

(c) Continuous slow down since December 31, 1967 by the Crane Drivers of the Merchant Mill Despatch Section and lightning illegal strike by a section of the workers of the Mill created a situation whereby the working of the Mill was paralysed and the Management was unable to provide normal work to the workers of the Mill. In consequence, the Management had to lay off the workers.

The Lay off entails a loss of production valued at about Rs. 4.5 lakhs per day.

Such situations can be averted only if the labour cooperate fully with the Management in maintaining production on an even keel.

EXPORT OF PEPPER

*437. SHRI S. R. DAMANI : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that in spite of the devaluation of rupee, the exports of Pepper have fallen sharply; and

(b) if so, the steps proposed to be taken to boost the export of Pepper ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI DINESH SINGH) : (a) and (b). Exports of Pepper have shown a declining trend during the last year. Efforts are being made to reach an agreement on export prices with other producing countries. Publicity and other such export promotion measures are also being taken by the Export Promotion Council.

ROURKELA STEEL PLANT

*438. SHRI K. P. SINGH DEO : Will the Minister of STEEL, MINES AND METALS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that some West German engineers have joined the Rourkela Steel Plant to assist in the maintenance of the new rolling mills forming part of project's expansion scheme;

(b) whether it is also a fact that some more engineers are also likely to join the Steel Plant shortly;

(c) if so, the number of engineers who have joined and the number of engineers who are likely to join the Plant; and

(d) the reasons for inviting German engineers when Government are facing the question of absorbing unemployed Indian engineers in the country ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL, MINES AND METAL (SHRI P. C. SETHI) : (a) to (d). Hindustan Steel Ltd. have decided to secure the services of about 60 German technicians subject to a maximum of 880 man months so as to ensure smooth commissioning, operation and maintenance of the new and highly sophisticated rolling mills being set up at the Rourkela Steel Plant under the current expansion programme of the Plant. Of these, 22 technicians have already arrived and the others are expected to reach the Plant shortly. The employment of these foreign technicians has been considered necessary by the Company for the initial period of the commissioning and operation of these mills as suitable Indian engineers possessing the requisite background, training and experience are not available.

RIOT AT MALAD STATION (WESTERN RLY.)

*439. SHRI VISHWA NATH PANDEY :

SHRI M. L. SONDHI :
SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that angry commuters ran riot at Malad suburban Station on the 16th February, 1968 indulging in stone-throwing and arson and they burnt down the Railway booking office and set fire to three coaches of a local train;

(b) if so, the causes thereof; and

(c) the total amount of loss to the railway property ?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C. M. POONACHA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The commuters demanded that 9 coach-trains should be run instead of 6 coach-trains and that all fast trains should stop at the Malad Station.

(c) Rs. 6 lakhs approximately.

GAZETTED CADRE FOR PURCHASE ORGANISATION ON INDIAN RAILWAYS

*440. SHRI RAJDEO SINGH : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the report of the sub-committee appointed by the Railway Board for determining the Gazetted cadre on the Indian Railways for purchase organisation has been received;

(b) if so, when Government's decision is likely to be implemented;

(c) whether this sub-committee has been made some recommendations about the non-gazetted staff also; and

(d) if so, the decision taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C. M. POONACHA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The report has been received very recently and the same is still under examination.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Does not arise in view of remarks against (b) above.

TEXTILE INDUSTRY

*441. SHRI KANWAR LAL GUPTA :

SHRI UMANATH :

SHRI M. L. SONDHI :

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that some of the textile mills have been closed down recently and some others are likely to be closed down particularly in Gujarat;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to revive them ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI DINESH SINGH) : (a) to (c). Owing to various reasons, such as in-

efficient management, financial difficulties, labour disputes, uneconomic working, etc., some cotton textile mills always remain closed at any given time of the year. Recently there have been no serious developments in Gujarat. During November, 1967, to January, 1968, 14 mills closed down while 10 mills were re-opened.

2. Government are fully alive to the situation and they have been taking over mis-managed or closed mills under the provisions of the Industries (Development and Regulation) Act, 1951. The Cotton Textile Companies (Management of Undertakings and Liquidation or Reconstruction) Act, 1967, has also been enacted to enable Government to liquidate such companies and to sell the undertaking as a running concern. It also provides for the re-construction of the Company in suitable cases and the Government acquiring interest in them. Textile Corporation is also proposed to be set up to manage mills taken over under the above mentioned acts.

3. The Government of Gujarat have appointed a Committee, under the Chairmanship of their Chief Secretary, to recommend Government guarantees to banks for advance of loans to textile mills. This Committee has already recommended guarantees in the case of certain mills, while the cases of some other mills are under its consideration. Another Committee has been appointed by the State Government under the Chairmanship of Shri Manubhai Shah, to suggest a programme for renovation and modernisation of marginal textile mills in the State.

TRADE RELATIONS WITH LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES

*442. SHRI RAMAVATAR SHASTRI : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the question of improving India's trade relations with Latin American countries has been considered by Government; and

(b) if so, the steps take in this direction ?