

Women in Army Medical Corps

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*966. { Shri R. C. Majhi:
Shri Subodh Hansda:
Shri S. C. Samanta:

Will the Minister of Defence be pleased to state:

(a) whether women in medical services are eligible for Permanent Commissions in the Army Medical Corps;

(b) if so, since when their eligibility is recognised; and

(c) the number of such officers at present in the Indian Army Medical Corps?

The Deputy Minister of Defence (Sardar Majithia): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) From the 1st November, 1958

(c) The number of women officers holding Permanent Regular Commissions in the Army Medical Corps is four at present.

Shri S. C. Samanta: May I know whether any relaxation is shown in the case of these women medical officers?

The Minister of Defence (Shri Krishna Menon): Not at all, Sir. They are equal in the eyes of the law. They get all the privileges and they take all the responsibilities. But they would not be expected to carry lethal arms with them as other members of the service.

Mr. Speaker: There won't be any discrimination between them and the others. There is only this difference that they will not carry lethal arms with them.

Shri Krishna Menon: Except for self-protection

Shri Achar: May I know whether they are liable to be sent on active service during any military action?

Shri Krishna Menon: Yes, Sir

Shri P. C. Boseah: May I know if there will be any reservation for them?

Shri Krishna Menon: No, Sir; but we shall be able to take as many women as apply and are qualified.

Utilisation of Scrap Iron

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*967. { Shri S. C. Samanta:
Shri Barman:
Shri Subodh Hansda:

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

(a) what steps Government are taking to encourage the utilisation of scrap iron in our country,

(b) whether any steel is produced from this; and

(c) if so, the total quantity of steel produced at present?

The Minister of Steel, Mines and Fuel (Sardar Swaran Singh): (a) and (b) The Hon'ble Members presumably have in mind steel scrap which can be melted. For the utilisation of such scrap, there are already some electric furnaces in the country. It is proposed to permit 25 more electric furnaces in various regions to utilise scrap available locally

(c) About 81,500 tons of steel were produced in electric furnaces during the year 1958. In the first quarter of 1959 about 26,500 tons were produced.

Shri S. C. Samanta: May I know whether the export of scrap is carried on at present?

Sardar Swaran Singh: Yes, Sir. Scrap which cannot be used by the electric furnaces inside the country is exported.

Shri S. C. Samanta: May I know whether the abundant quantity of scraps that are lying with the railways are going to be utilised by this Ministry or by the Railway Ministry?

Sardar Swaran Singh: The scrap which is declared by the Railways has been used and is proposed to be used both by the Railways as well as by the other electric furnaces and re-rollers.

Shri M. R. Thakore: May I know the total production of scrap iron from 1980 to 1989 and its value?

Sardar Swaran Singh: If the hon. Member tables a separate question, I shall be able to collect these figures.

Shri Nagi Reddy: May I know whether the Government has tried to find out the total available quantity of scrap from the different departments of the Government?

Sardar Swaran Singh: The total scrap arisings have been estimated, the figures from various sources must have been taken into consideration but I cannot give the department or sector-wise arisings.

Shri Nagi Reddy: What is the total quantity of scrap iron?

Sardar Swaran Singh: It is estimated that by the end of the Second Plan period the total arisings of scrap would be about six lakh tons a year.

Shri Simhasan Singh: May I know whether the export of scrap iron to Japan has been banned now?

Sardar Swaran Singh: It is being exported to Japan and to other countries.

Shri Raghunath Singh: May I know whether the export of scrap iron is increasing or decreasing at present?

Sardar Swaran Singh: The total quantity of scrap that was exported recently was somewhat lower than the total exports about three years ago.

Shri Viswanatha Reddy: How does the price of steel ingots manufactured in the small furnaces compare with those produced in the big factories?

Sardar Swaran Singh: Obviously, the cost of production in these smaller ones is somewhat higher but the intention is that in the interest of regional development these small-scale electric furnaces should be permitted to be installed so that some of the local requirements may be met. Se-

condly, certain special categories of steel are also proposed to be manufactured in some of these electric furnaces.

