

**Shri Hathi:** At Hirakud they are paid Rs. 1-8-0 per day; per month it is Rs. 40. In D.V.C. they are paid Rs. 45. Between skilled and unskilled labour there is a difference. From a minimum of Rs. 60 it goes up to Rs. 500 per month for skilled labour in D.V.C. And at Hirakud the minimum for skilled labour is Rs. 48 and it goes up to Rs. 300 to 500.

**Mr. Speaker:** I will go to the next question. He is going into minute details.

#### IMPORT OF Chanks

\*2126. **Shri S. C. Samanta:** Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a ban on the import of Chanks from Ceylon;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is a fact that the West Bengal Government have asked for the removal of the ban;

(d) if so, when and on what grounds; and

(e) the decision of Government on the matter?

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

(b) Since our requirements can be adequately met from our own production, there is no need for importing Chanks from outside.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) In October 1953, the West Bengal Government asked for lifting of the ban on the ground that the prices of Madras Chanks were high.

(e) The Madras Government have been requested to ensure that the prices of Madras Chanks are kept within the reach of the artisans in West Bengal.

**Shri S. C. Samanta:** Is it not a fact that the *shakharis* of West Bengal reached a very distressing condition for want of conch shells for their work?

**Shri Karmarkar:** The West Bengal Government did bring it to our notice that certain industries were using

these chanks on a large scale and urged their import from outside, saying that Madras chanks cost a little higher. But in view of the fact that the indigenous interests in Madras would suffer we did not think it proper to release imports of chanks from Ceylon.

**Shri S. C. Samanta:** What was the reason—was there short supply from Madras, or was there some other reason?

**Shri Karmarkar:** The complaint was that the prices were high, and we have represented to the Madras Government the desirability of reducing the prices.

**Shri S. C. Samanta:** Is it not a fact that the West Bengal Government have requested the Central Government to do away with the middle-men who deal with conch shell and allow the West Bengal Government to import direct?

**Shri Karmarkar:** I have no information on that.

**Shrimati Renu Chakravartty:** What is the difference in price between the chanks of Ceylon and those of Madras?

**Shri Karmarkar:** The difference in price should be appreciable from the fact that the West Bengal Government represented to us, but I could not say definitely.

**Shri A. P. Sinha:** Is it *shankhs* or chanks?

**Shri Karmarkar:** It is *shankhs* (शंख) in Hindi, chanks in English.

#### MICA INDUSTRY

\*2127. **Shri Nageshwar Prasad Sinha:** Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to refer to the answer to part (f) of unstarred question No. 281 on the 14th August, 1953 and state what are the specific facilities that have been given in 1952 and 1953 to the Mica Industry?

**The Minister of Commerce (Shri Karmarkar):** Since the industry at present depends mainly on export demand, help was given to the industry in 1952 and 1953 by including mica in trade agreements concluded with