

Shri Satish Chandra: In 1955-56, the imports were Rs. 69,30,00,000 and exports Rs. 87,12,00,000. In 1956-57, the imports were Rs. 105 crores and exports Rs. 90 crores.

Mineral Industry Association, Nagpur

*1448. Shri V. C. Shukla: Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state:

(a) whether any representation has been received from the M. P. Mineral Industry Association, Nagpur, relating to the difficulties encountered by the Manganese Mine Owners in obtaining from the Mining Officers of the States concerned a certificate to the effect that their mines do not produce ore containing less than 42% manganese as stipulated in the New Quota Policy for the export of Manganese ore for the period from July 1957 to June 1958, and

(b) if so, what action has been taken thereon?

The Minister of Commerce (Shri Kanungo): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Government have suitably modified their policy removing the difficulties pointed out by the Association. I may add that all restrictions have been withdrawn yesterday.

Regional Small Industries Institute, Calcutta

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*1449. { Shri Ghosal:
Shri Subinam Ghose:

Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state:

(a) whether the small factories of West Bengal have taken technical assistance from the Regional Small Industries Service Institute of Calcutta; and

(b) if not, the reasons therefor?

The Minister of Industry (Shri Manubhai Shah): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Employees' Provident Fund Act

*1450. Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: Will the Minister of Labour and Employment be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons for not extending the Employees' Provident Fund Act to the Mica Mines so far;

(b) when it is likely to be enforced; and

(c) the total number of workers employed in these mines as at the end of January, 1958?

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour and Employment and Planning (Shri L. N. Mishra): (a) and (b). As the extension of the Act to the Mica Mines at this stage would be detrimental to the interests of the industry, it has been decided to keep the matter in abeyance for a year.

(c) The latest information is not available. The number of workers employed in Mica Mines during 1956 was 53,973.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: May I know when a decision will be taken to extend this Act to the mines?

Shri L. N. Mishra: The matter has been kept in abeyance for a year.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: The Planning Commission had stated that the Provident Fund Act should be extended to all the industries during the First Plan period itself. Now we find that even during the Second Plan period it has not been done.

Shri L. N. Mishra: It is a fact that they recommended that it should be extended. But, in view of the fact that mica is an exportable commodity, the matter was considered by the Export Promotion Council and some other body and it was decided that, for the time being, it should not be extended.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: Since there have been many repeated accidents, may I know whether the services of