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THE
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(Part I—Questions and Answers)
OFFICIAL REPORT

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HOUSE OF THE PEOPLE

Monday, 6th April, 1953.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

[MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER in the Chair]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

WAGONS FOR COAL TRANSPORT

*1169. **Dr. Ram Subhag Singh:** (a) Will the Minister of Production be pleased to state whether Government are aware that considerable difficulty is being experienced by various mills and manufacturing concerns in meeting their coal requirements because of the non-availability of wagons?

(b) If so, do Government propose to take any steps to remove the difficulty in the availability of wagons?

The Minister of Production (Shri K. C. Reddy): (a) Although there has been an improvement in the coal supply position, it is a fact that due to inadequate supply of wagons it is not possible to meet the full requirements of all industries.

(b) Government have already taken action in the matter. A large number of wagons, both broad and metre gauge, are on order, which will allow for an increase of about 3,000 wagons each year. This increase will have to be suitably shared by the different kinds of traffic, including coal, in the light of competing demands, and their comparative importance and urgency.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: May I know whether Government take into account the requirements of wagons for internal supply before agreeing to make wagons available for export purposes?

Shri K. C. Reddy: Certainly the Government keep in view the internal requirements, but at the same time Government cannot dispense altogether with exports.

Shri T. N. Singh: Are the difficulties entirely due to lack of wagons or failure to properly rationalize the distribution of wagons?

Shri K. C. Reddy: It is mostly due to lack of availability of wagons.

Shri Sarmah: May I know if coal from Ledo could be supplied to the neighbouring Assam tea estates?

Shri K. C. Reddy: I would like to have notice of this question.

Sardar A. S. Saigal: May I know when these metre gauge wagons will be available to export coal?

Shri K. C. Reddy: I do not quite follow the question.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Does the hon. Member want the export of wagons? The question relates to coal and not wagons.

Sardar A. S. Saigal: May I know when the metre gauge wagons will be available for export of coal?

Shri K. C. Reddy: I cannot say whether all the export of coal will be either by metre gauge or by broad gauge wagons. I cannot give the break-up just now.

लेठ अचल सिंह : क्या मिनिस्टर महोदय यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि बैंगल्स के बटवारे का क्या तरीका अस्तित्वार किया जाता है ?

जवाबदाता महोदय : हमेशा कोशिश हो रही है ।

Shri Sarmah rose—

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: We discussed all these matters on the Railway Budget.

Shri Sarmah: Will Government be pleased to consider delivering the coal of the locality to industries which are in the neighbourhood?

Shri K. C. Reddy: That is the objective, but it is not capable of application in all cases. So we have got to take the overall position into consideration before we rationalize transport.

Shri R. K. Chaudhury: Is the Government aware that the local coal in Assam has to be purchased at a much higher rate than Raniganj coal imported there and is it a fact that for want of wagons Raniganj coal has not been imported into Assam for some time?

Shri K. C. Reddy: I take the information from the hon. Member.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Next question No. 1170.

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: If I may suggest, we may take up questions 1170 and 1172 together.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Another question on Coffee. Yes.

COFFEE PRICES

*1170. **Dr. Ram Subhag Singh:** (a) Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state whether the prices of coffee have marked any decrease in recent months?

(b) If so, do Government propose to take any steps to avert possible sharp price fluctuations?

The Minister of Commerce and Industry (Shri T. T. Krishnamachari): (a) No, Sir. No perceptible prospects of return to normal prices are indicated.

(b) Government have been in communication with the Coffee Board in regard to this matter—I attended a meeting of the Board on 31st December 1952 at Bangalore and discussed the question with the members of the Board. The prices I am sorry to say have shown an upward trend since then and the Government have had to co-operation from the Board in its attempts to reduce prices. Government have under active consideration the steps that could be taken to achieve the desired end.

EXPORT OF COFFEE

*1172. **Shri P. T. Chacko:** Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state:

(a) whether representations were made urging Government to permit

export of the accumulated stocks of coffee seeds following a twenty per cent. drop in the price of good quality seeds in the coffee market; and

(b) whether Government have taken any steps in the matter?

The Minister of Commerce and Industry (Shri T. T. Krishnamachari): (a) and (b). In December 1952 representations were received from the Kanara Chamber of Commerce and the Andhra Chamber of Commerce for allowing exports of coffee seeds. But it would not be correct to say that there has been a 20 per cent. drop in the price of coffee. In fact, prices have been steadily going up from the month of April 1952. The increase in price is in the region of over Rs. 110 per cwt. considering that the basic price fixed for Plantation A variety was Rs. 209 per cwt. In the circumstances Government did not feel that it would be wise to export coffee seeds from the 1952-53 crop, as it would seriously interfere with supplies available for internal consumers.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: Has there been much accumulation of coffee stocks in recent months?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: No, Sir. There has been no phenomenal accumulation of coffee stocks.

Shri A. M. Thomas: May I know what is the estimated requirement of the country and what is India's production?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: The production is somewhere in the region of 18,000 cwts. I have not got the correct figures but as it seems today India's consumption will be approximately that figure, provided prices are reasonable.

Shri P. T. Chacko: Due to the difficulties inherent in the present system of auction sales may I know whether the price is kept controlled by a handful of dealers?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: There must be some reason for the price going up from Rs. 196 for Plantation A variety in the month of March to Rs. 312 in September. I think, there must be some kind of rigging up of the market by interested parties.

Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy: May I know what is the total accumulation of coffee now?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: I would like to have notice.