and on his examination also it was found that the machinery also was not satisfactory and the mill could not be worked well.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: My question was quite different.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member's question was whether the ryots or the cultivators had been given due notice before the sowing season, so that they may avoid sowing. That was the short question.

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri A. P. Jain): No. The cultivators were not given any notice at the time of the sowing season. The factory suffered losses later, and as a result of the suffering of those losses, they decided to close down the factory.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: How can the factory suffer losses after the sowing of the sugarcane? For, the factory had been in existence for the last two years, and it might have suffered losses during the last season, and the decision could have been communicated to the cultivators in time to avoid sowing of surplus sugarcane.

Shri A. P. Jain: Sugarcane is sown in the month of February, and the factory stops working in the month of April or May, and, therefore, it was only in the month of April or May that the factory could come to the conclusion that it was suffering losses, and it was not worthwhile to continue it running.

Shri Ajit Singh Sarkadi: May I know whether it is not a fact that the

Punjab Government have recommended the taking over of this factory and has assured that it will not be run on a loss?

Shri A. P. Jain: The Punjab Government did recommend that the Government of India should take over the factory. We got the machinery of the factory examined. It is an un-economic factory. There are no spare parts available, and the factory cannot be run economically.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: Originally, there was a factory of 2,000 tons capacity. After that, the second factory of 500 tons was licensed. May I know how the second factory was licensed, when it was known that the original factory was not being run economically?

Shri A. P. Jain: The original factory was of a capacity of 2,000 tons. The new factory, that is, the existing factory is of a capacity of 500 tons. A factory of 2,000 tons may not be able to work, while a factory of 500 tons may be able to work.

Shri T. N. Singh: In view of the answer given by the Minister that the crushing season continues till the month of March or April, it would mean that no sugar factory owner will ever inform the cultivators in time if the factory is running at a loss, till after the sowing season.

Shri A. P. Jain: The hon. Member can draw his own conclusion. But that is a fact that the sugarcane is sown in a particular part of the year, and the factory closes in another part of the year which is later on than the sowing of the sugarcane.

Shri T. N. Singh: How is it that other factories which had occasion to suffer losses were in a position to inform the cultivators in time for the sowing season?

Shri A. P. Jain: I do not know of any such case. But this is a fact, that the sowing of the sugarcane takes place much earlier than the closing of the factory season.

Shri Goray: Is it not a fact that as soon as the crushing operation begins, it is known whether the returns are lower or higher?

Mr. Speaker: We are arguing this matter out.

Shri Goray: He said that the crushing season continues till March or April, and, therefore, the cultivators would not be informed. But I think that as soon as the crushing season begins, it could be known whether the returns are lower or higher.

Mr. Speaker: The hard facts remain. Hon. Members are only entitled to ask questions to elicit facts and not opinions—whether hypothetical or otherwise. Now, hon. Members have asked questions and elicited some information. The hard fact remains that the cultivators were not given notice, though three months later the factory was closed. What is the good of arguing out this matter?

Shri Sinhasan Singh: It arises this way. . . .

Mr. Speaker: Does the hon. Member mean to say that the factory would be closed suddenly? Surely, they must have thought of it. It is no good arguing out this matter. Is it a vote of censure now on the factory-owners? Let us go to the next question.

Abolition of Second Class

*426. **Shri T. B. Vittal Rao:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) at what stage is the proposal to abolish the Second Class on the Railways; and

(b) by when will it be completely abolished?

The Deputy Minister of Railways (Shri Shah Nawaz Khan): (a) Second Class has been abolished on Short Branch Line sections and on the suburban sections of Calcutta and Madras.