

**Import of coal from Australia**

816. SHRI K. RAMAMURTHY: Will the Minister of STEEL MINES AND COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have permitted import of one lakh tonne of coal from Australia by the Minerals and Metals Trading Corporation on the ground that the imported coal is cheaper and also the quality is of high grade; and

(b) if so, the steps being taken to bring down the cost of indigenously mined coal and also to improve the quality of coal?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL, MINES AND COAL (SHRI VASANT SATHE):

(a) Tamilnadu Electricity Board had been permitted to import 1 lakh tonnes of coal from Australia through Minerals and Metals Trading Corporation, having regard to the constraints in moving coal to Tuticorin Thermal Power Station via Haldia Port, to enable the Power Station to build up a buffer stock.

(b) Pithead prices of coal are fixed by Government. While revising the coal prices necessitated due to escalation in the cost of inputs, wage increases, higher incidence of depreciation and interest charges etc., its impact on the consumers and on the national economy is always kept in view and prices are kept as low as possible.

On the quality front, several measures have been taken for improving the quality of coal supplies. These: include

1. Setting up of an independent quality control organisation in each coal company.
2. Installation of more coal handling plants with provision for sizing and screening of coal wherever required.
3. Breaking up of sized coal and segregation of extraneous material by manual means, where CHP's do not exist.
4. Introduction of a clause in the agreement with major consumers providing for joint sampling and analysis and payment on that basis; and

5. The Coal Controller as an independent authority has been given the powers to determine the grades of coal seams in the mines as also of the coal supplied to consumers and for these purposes to take samples and arrange for the testing of coal suo-moto or if any complaint is made in this regard by any consumers. The Coal Controller's decision in the matter shall be final.

**Plans for Renovation Programme for the Bengal Nagpur Cotton Mills in Rajnandgaon**

817. SHRI SHIVENDRA BAHADUR SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND SUPPLY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any plan for renovation of Bengal Nagpur Cotton Mills at Rajnandgaon; and

(b) if so, the total estimated expenditure thereon?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND COMMERCE AND SUPPLY (SHRI VISHWANATH PRATAP SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir. An amount of Rs. 471.29 lakhs has been sanctioned for renovation, modernisation of this mill.

(b) Against the sanctioned amount, a sum of Rs. 367.16 lakhs has been spent upto December, 1984.

**Labour Problem in Bengal Nagpur Cotton Mills at Rajnandgaon**

818. SHRI SHIVENDRA BAHADUR SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND SUPPLY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the management of Bengal Nagpur Cotton Mills at Rajnandgaon is facing any labour problem at present; and

(b) if so, the steps proposed to be taken to solve the problem?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND COMMERCE AND SUPPLY (SHRI VISHWANATH PRATAP SINGH): (a) and

(b). There were labour-problems in the mill during the year 1984. A settlement was reached on 6th December 1984 between the

management and the representatives of Rajnandgaon Kapda Mazdoor Sangh in the presence of the Deputy Labour Commissioner, Madhya Pradesh. Production in all three shifts was restarted on 8th December 1984. There was a demand for parity of wages in certain occupations with wages prevailing in textile mills in Indore. A Committee, consisting of representatives of the Workers' unions and the management, has been constituted to look into this matter.

#### Setting up of an Inland Container Depot at Ahmedabad

819. SHRI R.P. GAEKWAD: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND SUPPLY be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry has decided to set up an inland container depot at Ahmedabad;

(b) whether a site at Thaltej in Ahmedabad was selected for such a depot but as the landowner has gone to Court, the project is delayed;

(c) whether an alternative site at Sabarmati station has been suggested for the depot; and

(d) if so, the present position thereof?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND COMMERCE AND SUPPLY (SHRI VISHWANATH PRATAP SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) & (d). The location of Sabarmati has not been found suitable for a regular Inland Container Depot (ICD).

#### Gold Refinery at Ahmedabad

820. SHRI R.P. GAEKWAD: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state;

(a) whether Government have decided to set up a gold refinery at Ahmedabad;

(b) if so, whether a suitable place for setting up the refinery has been located; and

(c) if so, the time by which the refinery at Ahmedabad is likely to start work?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANAR-

DHANA POOJARY): (a) to (c). There is only one Gold Refinery in the country and it is located in the Bombay Mint. There is no proposal to set up a gold refinery at Ahmedabad. However, a Collection-cum-Delivery Centre for gold has set up at Odhav, Ahmedabad. The Centre receives gold ornaments and other articles from merchants and the public and gives back equivalent amount of gold in standard gold bars.

#### Shortage of coins and small Denomination currency notes in Gujarat

821. SHRI R.P. GAEKWAD: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state;

(a) whether Government are aware that there is acute shortage of coins and small denomination currency notes in Gujarat for over two years;

(b) whether Government are aware that this is causing considerable hardship to people in their day to day business;

(c) whether State Government represented the matter to the Reserve Bank of India and the Ministry of Finance some time in July 1982 and in December 1983; and

(d) if so, the concrete steps taken or proposed to be taken to meet the shortage of small coins and notes in Gujarat?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY): (a) Reports of shortage of coins and small denomination currency notes have been received from various parts of the country including Gujarat.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The Reserve Bank of India was advised to take remedial action and the Bank had stepped up supply of currency notes and small coins to Gujarat consistent with stock position. In addition, Government have taken various steps to ease the supply position of coins and small denomination currency notes. Incentive schemes have been introduced alongwith the increased working hours in all the three Mints, i.e. Bombay, Calcutta and Hyderabad and two Currency Note Presses at Nasik Road and Dewas,