

(ii) No. of persons who are no longer in service. 45

(iii) No. of persons who are still continuing in an *ad-hoc* capacity against the duty posts in Grade IV. 32

The question of continuance of these officers in service on a regular basis will be considered as part of the proposals for re-organising the C. I. S.

(c) The minimum qualifications laid down for *ad-hoc* recruitment to posts in Grade IV were :

(i) Degree of a recognised University.

(ii) Knowledge of Hindi and/or a regional language.

(iii) Age limit-21 to 25 years.

(d) It is not proposed to make any further *ad-hoc* appointments to Grade IV posts unless it becomes absolutely necessary.

12.01 hrs.

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

REPORTED CLOSURE OF TEXTILE MILLS IN AHMEDABAD

SHRI DHAMANKAR (Bhiwandi) : I call the attention of the Minister of Foreign Trade to the following matter of urgent public importance and request that he may make a statement thereon :

"Reported closure of textile mills in Ahmedabad"

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN TRADE (SHRI A. C. GEORGE) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, Gujarat Electricity Board announced a cut of 25% in electricity for high tension and commercial consumers including textile industry with effect from 23rd March, 1972 and all textile mills outside Ahmedabad were affected by this cut. The Ahmedabad Electricity Company which supplies electricity to mills in the city announced a cut of 5% with effect from 31st March, 1972.

The reasons for these cuts are :—

(a) Dhuvaran Thermal Power Station of Gujarat Electricity Board was

affected because of break-down of some of its turbines ;

(b) power supply from Tarapore Atomic Power Station was cut completely in the last week of March because of break-down of its Reactor

The position with regard to power supply from Dhuvaran Thermal Power Station and the Tarapore Atomic Power Station is expected to improve by the end of May, 1972. With effect from 13th April, 1972 the Gujarat Electricity Board has since reduced the cut from 25% to 16% ; the Ahmedabad Electricity Company has increased the cut from 5% to 16% so as to bring about uniformity. As a result of this power cut about 12000 workers in mills in Ahmedabad city have been laid off.

With a view to implement this 16% cut without affecting the smooth working of the mills, the, Gujarat Government have evolved a system of staggered working. All mills in the State are divided into 7 groups of 9 to 10 mills each and each group remains closed for one day in a week and that group will not be supplied electricity on the day on which it is not supposed to be in operation. There was complete stoppage of power supply in Ahmedabad City from 11 A. M. on 15th April due to delay in the supply of coal to the Company. As a result of this, 52 mills closed down, in addition to the 10 mills which were not working on that day as per staggering arrangements and about 2,00,000 workers were affected. Gujarat Government took a serious view of the situation and arranged to rush coal supplies and power was restored by 12 O'clock in the night of 15th April to the levels of the cut imposed on the 13th April.

SHRI DHAMANKAR : From the statement of the Minister it seems that the 25% cut in the power supply was already there due to short supply of power from the Dhuvaran power station as also from the Tarapore Atomic power station. Actually, the crisis came on the 15th April when nearly 51 textile mills and 11 staggering mills and other 62 industries were forced to close down for want of power supply. This has resulted in the loss of wages of about 2 lakh workers in Ahmedabad.

Secondly, it has resulted in a loss of revenue to the Government exchequer by way

[Shri Dhamankar]

of excise duty on cloth. Thirdly, it is a loss to the national production. But, the crisis was not unexpected.

The Government of Gujarat and the Electricity Board knew about it and on the 1st April, there was a meeting between the State officials of Gujarat State and the Railway officials when it was agreed to increase the quota of coal supply to Ahmedabad. The increase was not about 20,000 tonnes per month to compensate the reduction in power supply and somewhat to increase the electric supply from the thermal power station. One thing should be appreciated. The Railways were very alert. They supplied 15,000 tonnes of coal. But this crisis could have been avoided if early action was taken. The Government of Gujarat had intimated that the stocks of coal are likely to fall necessitating a crisis within a week or about 10 days. In spite of this no supply was made. On the 10th April, the company had about 53,000 tonnes of Coal. From April 11 to 14, 15 wagons, that is, 3460 tonnes of coal were delivered, that is 8850 tonnes of coal were thus given to the Electric Supply company. But what happened? In spite of this, the crisis came. It could have been avoided if the coal supply was made in time. The Electric Supply Company and the Gujarat Government had already communicated to this Government that the coal supply should be made.

