

(d) Will it not be possible to start a cement factory in Assam instead of lending the limestones to Pakistan?

The Minister of Commerce and Industry (Shri T. T. Krishnamachari): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (d). Government agreed in 1948 to the starting of a cement factory in Assam. It appears that due mainly to transport difficulties no progress has so far been made.

(c) The cement factory in East Pakistan owned by Messrs. Assam Bengal Cement Co. Ltd., Calcutta, has been utilising the limestone from Assam.
COIR INDUSTRY IN TRAVANCORE-COCHIN

*838. Shri Raghunath: (a) Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state whether the Chief Minister of Travancore-Cochin State had come recently to Delhi to discuss the position of the coir industry in his State?

(b) What are the official figures, according to the State Government, of the number of coir factories closed down and the number of unemployed?

(c) What steps are contemplated by the Central Government to find new markets for coir goods and for giving interim relief to coir workers in Travancore-Cochin State?

The Minister of Commerce (Shri Karmarkar): (a) Yes, Sir. The Chief Minister and the Finance Minister of Travancore-Cochin Government discussed this matter with the Ministry early in October 1952.

(b) About 108 factories and about 21,400 workers.

(c) Government's Trade Representatives abroad have been addressed, with a view to removing obstacles, if any, in the way of import of coir and coir products into foreign countries.

Opportunities are taken from time to time to introduce coir products as an item of export from India, in our Trade Agreements with foreign countries.

To stimulate internal markets, the Government of India have requested all State Governments and departments of the Central Government to make increased purchases of coir products.

To relieve immediate unemployment, steps are being taken to start civil works in the affected area. A conference was convened by the Travancore Government last month to discuss problems relating to the Coir Industry. The Textile Commissioner

to the Government of India attended this conference. The further steps to be taken in this connection are under examination.

DIVERSION TUNNELS IN BHAKRA-NANGAL PROJECT

*839. Shri Krishna Chandra: Will the Minister of Irrigation and Power be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Estimates Committee in their fifth report for 1951-52 under para 85 has reported that the two diversion tunnels of the Bhakra-Nangal Project have been constructed by engineers who are not experts at the job;

(b) whether some damage has been caused to these tunnels by flood; and

(c) whether this has been due to defect in construction?

The Deputy Minister of Irrigation and Power (Shri Hathi): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The attention of the hon. Member is also invited to reply to part (a) and (b) of Starred Question 1169 by Shri Lakshamanan on the 20th September, 1951. There has been no damage to the tunnel structure.

(c) No, Sir.

SOIL CONSERVATION IN KOSI CATCHMENT AREA

*840. Shri L. N. Mishra: Will the Minister of Irrigation and Power be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any programme for soil conservation measures in the Kosi catchment area; and

(b) if so, the chief features and the estimated cost of the said programme?

The Deputy Minister of Irrigation and Power (Shri Hathi): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The details are being worked out.

COMMUNITY PROJECTS IN TRAVANCORE-COCHIN

*841. Kumari Anule Masearene: Will the Minister of Planning be pleased to state:

(a) the amount of money allotted to Travancore-Cochin State for community projects;

(b) whether the Government of Travancore-Cochin State have placed any schemes before the Central Government for community projects;