

salt production centres in the State of Bombay is 20.

(b) A statement is placed on the Table of the House. [See Appendix I, annexure No. 36.]

(c) and (d). Certain small pan owners have failed to keep the embankments in proper repairs, but this has not resulted in any substantial loss of production.

(e) Commencement of salt manufacture depends entirely on the individual manufacturer, who is guided by the local market position.

(f) Under the terms of the licenses issued to them the owners are bound to carry out proper repairs to the salt works. If they fail to do so, the work can be carried out by the Salt Department at the cost of the licensees concerned, and the expenditure recovered from them. The powers have however not been utilised as private production is generally on the increase and the supply exceeds the demand. Government have no authority to force the manufacturer to commence production in a particular month.

GOVERNMENT AGENCIES FOR IMPORT, EXPORT AND RAILWAY CLEARANCE

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

(a) whether there is any Government organised Agency for import, export (by sea and air), railway clearance and forwarding under his Ministry;

(b) whether there were separate Government Agents under the same Ministry;

(c) if so, whether the rates of Agency charges were different;

(d) the overall Government Agency charges, year by year, between 1947 to 1952; and

(e) whether the cheapest rate of Government Agency charge is availed of in clearing Government consignments under this Ministry?

The Deputy Minister of Works, Housing and Supply (Shri Buragohain): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) There are different clearing agents at different ports but there is only one agent functioning at each port.

(c) The rates of agency charges vary from port to port.

(d) A statement is placed on the Table of the House. [See Appendix I, annexure No. 37.]

(e) The clearing agents at the ports are appointed on the basis of advertised tenders after every three years. The contracts are awarded to well established clearing houses whose rates are the lowest, provided they are recommended by the Customs and Port Trust Authorities as fit for handling all types of cargoes and are also reported as financially sound.

CLEARING AGENCY

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

(a) whether "Profit" was derived from year to year out of the cheapest Organisation for clearing Government Consignments under the Printing and Stationery Organisation;

(b) if so, the amount of profit year by year; and

(c) the reasons that led to the abolition and transfer of the import and export work so long carried out efficiently at a low cost by Government Agency under the Deputy Controller of Stationery at Calcutta?

The Minister of Works, Housing and Supply (Sardar Swaran Singh): (a) The clearing and Shipping Section of Central Stationery Office was not run on a commercial basis but "proforma" accounts reveal that there were both profits and losses in running it.

(b) The amount of profit/loss during the five years ending 1950-51 is as below:—

	Net loss	Net profit
1946-47	Rs. 11,330	—
1947-48	-	Rs. 6,784
1948-49	-	Rs. 38,685
1949-50	-	Rs. 20,368
1950-51	Rs. 15,785	—

(c) The Estimates Committee recommended that the Stationery Office should not handle shipping and clearing work of other Ministries. This was accepted by Government. As a result, the shipping and clearing work of stationery office was expected to shrink and it was not, therefore, considered necessary to keep a small separate organisation in the Stationery Office. Consequently, the shipping and clearing work of the Stationery Office was transferred to the Director of Supplies and Disposals, a much larger organisation at Calcutta under this very Ministry.

COLLIERIES

30. Pandit M. B. Bhargava: Will the Minister of Production be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of collieries run by private individuals and companies or Railways and other Government departments in the different parts of the country;

(b) the total quantity and value of production of coal from such collieries;

(c) (i) the maximum productive capacity of the existing mines, (ii) the quality of the coal produced, and (iii) how it compares with the coal produced in other countries of the world;

(d) whether geological survey has revealed the possibility of finding coal in any other parts of the country; and

(e) whether there is any scheme for exploring the same by the Central Government or through private agencies?

The Minister of Production (Shri K. C. Reddy): (a) There were 928 in March 1953. Of these 11 are owned by the Central Government and the rest by private individuals and companies.

(b) (i) Total Quantity produced in 1952 was 36,301,865 tons.

(ii) Total Value was Rs. 53,61,87,030/- (as reported by Chief Inspector of Mines).

(c) (i) The potential maximum output of the coal industry depends upon (a) wagon supply, (b) labour, (c) adequate supply of power or electricity, machinery and materials. The maximum productive capacity of the existing mines cannot therefore be accurately assessed. If, however, sufficient orders for coal and the required railway transport are available it is estimated that the maximum productive capacity of existing mines will be not less than 45 million tons per annum and by increased mechanisation this can be increased to 50 or even 55 million tons per annum.

(ii) A statement is laid on the Table of the House showing the results of the analysis of various collieries. [See Appendix I, annexure No. 38.]

(iii) As a general rule the ash content of Indian Coals is higher than coals produced in U.S.A., Britain, Germany, Netherlands, France and Russia and is about the same as coals produced in South Africa, Australia, China and Japan.

(d) During the last three years as a result of geological survey certain coal bearing areas have been located.

(e) The detailed and systematic survey of known coal-fields and coal-bearing areas is included in the annual field programme of the Geological Survey of India.