

**Activated Charcoal**

**1900. Shri P. K. Deo:** Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state:

(a) whether activated charcoal can be produced from rice husk;

(b) if so, where it is produced in the country and in what quantity;

(c) for what purpose this activated charcoal is used and what is the total requirement of the country;

(d) whether there is any foreign market for this activated charcoal; and

(e) whether there is any possibility for the expansion of this industry in this country?

**The Minister of Industry (Shri Manubhai Shah):** (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) According to the available information activated charcoal from rice husk is being produced at Thiruchirappally at the rate of about 100 tons per annum. Besides, there are some units engaged in its manufacture at different places.

(c) It is used for de-colourisation and de-odourisation of vegetable oils like groundnut oil, castor oil, linseed oil, palm oil etc. Activated charcoal produced from rice husk and other raw materials such as wood and coal is also used for refining of vegetable oils, drugs and pharmaceuticals, fine chemicals, sugar, glycerine and gases like carbon dioxide etc. The total internal demand for activated charcoal is estimated at 600|700 tons per annum.

(d) Foreign manufacturers in the U.S.A., U.K., Germany and France being well established in the manufacture and marketing of various grades of activated charcoal, there is no appreciable foreign market for the Indian product which is still produced in smaller quantities.

(e) Yes, Sir.

**Workers in Raniganj Coal-field**

**1001. Shri Indrajit Gupta:** Will the Minister of Labour and Employment be pleased to state:

(a) the present strength of C.L.O. workers (Gorakhpur Labour) employed in the Raniganj coal-field, West Bengal; and

(b) whether it is proposed to maintain or to reduce this strength?

**The Deputy Minister of Labour (Shri Abid Ali):** (a) 5,212.

(b) That is a matter for the employers.

**Export Trade with West Asia and Africa**

**1002. Shri D. C. Sharma:** Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to a study released by the World Trade Department of the Indian Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta that there is a vast scope for increasing India's export trade with West Asia and Africa;

(b) the reaction of Government thereto; and

(c) the action taken or proposed to be taken in the matter?

**The Deputy Minister of Commerce and Industry (Shri Satish Chandra):** (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c). Government are aware of the possibilities for increasing India's export trade with countries in West Asia and Africa and have been giving special attention to those markets in the overall effort to promote exports.

**Indian Trade Commissioners in Middle East**

**1003. Shri S. A. Mehdi:** Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state:

(a) whether any Trade Commissioner has been appointed in the