There was a question answered on the floor of this House on the 11th April. The Railway Minister categorically stated about this. He shared the concern expressed on this account. He said in the end that the supply of coal will be met, that it will be increased. But his statement came out to be misleading, because, by the 15 April, the demand was not met. There was short supply of coal resulting in short supply to the power house and the closure of several mills. I would like to know as to what is the type of co-ordination between the South eastern, Western and the Central Railway to see that coal is supplied to Ahmedabad and other places.

Secondly, Sir, the Electric Supply Company in Ahmedabad seems to be utterly mismanaged. There is no Managing Director there it is managed by the Chairman of the Board. Formerly it was managed by Kilick Nixon and Company. But subsequently Kapadias came in. I would like to know

whether Government intends to take over the company and stop these malpractices there and mismanagement there.

Thirdly, these workers suffered a loss of Rs. 10 lakhs on that day by way of lay off. Who is going to make up for this loss? Will it be the Electric Supply Company or will it be the Government which will make up this loss?

Lastly, I would like to congratulate the Gujarat Government; they were very alert and active. If the supply had been made in time, this crisis could have been avoided and loss in production and loss of wages by workmen averted. Will the Government set up an enquiry to find out who was responsible for all these things? Will they go into this matter and see who is responsible for the short supply made, resulting in the national loss by way of production and loss in the wages of the workers?

With these three questions, I conclude, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER : You put them as one question. Every time I remind hon. Members that they can ask only one question. He specifically says, three questions, putting me in an awkward position.

SHRI K. S. CHAVDA (Patan) : They are parts (a), (b) and (c) of the same question.

MR. SPEAKER : All right—one question, in three parts !

SHRI A. C. GEORGE : I may try to answer the last question first. The hon. Member asked whether any enquiry will be made. He quoted certain instances alleging that there were quite a few instances of mismanagement of the Electric Company. He was seeking information from the Government of India whether we would be taking over the electricity company. As per the existing provisions and precedents, I may inform the hon. Member that it may not be within the purview of the Government of India to take over the electricity company. I think the question may be brought to the notice of the Government of Gujarat.

Then, he was pointing out that the whole crisis had its genesis in the shortage of coal. It is true. But the Foreign Trade

Ministry which is the administrative wing in charge of the textile industry was not informed of this particular crisis, and in fact, it was not only that, but I may quote from the State Minister for Power, Shri Chimanbhai Patel and say that not only was it not informed to the Government of India but even the State Government expressed surprise at the sudden stoppage of power and said that the Government had no prior information from the electricity company.

SHRI PILLOO MODY (Godhra) : Very misinformed Government.

SHRI A. C. GEORGE : I was quoting from the Minister for Power in the Gujarat Government.

SHRI PILLOO MODY : I am blaming him also.

SHRI A. C. GEORGE : Then, the area superintendent of the Western Railway is on record, saying that 'the electricity company informed him about the coal shortage only yesterday'—this statement was on the 15th April, and so 'yesterday' means the 14th April. The area superintendent of the Western Railway was informed about the shortage and the railways supplied about 1300 tonnes immediately; another 1500 tonnes of coal must have reached on the 16th instant, and another 13,000 tonnes must have reached on the 17th as per our information. So, it is evident that the electricity company did not inform about this acute crisis and shortage of coal to the Railway Ministry or the Gujarat State Government or to the Government of India. In this context, may I submit that the crisis came because proper planning was not there on the part of the concerned authorities.

SHRI D. D. DESAI (Kaira) : Rs. 75 lakhs are lying as deposit with the railways as indenting charges, and no wagons were made available.

