

Sardar Swaran Singh: I could not say. It is a fact that the actual production in the first blast furnace at Bourkela is not up to the rated capacity, but I could not say whether this is due to any defect in the fire bricks, but the advice that was received by me was that this was mainly due to the troubles in the big casting machine

Shri Tangamani: May I know whether it has been brought to the notice of the Government that the cement that is supplied by the contractor is of an inferior quality?

Sardar Swaran Singh: That does not arise out of this because this is about the blast furnace, but it is a fact that some of the cement that was supplied by one of the factories nearby was found to be of inferior quality when we tested the core, but that is in the rolling mill section. That, unfortunately, has retarded to a certain extent the progress of construction

Shri Supakar: May I know if sufficient precaution is taken to see that the same defect which has occurred in the first blast furnace causing a shortfall in production does not take place in the case of the second and third blast furnaces when they are constructed?

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Does he expect that the answer would be 'No'.

Shri Supakar: My question is if sufficient precaution has been taken

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Government would always say that sufficient precaution is taken. What is the significance of the question?

Expansion of Harness and Saddlery Factory at Kanpur

*1370. **Shri Keshava:** Will the Minister of Defence be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal to expand the Harness and Saddlery Factory at Kanpur and add a boot section; and

(b) how does this feature affect the small scale industries in the locality?

The Deputy Minister of Defence (Shri Raghuramaiah): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) It is proposed to undertake manufacture for the present only half of the annual requirements of boots and the other half will be obtained from trade through the Director General of Supplies and Disposals in the normal manner

The production in the Ordnance Factory is not likely to affect the Small Scale Industry as it will only be a very small percentage of the total quantity of boots produced by that industry

Shri Keshava: May I know whether, consistent with our policy of encouraging small-scale industry and co-operation, any attempt at all was made to secure the supply of goods from the small-scale industry and the co-operatives?

Shri Raghuramaiah: The point here is that in the supplies got from the trade we noticed various defects. First of all, there has not been any uniformity, and there have also been other defects, but more than that, we have found also idle capacity in this particular factory. In fact, a number of workmen are officially listed as being on idle-time. Considering all these facts, we have thought it advisable in the interests of the country to have boot manufacture from this factory. But as I have already explained, it will only cover a fraction of the supplies by the small-scale industries making boots in the country.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: May I know when this plant is likely to be established, and whether the foreign exchange difficulties in getting the machinery from Czechoslovakia have been overcome?

Shri Raghuramaiah: I think all the difficulties are got over, and we hope to have this as soon as possible.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: May I know the capacity of this plant, and the

number of boots likely to be manufactured per month, and the employment potential?

Shri Raghuramaiah: As I said, now, it will be confined to the manufacture of about a lakh numbers.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: He wanted to know the employment potential also.

Shri Raghuramaiah: I have not got those figures.

Shri M. R. Krishna: The hon. Minister has just stated that the boots procured from the small-scale industries were found to be inferior. May I know the number of boots so far secured by the Defence Ministry from the small-scale industries?

Shri Raghuramaiah: The annual requirements of the Army stand at about 2 lakhs pairs of boots.

Shri N. R. Muniswamy: May I know whether in the boots section that has been added in this factory, cost accounting has been done, and if so, how the cost of production of a pair of boots compares with the market price?

Shri Raghuramaiah: We have worked out the figures; the production cost, will be a little over what we now pay to the civil trade. It is stated that the average price per pair of boots produced in the civil trade is Rs. 17; in the case of the boots that are produced here, it will be slightly on the increase, that is, about Rs. 18.46. But the total benefit to the Defence Budget will be round about Rs. 6 lakhs, but because the overheads of the factory will get reduced, overall, there is a benefit to the Defence Budget to the extent of about Rs. 6 lakhs.

Geological Survey for Sulphur

*1373. **Shri Raghunath Singh:** Will the Minister of Steel, Mines and Fuel be pleased to state whether to find out new mines of sulphur in India the Base Metal Unit of the Geological Survey of India has decided to carry

out detailed exploration in Bihar, Mysore and other parts of the country?

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Steel Mines and Fuel (Shri Gajendra Prasad Sinha): The Base Metal Unit in the Geological Survey of India was set up with a view to intensify investigations pertaining to base metals, e.g., copper, lead and zinc. These ores ordinarily have a proportion of sulphur content in chemically combined form, which, under suitable conditions of metallurgical treatment, can be obtained as a by-product. The Base Metal Unit proposes to carry out detailed exploration for sulphide ores in different parts of the country including Bihar and Mysore, etc.

Shri Raghunath Singh: May I know the consumption of sulphur in India, and whether we are self-sufficient in sulphur?

Shri Gajendra Prasad Sinha: The import in 1958 was near about 2 lakhs tons, but mostly, for our total consumption, we have to depend upon imports.

Shri Raghunath Singh: May I know the amount which we have paid for these imports?

Shri Gajendra Prasad Sinha: I am not in a position just now to say the exact amount of foreign exchange which we had to pay for it, but I have already stated the quantity which we had imported in 1958.

Shri Shree Narayan Das: May I know whether any programme has been prepared for the exploitation of this element in Bihar?

Shri Gajendra Prasad Sinha: The programme is already there, and exploration had been started long before; we have already proved 9 million tons of pyrites in Bihar, which are the main source for sulphur production; we are also doing exploration in other States where it is in the preliminary stage.