

saving India's foreign exchange, and what is the total amount that is saved by using the newsprint of this factory?

Shri Manubhai Shah: Last year, the total amount produced was about 10,500 tons, which saved us about Rs. 80 lakhs foreign exchange.

Shrimati Tarkeshwari Sinha: The hon. Minister replied that the Swedish delegation did not visit the actual site of the factory. What was the background then on which they reported that this project was not going to be successful?

Shri Manubhai Shah: It will be difficult for me to say whether, without visiting the site, one could express an opinion. But I can well understand that the technical people would naturally think that the traditional raw material like fir and spruce were not available in Nepa and we have used a new experiment with bamboo and salai. And so they might have expressed their fears about these two new raw materials and thought that perhaps this new factory may not succeed in the manufacture of pulp and newsprint.

Shrimati Tarkeshwari Sinha: The hon. Minister has said that the factory has been running for the last few months. May I know whether the production that is coming out of this factory compares well with the paper produced in other factories?

Shri Manubhai Shah: The House will be pleased to know that the quality is better than that of imported newsprint, and the price is about Rs. 25 per ton less than that of the imported newsprint.

Shri Joachim Alva: Is it the view of the Government that the opinion of the Swedish delegation, who never went and saw this factory, is a biased one in view of the fact that Sweden exports newsprint?

Shri Manubhai Shah: I have no reasons to suspect their motives. Of course the Swedish delegation, I think, would not have given their opinion without proper consideration

of the question. Perhaps the Press reports may not have given a truthful account of what they had said. They might have said that we are not using fir and spruce but instead we are using bamboo and salai in this country. Fir and spruce are the traditional raw materials used.

Shri Wodeyar: May I know whether the raw materials from Malnad will be used in this factory, and if so, the results thereof?

Shri Manubhai Shah: I can only say that if Malnad is producing bamboo and salai, we shall certainly be using them for this factory.

Postal Money Order Service

*104. **Shri Barman:** Will the Minister of Communications be pleased to state whether any proposal has been recently received from Pakistan to provide facilities for postal money orders between the two countries?

The Minister of Communications (Shri Raj Bahadur): Yes.

Shri Barman: Is it a fact that Indian currency is being exchanged with Pakistan currency at a premium of about 40 per cent?

Shri Raj Bahadur: I have also heard that but that question should better be addressed to the Minister of Finance.

Shri Barman: If that be so, may I know whether this fact will be taken into consideration when deciding the question of money exchange with Pakistan?

Shri Raj Bahadur: It is on account of exchange difficulties that these things have been left under suspension; otherwise, these facilities will be there.

Ashoka Hotel

*105. **Shri Kamath:** Will the Minister of Works, Housing and Supply be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Ashoka Hotel is running at a loss; and

(b) if so, the present position?

The Minister of Works, Housing and Supply (Sardar Swaran Singh): (a) and (b). The profit and loss account of the Company will be known after its accounts have been audited for the year ending 30th September 1957.

Shri Kamath: What has been the quantum of Government investment in this Asoka Hotel and what has been the average income and expenditure per month or the average net income per month since it was declared open?

Sardar Swaran Singh: These three questions involve a lot of figure work and if a separate notice is given, I shall be glad to collect these figures.

Shri Kamath: Is it a fact that during recent months, particularly after the UNESCO Conference came to a close, there have been days and even weeks when there have been not more than half a dozen residents in the Asoka Hotel, and over a hundred servants to cater to them?

Sardar Swaran Singh: I think it is much too pessimistic a picture that the hon. Member is painting.

Shri Kamath: What is the optimistic view of the Minister?

Sardar Swaran Singh: I believe in realistic views—neither optimistic nor pessimistic.

Shri Kamath: What is that view?

Shri Velayudhan: May I know the current running expenditure per month?

Sardar Swaran Singh: That is the same question put in a different language. This involves figure work and I say that if notice is given with regard to any particular month, I shall be glad to give the figures.

Shrimati Tarkeshwari Sinha: As this hotel is completely a Government hotel and it has started running for the last few months, may I know whether the Government does not take note of the current accounts, the expenditure and income, etc.?

Sardar Swaran Singh: We do.