Shri Tangamani: The hon. Minister has told us that 25 more electric furnaces are going to be set up. May I know whether there will be regional considerations and whether all these furnaces will be set up in areas like Andhra, Kerala, Tamil Nad, etc. where there are no steel plants, minor or major?

Sardar Swaran Singh: As the hon. Members are aware, these are all being set up in the private sector. If sufficient interest is shown in those areas and if there are sufficient arising of steel scraps, these factors will be taken into consideration.

Shri Tangamani: How much of the six lakh tons of scrap iron is being utilised now?

Sardar Swaran Singh: To refresh the memory of the hon. Member, I have said that by the end of the Second Plan period the estimate is that about six lakh tons of scrap would be available. Scrap is scrap after all and it is very difficult to give any firm figure but it will certainly be very much lower at the moment because in another eighteen months, the availability of steel in the country will be much larger and larger utilisation will mean larger scrap arisings. So far as the internal utilisation is concerned, it is expected that somewhere in the neighbourhood of three lakh tons would be required inside the country if this scheme of the establishment of electric furnaces goes through.

Shri S. C. Samanta: May I know whether any conditions have been put to Japan while we export scrap to that country?

Sardar Swaran Singh: The obvious condition appears to be that they pay us the price.

Shri S. C. Samanta: Over and above, is there any condition that they supply us some steel?

Sardar Swaran Singh: That is not necessary and we do not want to tie this up with any such condition because it is an obvious sale and so far as the steel market is concerned, Japan does not hold a monopoly. We have got the whole world from which we can purchase steel and we would like to obtain steel from a country where the terms are competitive.

Purchase of Ammunition

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*968. { **Shri Ram Krishan Gupta:**
Shri Vidya Charan Shukla:
Shri M. E. Krishna:
Shri Supakar:
Shrimati Maftda Ahmed:

Will the Minister of Defence be pleased to refer to the reply given to Starred Question No. 1047 on the 10th March, 1959 and state:

(a) whether the Committee appointed to enquire further into the purchase of ammunition from a European firm in 1952 has submitted its report,

(b) if so, the findings thereof; and

(c) the action taken thereon?

The Deputy Minister of Defence (Sardar Majithia): (a) No, Sir

(b) and (c) Do not arise

Shri Ram Krishan Gupta: In answer to a previous question, the hon. Deputy Minister has stated that the Committee has been asked to submit the report by April, 1959. May I know the reasons for so much delay?

Sardar Majithia: The health of the Chairman.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: This Committee was appointed long ago and this relates to a deal which was effected in 1952 and this is not a single instance of a deal of a similar nature of the Defence Ministry. May I know why this inordinate delay is being made by the Ministry?

Shri Majithia: As I have said, this Ministry has got no control over the health of certain members and therefore, we cannot ask them to work

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: May I know whether the Ministry will see to it that some healthy people are appointed on such committees and the Ministry also enters into some healthy deals?

Mr. Speaker: If owing to reasons of health of a particular member the committee could not proceed with its work, hon. Members want to know why another member could not be fixed up to act or proceed with that work (Interruptions.)

Sardar Majithia: It was our Deputy Law Minister who was appointed Chairman of this Committee. Unfortunately, he has not been keeping good health

An Hon. Member: He was in the House (Interruptions)

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Minister must anticipate questions from this side. If any member or even a Minister should fall ill, they say it is necessary that some other person should take up the work (Interruptions)

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: They are not taking the House into confidence.

The Minister of Defence (Shri Krishna Menon): The reason for not appointing a committee or someone else is that the second part of its work is in continuation of its earlier work. There has been no delay. The Deputy Law Minister has come back and he is doing his best to expedite the work (Interruptions)

An Hon. Member: We do not hear him

Mr. Speaker: He has come back and he will take up the work.

Shri Ranga: Is there any time-limit? (Interruptions)