

the information is laid on the Table of the House. [See Appendix V, annexure No. 12.]

(b) The quantity of Selected Grade coal consumed by the Railways in 1951 was 1,139,193 tons. The quantity exported during the same year was 443,351 tons.

The figures of consumption by other users are being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House, in due course.

Shri Barman: I again refer to page 41 of the same Committee's Report where it is stated that "a time limit of say 5 years should be given for the implementation of the scheme after which output of metallurgical coal should be adjusted to the absolutely necessary requirements of the metallurgical industry". What steps have Government taken in that direction?

Shri K. C. Reddy: Sir, as I have said in my answer to the supplementary put on the previous question, every possible step is being taken and so far some action has been taken by the Government with regard to the consumption of metallurgical coal by the railways by reducing the metallurgical coal used and using other kind of coal instead and several other steps are also being taken. If the hon. Member wants further information, I will be prepared to give it on receiving a fresh notice of the question.

Shri Barman: I do not deny that Government has taken steps. My query is what is the period after which Government propose to stop the use of metallurgical coal for non-essential purposes?

Shri K. C. Reddy: As early as possible. The process is going on and we do not want to wait even till the five-year period. We want to make progress every few months and I may assure the hon. Member that very energetic action is being taken along these lines.

Shri K. K. Basu: May I know the countries to which metallurgical coal is exported?

Shri K. C. Reddy: For example, Japan.

Shri K. K. Basu: In view of the shortage of metallurgical coal and its industrial requirements in this country, does the Government consider the possibility of stopping further exports?

The Prime Minister (Shri Jawaharlal Nehru): There is no shortage of

metallurgical coal. I do not know how this impression has arisen. There is coal enough to last for 200 years probably, and certainly for 100 years. But nevertheless it is highly desirable to conserve it—that is another matter—because one does not know what use there might be in the future, therefore we ought not to waste it or use it for other purposes for which it is not necessary. But there is no shortage.

Shri K. K. Basu: I did not mean shortage as such but considering the industrial requirements of the future India.

INDO-BRITISH TRADE AGREEMENT

*898. **Pandit M. B. Bhargava:** Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have examined the report of the Fiscal Commission regarding the Indo-British Trade Agreement; and

(b) if so, when Government propose to commence negotiations with the United Kingdom and the Colonies for reviewing the trade position and the question of continuance or otherwise of preferences?

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

(a) The question is under examination.

(b)* Does not arise.

Pandit M. B. Bhargava: May I know if Government has ever applied its mind to the overall working of this trade agreement to see whether it is to the advantage or disadvantage of India and, if so, may I know what was the net loss or gain to this country in 1951-52?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: The question is being continuously examined. We have certain benefits in that we get a 2 d. reduction in the duty on tea. The Department is trying to estimate the question of loss but we have not been able to arrive at any definite figure so that I am unable to commit myself to any statement. But it is a thing which varies and I do not think it is a very appreciable figure any way. Even these estimates are largely in the realm of conjecture.

Pandit M. B. Bhargava: May I know whether the Government thinks the continuance of this preference is consistent with India's position as a sovereign independent country?

Mr. Speaker: I am afraid that will be a question of opinion.

Shri A. C. Guha: May I know if this Indo-British Trade Agreement has been found to be in conflict with the G.A.T.T.?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: Naturally, Sir, as signatories to the G.A.T.T. we cannot offer these preferences afresh to anybody and if we remove the preferences given to U.K. and other Commonwealth countries, as we have done in some cases, there is no question of restoring them. We have diminished these preferences in many cases. If any new agreement is to be made the question of preference does not enter into the scheme at all so long as we are signatories to the G.A.T.T.

Shri A. C. Guha: Is it the intention of the Government, in view of the G.A.T.T. and the Havana Charter, to revise this Indo-British Trade Agreement wholesale?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: It raises a number of questions. The Havana Charter, though we did agree tentatively to it at one stage, has not obtained approval all over the world and the G.A.T.T. is the only thing that is now holding the field. It is very difficult for me to say whether it will also continue to be in force for any length of time. The procedure that India follows is one of bilateral agreements in many cases subject to our commitments as signatories to the G.A.T.T. That is the process and it is now going on. We are negotiating with the U.K. and other countries and maybe where it is most advantageous to us we will come to an arrangement.

Shri Velayudhan: May I know whether there was any proposal with the Government of India to revise the imperial preference by which trade relations between India and Britain are going on still?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: The question has been so rapidly voiced that I could not catch it.

Mr. Speaker: I am going to the next question.

JAPANESE MACHINERY FOR COTTAGE INDUSTRY

*889. **Pandit M. B. Bhargava:** Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the late Ministry of Industry and Supply and

the Ministry of Rehabilitation jointly sent a delegation to Japan to study cottage and small-scale industries there;

(b) if so, whether this Delegation made some purchases of Japanese machinery;

(c) whether these machines were brought into India on Government account and run on Government account or were given to private parties; and

(d) in which centres these machines are working now and with what results?

The Deputy Minister of Commerce and Industry (Shri Karmarkar): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) All the machines purchased by the Delegation were brought to India on Government account. Except for a few machines allotted on payment to displaced persons and their organisations, the machines are being used by Government.

(d) The machines are working in the Central Cottage Industries Institute at Harduaganj, various Training and Work Centres at Delhi and Bhopal, and a number of other Centres run by State Governments. Generally, the machines have proved useful.

Pandit M. B. Bhargava: May I know what trade or industry of India has been improved by the import of these machines?

Shri Karmarkar: Some machines have been found to be extremely useful. For instance, in the Arab-kisarai centre the job printing press worth about Rs. 175 and the oil expeller, power-driven and hand-driven, are getting more and more popular. But it would be premature to assess in quantity the amount of benefit received though these machines certainly have been useful.

Pandit M. B. Bhargava: What has been the total production during 1951-52 from these machines?

Shri Karmarkar: These machines are brought in here so that they could prove as models. The machines were tested and duplicates of these machines were put up for sale. It is too early to say how much production has resulted from these machines.

Pandit M. B. Bhargava: May I know whether the necessary technical personnel has been available for the successful operation of these machines?