Shrimati Tarkeshwari Sinha: Then, how does the Minister say that he shall have to collect the figures and that he does not have any information about the running expenditure and the income of that hotel?

Sardar Swaran Singh: All the figures that are checked by the various limbs of the Government are not carried in the heads of the Ministers. All that I say is that, if notice is given, I shall be certainly glad to give whatever information is available.

Shri Kamath: Had the hon. Minister's attention been drawn to various comments in the Delhi Press that this has become more or less a white elephant and that the Government are thinking of handing it over to a private party?

Sardar Swaran Singh: I have seen comments—both favourable and unfavourable. I do not propose to be influenced by these comments unless I have had occasion to check them up. I am examining all these points that have been raised either favourable or unfavourable about the functioning of the Hotel and whatever steps are necessary to be taken will be taken.

राजमाता कमलेश्वरिणी साह : क्या सरकार यह विचार कर रही है कि उसके जो महमान हंदराबाद हाउस में रहते हैं उनको रखने के लिए अशोक होटल को इस्तेमाल किया जाय ?

सरदार स्वर्ण सिंह : मैं एक्सटर्नल एके-मसं मिनिस्ट्री से दरियाफत करूंगा कि प्राया कोई ऐसा प्रोपोजल उनके खेर गौर है ।

Shri Ramachandra Reddi: May I know the total expenditure that has been incurred on the building and the equipment so far?

Sardar Swaran Singh: I could not say offhand but I think it is of the order of over two crores of rupees.

Shri C. D. Pande: May I put one question?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Members may go and see the Asoka Hotel building for further information. It is a big construction.

Fertilizer Factory

*166. **Dr. Rama Rao:** Will the Minister of Production be pleased to state whether any decision has been taken to start a fertilizer factory in Andhra Pradesh?

The Minister of Production (Shri K. C. Reddy): The question of the establishment of new fertilizer factories in addition to those which have already been included in the Second Five Year Plan programme is under consideration in view of the increasing requirement of fertilizers in the country. The claims for the establishment of a fertilizer factory in Andhra as also in one or two other suitable places will be borne in mind in this connection.

Dr. Rama Rao: Is the Minister aware that Andhra is the largest consumer of ammonium sulphate in the country?

Shri K. C. Reddy: It is one of the States which consumes a large quantity of fertilizer.

Dr. Rama Rao: When can we expect some firm decision on this matter?

Shri K. C. Reddy: As soon as possible.

Shri Boovaraghasamy: Whether any fertilizer factory is to be started near any place where the raw material, particularly gypsum, is available? If so, is there any proposal under consideration to start a factory at Perambalur in Madras State where gypsum is available in abundance.

Shri K. C. Reddy: The hon. Member is perhaps aware that a decision has already been taken to start a fertilizer factory as part of the composite Neivelli lignite project.

Shri B. S. Murthy: What are factors standing in the way of Andhra getting a fertilizer factory for which it has been agitating so long and the need for which is great there?

Shri K. C. Reddy: I would invite the attention of the hon. Member to a report, a copy of which has already been placed on the Table of the House. It deals with the requirements of fertilizers in the country the various types of fertilizers to be produced and the places where the factories could be located. That report was submitted by a committee and one of the recommendations in that report dealt with the sites which could be considered in the order of priority. It divides the various sites into four categories. Two sites have already been selected and we are considering the possibility of selecting two or three more places for the establishment of two or three more factories.

Shri B. S. Murthy: Is it not a fact that the same report has emphatically expressed that the needs of a fertilizer factory for Andhra are quite imperative and that Bezwada could be chosen as a suitable site?

Shri K. C. Reddy: Yes, Sir. The Andhra Government has expressed very strongly that a fertilizer factory should be established in Andhra. I agree that there is a great justification in that claim but it is a question of priorities and we have to go forward in this regard with due circumspection.

Dr. Rama Rao: In spite of the recommendations of that Committee, Bezwada lost the chance at that time because the railway authorities pleaded that there would be bottlenecks. Now that there is going to be doubling of the track between Bezwada and Madras, may I know if Bezwada stands a better chance?

Shri K. C. Reddy: Bezwada stands a better chance than what other site? The question is not complete.

Shri Raghavaiah: As the hon. Minister said that Bezwada would have a