SHRI VASANTRAO PURUSHOTTAM SATHE (Akola) : In this whole question there is something more than what meets the eye, because although *prima facie* the allegation is that there was shortage of coal supply, and, therefore, the Ahmedabad electricity company could not produce the electricity, that does not appear convincing even from the statement made by the hon. Minister or the reply given by him, because

the company could have easily known what supply it needed and what supplies should be made available. May I point out to you a news item which contains the reply given by the railways to this allegation by the company that this failure had occurred on account of the shortage of coal? This is the reply which has appeared on the 17th instant. The railways replied as follows :

"The Western Railway authorities here blamed the Ahmedabad Electricity Supply Company for intimating as late as April 14th....."

SHRI A. C. GEORGE : That was precisely what I had myself said.

SHRI VASANTRAO PURUSHOTTAM SATHE . I am not condemning him at this stage, but I shall come to him later. The news item further says :

".. about the shortage of coal which has now resulted into a power crisis in the city. The railways in a press release said that they were informed by the company on the evening of April 14th, that the coal stocks would last only for two days.. The railways pointed out that the normal allocation of coal to the company was 25,000 tonnes per month. This was increased to 45,000 tonnes from this month as decided at a meeting held in Delhi on April 1."

This has not been stated in the statement. I hope this was not an April fool trick, because if this had been supplied, if 45,000 tonnes had been supplied, where was the question of shortage so far as the company is concerned? In fact, they have been given twice over. This was increased to 45,000 tonnes, out of the increase of 20,000 tonnes of coal, 12,000 tonnes were for generation of increased power and 8,000 tonnes to the company in and lieu of 4,000 tonnes of fuel oil. Even in regard to fuel oil, the supply has been increased. So where is the excuse for saying that there has been a shortage of coal and, therefore, supply has been stopped?

Again, it appears from the Minister's statement that because the Gujarat Electricity Board did not supply electricity or made a cut, therefore, the Ahmedabad Electricity company has made a cut. But this has

[Shri Vasantrao Purushottam Sahte]

been given the lie to by the Company. They have never said, that this cut was imposed due to short supply by the Electricity Board. The entire responsibility was of the company and they had no reason for taking this step. The cat is out of the bag. They say in the report that the shareholders have written to the Government saying that the Bombay-Gujarat shareholders society has requested the Union Government to appoint a managing director for the Ahmedabad Electricity Company which, it is alleged, was responsible for the closure of 51 textile mills and a number of factories. There is something wrong with this management. Here the Government of India are directly concerned because it is they who can appoint the managing director of this company under the company law or otherwise. What steps have the Government taken in this direction? They cannot just brush aside this question.

SHRI N. K. P. SALVE (Betul): Cancel the licence.

SHRI VASANTRAO PURSHOTTAM LATHE: They can do that. But I cannot understand this indifferent attitude on the part of Government. They say that the Gujarat Government took a serious view of the situation. Why did not Government here take a serious view of the situation? Why are Government here indifferent? Is Gujarat some other nation? As Government themselves say, 2 lakh employees were laid off. A sum of Rs. 10 lakhs was lost per day to the employees. Are Government going to ask this company to make good this damage and loss to the employees? We play with the lives of workers like this, apart from the loss to the community and loss of revenue to Government.

Last year on 3rd March, a similar closure had come about and news of short supply had appeared in the papers. Are Government going to allow this company to behave in this shabby manner? What action is the Ministry going to take to co-ordinate and take steps to see that this sort of mischief is stopped and not allowed to recur?

SHRI A. C. GEORGE: At the very outset, I would like to admit that whoever is at fault, the ultimate result is that at least for a few days, 2 lakh workers went out of their job, lakhs of rupees were lost to them in emoluments, and that much of

national wealth and central revenue are lost. But I was only pointing out that the whole thing was brought to the notice of the Government of India only very late. The moment the crisis was brought to our notice, immediately very prompt action was taken by the Railway Ministry. That was why at the very beginning itself I pointed out that as soon as this information was available, within 12 hours 1300 tonnes of coal were rushed; in the subsequent two days 1500 and 1300 tonnes were also diverted.

