

BRASS AND COPPER INDUSTRY

*1057. **Shri H. N. Mukerjee:** Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to the virtual collapse of the brass and copper industry of West Bengal; and

(b) whether Government are taking any steps to assist it?

The Minister of Commerce and Industry (Shri T. T. Krishnamachari):

(a) It is understood that the brass and bell-metal industry in West Bengal has been faced with difficulties of late owing to several reasons.

(b) The State Government have taken certain measures to assist it and the Central Government have also given aid.

Shri H. N. Mukerjee: In view of the fact that raw materials for copper are almost entirely imported and a British managing agency firm controls the production of brass raw materials, does Government have any schemes for producing cheap and good quality raw materials as well as to give necessary technical aid to the industry?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: The first part of the question is not right. The raw material that is needed, to a large extent, so far as copper is concerned, is available, in India but what is needed is only zinc for the purpose of converting that copper into brass ingots. But it so happened that even the one unit of production was not able to maintain its production for the reason of there being a fall in the demand.

Shri H. N. Mukerjee: Is it not a fact that the raw materials of copper which are found here are of such bad quality that they are not really usable for the purpose of manufacturing articles which would be saleable in the market, and is it not a fact that, therefore, we are largely dependent on foreign sources which we should try to get rid of?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: I am afraid,—I have no intention to cross words with the hon. Member,—the fact, really, is that for this particular use the raw material available in India is quite good. We could not convert that copper as electrolytic copper with the facilities we have today. The copper itself is good enough for conversions into brass ingots.

TRADE WITH JAPAN

*1058. **Shri P. N. Rajabhoj:** Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state what efforts are being made to increase the trade between India and Japan?

The Minister of Commerce (Shri Karmarkar): Trade between India and Japan is proceeding smoothly. No special efforts are therefore considered necessary.

Shri P. N. Rajabhoj: Is Government intending to take any further action to prevent the Japanese competition in cloth?

Shri Karmarkar: We are trying to do the best that we can.

Shri P. N. Rajabhoj: Can Government tell us if Japanese textiles are competing with Indian textiles in the outside markets?

Shri Karmarkar: Yes, Sir; just as they are competing with every other textile production in the world.

AURANGABAD RADIO STATION

*1060. **Shri H. G. Vaishnav :** Will the Minister of Information and Broadcasting be pleased to refer to the reply given to starred question No. 1309 asked on the 23rd December, 1953 and state:

(a) whether the broadcasting station at Aurangabad which was closed down about six months ago, is to be re-opened following representations from the people of Marathwada;

(b) if so, the approximate time of its resumption; and

(c) whether any decision has been arrived at with regard to the transmitter and other machinery at present lying at Aurangabad?

The Minister of Information and Broadcasting (Dr. Keskar): (a) to (c). The Station at Aurangabad was closed down as it was found that the cost of running the station was not commensurate with the coverage achieved by the very weak transmitter there. The possibility of installing an experimental and auxiliary relay station at Aurangabad is under examination from technical point of view. But any auxiliary relay station, if decided upon, will have to utilise a better and more modern transmitter as the transmitter which was functioning at Aurangabad is too old and weak to be of much use. A decision regarding an auxiliary relay station can only be taken after the technical study and experiments are over.

Shri H. G. Vaishnav: May I know whether the State Government was consulted before closing down the station?

Dr. Keskar: Broadcasting is a Central subject but we consult the State Governments whenever we consider necessary and in this matter also the State Government was informed of our proposal.

Shri H. G. Vaishnav: May I know whether the scheme of running the Aurangabad Radio Station as a rural broadcasting station is under the consideration of the Government?

Dr. Keskar: My hon. friend has not listened very carefully to the reply that I gave. I said 'auxiliary relay station'. That certainly is at present under consideration. We are carrying on certain experiments whether this could be successfully done.

Shri H. G. Vaishnav: Is it not worthwhile to continue relaying programmes from the station?

Dr. Keskar: We do not think so because our technical advice is that

the present transmitter is too weak and old to be of much use, and in any case it will not be commensurate with the money that we will have to spend.

Dr. Suresh Chandra: May I know whether the Government have received any representations from the State Government as well as from the people of Marathwada not to discontinue the station, and whether the Government had failed to justify the closure of this station?

Dr. Keskar: Government have received a number of representations from the region of Marathwada and no doubt we have not been able to convince them of the reasons why we had closed it down. I am sorry for that, but even after these representations it was not possible for us to carry on the station as it was.

RUBIES

***1061. Shri B. S. Murthy:** Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state:

(a) the total value of imports of rubies during 1951-52, 1952-53 and 1953-54;

(b) the total value of exports of rubies during the same period; and

(c) whether there is any duty on exports and imports of the same?

The Minister of Commerce (Shri Karmarkar): (a) and (b). A statement is laid on the Table of the House. [See Appendix IV, annexure No. 15.]

(c) The import duty on rubies, *unset and imported uncut*, is 20 per cent. *ad valorem* and on rubies, *unset and imported cut*, 25 per cent. *ad valorem*. There is no export duty on rubies.

Shri B. S. Murthy: Have Government any reasons to offer for the abnormal fall of export of rubies during the year 1953-54?

Shri Karmarkar: There is no particular reason; it is perhaps because