

scarce and strategic minerals lie buried underground, the country has to pay a heavy amount in foreign exchange year after year to import the same minerals merely because we have not been able to finalise the technology that will be used for the exploration and economic exploitation of these minerals. I am referring about Nickel and Cobalt. India imports her entire requirements of these two metals and the annual outgo is Rs. 30 crores in foreign exchange. It is a pathetic situation because as far back in 1971-72 the Geological Survey of India had established the existence of rich reserve of 15 million tonnes of nickel of 1.19 per cent nickel in Kansa area of Orissa. An Indian consultancy firm was appointed to draw up a feasibility report which suggested that annually 6,90,000 tonnes of nickel could be mined, out of which 4,800 tonnes of nickel, 200 tonnes of cobalt and 17,000 tonnes of fertiliser type ammonia could be produced. However, the process recommended by this firm was put to a pilot plant test for nearly five years between 1973-77 but it did not give the desired results. In the bargain the Government had lost an investment of Rs. 42 lakhs and much more than that, precious time was lost. Since there was no other indigenous technology available within the country, we had to look for foreign technology and offers were received from USSR, Canada and Cuba. It is rather unfortunate that even during the last three years the finalisation and the selection of the technology out of these three offers could not be made. It is now understood that the choice of technology has been narrowed down as two of these do not suit Indian condition and purpose. Expert opinion is also available after due processing. I would therefore, request the Government not to lose any more time on this issue. I may add in this connection that in addition to 15 million tonnes reserve in Kansa another reserve of 14 million tonnes have further been discovered in the Sukinda Valley in Orissa. This no doubt will help the Government to set up a plant of 10,000 tonnes capacity instead of 5,000 tonnes capacity as envisaged earlier. I urge upon the hon.

Minister for Steel to take expeditious action to finalise the technology issue and initiate immediate steps to locate the plant in Orissa which has already been decided upon by the Central Government and save the foreign exchange now being incurred on imports.

(iii) TRAFFIC SURVEY OF THE PROPOSED RAILWAY LINE ON BANDEL-HOWRAH SECTION

PROF. RUP CHAND PAL (Hooghly): Bandel-Howrah section is one of the busiest sections of Eastern Railway as well as a remunerative one. Daily, thousands of people are going to Calcutta through Howrah station for various reasons, viz, service, business, medical treatment, education, etc. From the Railway time table it may be seen that there are more than 50 nos. of local trains running daily between Bandel-Howrah. Besides, during the office time, there are also 20 nos. Mail, Express, Fast Passenger and Passenger trains. Further during this peak hours a good number of goods trains also run through Bandel-Howrah Down line.

Moreover, beyond Sheoraphuli-Serampore, there are some local Down trains viz. Sheoraphuli, Tarakeswar and Serampore etc. running during the office time. As a result, most of the local trains cannot move smoothly over their own tracks and as a result of which commuters have to stay in train for a long time sometimes over a station and sometimes in the middle of the stations. The other incoming local trains have also to be stayed over the same line one after another.

Day by day the number of daily passengers, ordinary passengers, vendors as well as goods, parcels etc. are also increasing voluminously. This goes to indicate that the revenue earnings of Railways are increasing day by day and on the contrary, when the revenue earning appears to be improving, the facilities of the railway users are decreasing due to shortages of trains and irregular train services. In this connection, it will not be out of place to mention that due to irregular train

[Prof. Rup Chand Pal]

services as mentioned above supplies of daily necessities to the city of Calcutta are greatly disrupted causing financial loss to the poor vendors and others.

Considering the above aspects, it is a necessity to have the third Dn. line Ex. Bandel to Bhadreswar extended immediately so that the smooth and quick running of the train services may be made possible by the Railway administration and at the same time minimising the trouble of the daily office passengers, teachers, students etc.

Nevertheless, for getting facility of train services, most of the people are likely to build dwelling houses on both sides, close to the railway lines and this may put obstruction to the proposed extension of lines, sidings, new lines etc. Now is the best time to acquire the private lands on both the sides of the existing lines between Bandel-Bhadreswar for new construction of the third down line. At present, it may be easy to acquire the vacant land for which a small amount of compensation has to be paid to the owners of the private lands.

In view of the above circumstances, I would urge the Railway Ministry to undertake early traffic survey of the proposed line and include the above demand in railway works programme immediately and also provide necessary budget allotment in the next Railway Budget for a third Dn. line Ex-Bandel to Bhadreswar from where there already exists one third line upto Howrah.

(iv) LOSSES IN TALCHER UNIT OF FERTILIZER CORPORATION OF INDIA

SHRI ARJUN SETHI (Bhadrah):
Sir, under Rule 377. I raise the following matter of public importance.

Sir, the Talcher Fertilizer Plant in Orissa is one of the coal based Fertilizer units in the country, the other one being Ramagundam in Andhra Pra-

desh. This particular unit at Talcher had gone into commercial production in November, 1980 with the total investment of Rs. 220 crores. But, from the beginning the plant at Talcher runs at a colossal loss. The Cumulative loss upto March 31st, 1981 i.e., from November, 1980 to March, 1981 is about Rs. 18 crores. Thereafter, the average loss in every month is about 3 crores while the average rate of production per day is only 94 tonnes i.e., less than 7 per cent of the scheduled rated capacity utilization. While at Ramagundam other coal based unit is about 45 per cent of the rated capacity utilisation. But the most irony of fact is that being the lowest capacity utilised unit in the country, its overtime payment to the employees is the highest of all F.C.I. Plants in India today. The actual figures stand upto June 1981 is more than 40 crores. It is said, a worker who even comes for half an hour gets overtime for 8 hours.

The main reasons for these colossal losses are managerial lapses, bad administration, wastages and faulty decision makings in the plant.

Therefore, I urge upon the Government at the Centre to constitute a high power committee consisting of M.Ps of both the Houses of Parliament to go into the details of the defects and set right the things at Talcher in the interest of the National economy as a whole.

(v) PROBLEMS OF WEAVERS OF UTTAR PRADESH DUE TO RISING PRICES OF YARN AND CHEMICALS

श्री हरिकेश बहादुर (गोरखपुर) :
मान्यवर, उत्तर प्रदेश तथा देश के अन्य भागों में बुनकरों को आर्थिक स्थिति दिन प्रति दिन बिड़ती चली जा रही है क्योंकि सूत और कैंमिकल्स की कीमतों में निरन्तर वृद्धि हो रही है। हथकरघा उद्योग में जगे हुए देश के करोड़ों बुनकर