SHRI VASANTRAO PURUSHOTTAM SATHE: This is a man-made crisis. What is he going to do to stop this mischief?

SHRI A. C. GEORGE: I am coming to that.

Then, as I pointed out in the beginning, not only that this information was not given to us but it was not even available to the Government of Gujarat and the Minister of Industries and Power who is sitting in Ahmedabad itself. I do admit that there is a lacuna and discrepancy on the part of somebody, and it is our duty to fix the responsibility. I do not want to shirk from that. But I hope that the hon. Member will realise that the taking over of the Ahmedabad Electricity Company may not be strictly within the purview of the Government of India. *(Interruption)* Any suggestion of this sort will have to be first mooted by the Gujarat Government. But I may assure the House that this is a serious situation; now it is solved, but all the same, the fault is not to be absolved, and a very serious view will be taken, and we will see that if it is brought to the notice of the Government of India promptly, recurrences will be prevented.

SHRI HARI SINGH (Khurja): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I very patiently listened to the statement of the hon. Minister. He mentioned two major causes for the failure of power: one was the breakdown of some turbines, and the second was the breakdown of the reactor. I think so far as my knowledge goes, the experts think that these are very strong and cannot break; so, if there has been a breakdown and they are not in working condition, I doubt whether the causes mentioned here are true. Secondly, as the news item says, it could generate only 50 to 60 mw of power instead of its usual generation of 2.0 mw during day-time. I want to know whether this is fact, that

power is going to be supplied to other users, other media, leaving these textile mills.

SHRI A.C. GEORGE : As I pointed out in the statement, the earlier cause of the trouble was the failure of the two turbines and certain defects in the Tarapore generation. The Gujarat State Government is now short by 33 per cent in electricity production, and recently, Mysore has agreed to supply some power to Maharashtra, out of which 50 per cent will be diverted to Gujarat also. So, we are taking some short term measures. We hope that by the end of May, the Power shortage will be over, and prompt action is now being taken.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE(Rajapur) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, is it not a fact that the closure of the textile mills in Ahmedabad is the culmination of certain power deficiencies built in over a period? Is it not a fact that the report of the Sixth Annual Electric Power Survey Committee headed by Mr. K. A. Dave had already warned that unless an installed capacity of 26 million kw of electric Power is created by 1973-74, such recurring closures of mills and factories will always take place. Is it true that the Ahmedabad Electric Company stopped electricity supply to the textile industry because hit severely by the shortage of fuel like coal and oil, it could generate only 50 to 60 mw of power instead of its usual quota of 200 mw? Is it true that in the past few days, the receipt of coal wagons and oil tankers had been inadequate? Did the Ahmedabad Electric Company lack promptness and efficiency to inform the railway authorities in time, and did the railway authorities' inefficiency also match with that of the company?

Is the statement of the Area Superintendent of the Western Railway, Mr. E A Khan—I am quoting that statement—that the Ahmedabad Electric Company informed him about the coal shortage only a day before the closure of the textile mills, and that the railway authorities had already made arrangements to supply about 1,300 tonnes of coal on the same day, and for a further provision for the supply of 1,300 and 1,800 tonnes of coal by two trains, correct?

Was the Ahmedabad Electric Company's quota of residual fuel oil slashed last month by 5,000 tonnes per month and was it not the cause of additional consumption of coal?

I want to know if the Ahmedabad Electric Company has failed to anticipate the difficulties and act in time and in view of such mismanagement does the Government propose to take over that company? May I also know if it is not true that the demand for coal is going up at the rate of four per cent and that of oil by 12 per cent per year. As a result of this differential, we have to depend for oil mainly on imports. Will not this dependence on imports mean further difficulties in power generation?

