

Mining and Allied Machinery Corporation in Durgapur

649. **Shrimati Jyotana Chanda:** Will the Minister of Industrial Development and Company Affairs be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Mining and Allied Machinery Corporation in Durgapur is running at a loss since it was commissioned in 1963; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor?

The Minister of Industrial Development and Company Affairs (Shri F. A. Ahmed): (a) The Mining and Allied Machinery Corporation Ltd., Durgapur was incorporated as a company on 1st April, 1965 and during the year 1965-66 it has shown a total loss of Rs. 2,08,24,167.

(b) Such losses in the earlier years of operation are not unusual in capital-intensive heavy engineering projects of a specialised nature. It takes some time for normal production to be established and the break-even point is reached only after a few years of such operation when batch production of sophisticated machinery items has been established. In the case of the M.A.M.C. also the burden of interest, depreciation charges, the heavy expenditure incurred in the initial years on the training of workers and on preliminary work required to be completed to launch batch production without adequate countervailing production has been responsible for the loss under reference. Furthermore, during 1963-66 there was lack of adequate orders for coal mining equipment on the company which again was due to the downward revision of coal production targets and the relatively slower pace of mechanisation of the existing coal mines than envisaged earlier.

Accumulation of Steel at Bhilai

650. **Shri Onkar Lal Berwa:**
Shri Meetha Lal:

Will the Minister of Steel, Mines and Metals be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that huge quantity of Bhilai steel is lying unused because it could not be utilized by some important public sector undertakings;

(b) if so, whether the possibilities of export of this steel stock pile have been explored; and

(c) the manner in which this stock is intended to be utilized?

The Minister of Steel, Mines and Metals (Dr. Chenna Reddy): (a) On 1st May, 1967, Bhilai had stocks of 84,759 tonnes of Saleable Pig Iron and 94,392 tonnes of Saleable steel. This accumulation reflects recessive market conditions.

(b) The possibilities of export of Bhilai Products are continuously being explored. Currently, Bhilai is executing export orders for Pig Iron from Japan, for rails from Sudan, Iran, Ghana, etc. and beams and channels from U.S.S.R.

(c) The stock of saleable products is expected to be liquidated through internal as well as external sales.

Reservation of Berths on Railways

651. **Shri Meetha Lal:**
Shri Onkar Lal Berwa:

Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the new system of reservation of berths on Railways has been very inconvenient for intending passengers, and there have been strong protests against this from the people of all sections;

(b) if so, whether Government propose to revoke the new system of reservations; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

The Minister of Railways (Shri C. M. Poonacha): (a) to (c). It is resumed that the Member's reference is to the enhanced time limit introduced on Railways for advance reservation.

In order to meet the heavy rush of traffic during Summer effectively and with a view to giving relief to the travelling public by reducing the queues at the reservation offices and to avoid black-marketing in reservations by unsocial elements, the time limit for advance reservation has been enhanced on Railways as an experimental measure.

The working of this system is being watched. The question whether this arrangement should be extended uniformly throughout the year will be considered after a full assessment of the experiment is made.

Indian Pavilion at Montreal Exhibition

652. Shri Meetha Lal:
Shri Onkar Lal Berwa:

Will the Minister of Commerce be pleased to state:

(a) the cost borne by Government in terms of foreign exchange in setting up a pavilion for Indian goods in Montreal Exhibition 1967; and

(b) how much export orders of the goods displayed at this exhibition are anticipated?

The Minister of Commerce (Shri Dinesh Singh): (a) The total cost in foreign exchange in setting up the pavilion in the Exhibition 1967 at Montreal (Canada) is likely to be around Rs. 2,08,80,000.00.

(b) The exhibition, which is to last for six months, has opened recently on the 28th April, 1967 and it is too early to anticipate or forecast the export orders which would be obtained through this participation.

Montreal Exhibition

653. Shri Meetha Lal:
Shri Onkar Lal Berwa:
Shri V. Krishnamoorthi:

Will the Minister of Commerce be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a team of girls was recruited and sent as guides for Indian Pavilion in Montreal Exhibition for six months;

(b) their service conditions and salary paid to them;

(c) why was it necessary to send girl guides from India at a high cost when guides could be recruited locally at a comparatively cheaper cost; and

(d) whether Government have selected other personnel also for the Indian Pavilion at the Fair?

The Minister of Commerce (Shri Dinesh Singh): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A statement is laid on the Table of the House. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-418/67].

(c) Taking all factors into consideration it was felt that guides from India would be more useful and less costly in terms of foreign exchange. However, local talent was also utilised to the extent possible and 10 Indian guides were selected.

(d) Yes, Sir. They are already in Montreal.

Import of Cotton from U.A.R. and Sudan

654. Shri F. G. Sen:
Shri Sharda Nand:
Shri Bharat Singh Chauhan:
Shri Ranjit Singh:

Will the Minister of Commerce be pleased to state:

(a) whether possibilities of barter have been explored for the import of Cotton from U.A.R. and Sudan; and

(b) if so, with what results?