Since 95 per cent of the reserves of coal are in West Bengal and Bihar, does it not pose transport difficulties? In view of this, is it not possible to ensure that only high grade coal is transported over long distances to States like Gujarat and Maharashtra whereas lowgrade coal is actually utilised for generation of electricity in thermal power stations near the coal fields and the electricity thus produced in these regions transmitted to distant places like Ahmedabad? For this purpose will the Government ensure the linking up of the power systems of various States and the establishment of a national grid?

In conclusion, is it not true that all this calls for an early formulation of a national fuel policy that can ensure optimum utilisation of the country's fuel reserves? Is not the closure of the textile mills in Ahmedabad threatening to be chronic just a symptom of the man made Power famine? Will the Government strike in a planned way at the very root of this problem and see that this problem of man-made Power famine is completely eliminated?

SHRI A. C. GEORGE : The hon. Member has put in a multitude of enlightening questions out of which, I may humbly submit, more than half were questions asking me to confirm the statement which I have already made. It is true, as the hon. Member pointed out and as I myself have said already, that the coal shortage was brought to the notice of the concerned people very late. I should like to refute the implication in the question put by the hon. Member whether the Railway Ministry is matching the inefficiency of the Ahmedabad Textile mills; the Railway Ministry has taken very prompt action; immediately the crisis was known, coal was rushed and subsequently also we took the maximum measures to replenish the supply. His question regarding fuel and oil, different grades of coal supplied

(Shri A. C. George)

to various parts of the country, a national power policy, etc —these are all good suggestions and I shall pass them on to the concerned authorities.

12.29 hrs.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

INDIAN TELEGRAPH (FIFTEENTH-AMDT.) RULES

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA) : I beg to lay on the Table—

- (1) A copy of the Indian Telegraph (Fifteenth Amendment) Rules, 1971 (Hindi and English versions), Published in Notification No. G. S. R. 1727 in Gazette of India dated the 13th November, 1971, under sub-section (5) of section 7 of the Indian Telegraph Act, 1885.

- (2) A statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the above Notification.

[Placed in library See No. LT1797/72.]

NOTIFICATIONS UNDER ALL-INDIA SERVICES ACT

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI F. H. MOHSIN) : I beg to lay on the Table—

- (1) A copy each of the following Notification (Hindi and English versions) under sub-section (2) of section 3 of All India Services Act, 1951 :—

- (i) The Indian Police Service (Fixation of Cadre Strength) Sixth Amendment Regulations, 1971, Published in Notification No. G. S. R. 1788B in Gazette of India dated the 1st December, 1971.

- (ii) The Indian Police Service (Pay) Ninth Amendment Rules, 1971, published in Notification No. G. S. R. 1788C in Gazette of India dated the 1st December, 1971.

- (iii) The Indian Administrative Service (Probation) Amendment Rules, 1972, published in Notification No. G. S. R. 386 in Gazette of India dated the 1st April, 1972.

- (iv) The Indian Police Service (Probation) Amendment Rules, 1972, published in Notification No. G. S. R. 387 in Gazette of India dated the 1st April, 1972.

- (v) The Indian Administrative Service (Probationers' Final Examination) Amendment Regulations, 1972, published in Notification No. G. S. R. 388 in Gazette of India dated the 1st April, 1972.

- (vi) The India Police Service (Probationers' Final Examination) Amendment Regulations, 1972, published in Notification No. G.S.R. 389 in Gazette of India dated the 1st April, 1972.

- (vii) The All India Services (Medical Attendance) Amendment Rules, 1972, published in Notification No. G. S. R. 419 in Gazette of India dated the 8th April, 1972.

- (viii) The Indian Administrative Service (Fixation of Cadre Strength) Second Amendment Regulations, 1972, published in Notification No. G. S. R. 425 in Gazette of India dated the 8th April, 1972.

- (ix) The Fourth Amendment of 1972 to the Indian Administrative Service (Pay) Rules, 1954, published in Notification No. G. S. R. 426 in Gazette of India dated the 8th April, 1972.

- (2) A statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the Notifications mentioned at (i) and (ii) above, N.L. [Placed in Library. See No. LT—1798/72.]