

SHRI IRENGBAM TOMPOK SINGH: My second supplementary question, arising out of this question, how much portion of it has been handed over to the Border Roads Organisation and how much to the State PWD? I would also like to know whether the portion with the State PWD is being maintained properly by them.

SHRI CHAND RAM: This is a very difficult road because of climatic and geographical conditions. The length of the total road is about 320 km. Out of this 134 km. of road has been taken over by the Border Roads Organisation and the rest is maintained by the State PWD.

श्री श्याम लाल गुप्त : श्रीमन्, मैं दीमापुर की बात नहीं कहता क्योंकि हो सकता है कि मंत्री महोदय के लिए वहाँ जाने की नौबत न आए, लेकिन आप दिल्ली के पास हापुड़ को ले लीजिए। वहाँ पर एक ब्रिज बन रहा है। यह नेशनल हाई-वे में है। इसको बनते हुए चार साल हो गये। आप वहाँ जा कर इसकी स्थिति को देखें तो आपको सारी हालत का पता लग जाएगा।

श्री चांद राम : माननीय सदस्य हापुड़ के ब्रिज की बात कह रहे हैं। उसके बारे में उनको जिकायत है कि उसको बनने में ज्यादा देर लग गई है। लेकिन इस बारे में सवाल यह है कि जितनी भी एजेंसियाँ इस काम में लगी हुई हैं वे स्टेट गवर्नमेंट के अन्तर्गत आती हैं। इसलिए अगर माननीय सदस्य स्टेट गवर्नमेंट पर इस बारे में दवाब डालें तो ज्यादा अच्छा रहेगा।

I do recognise that this is a national highway, but the existing agencies are State PWDs.

Effect of rise in prices of cotton on N.T.C.s profitability

*339. SHRI SAWAISINGH
SISODIA:
SHRIMATI HAMIDA
HABIBULLAH: †
SHRIMATI LAKSHMI
KUMARI CHUNDAWAT:
SHRI PRAKASH MEH-
ROTRA:
SHRI GURUDEV GUPTA:

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the National Textiles Corporation is likely to suffer heavy losses during the current financial year due to steep rise in prices of cotton; and

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) The losses which the National Textile Corporation are likely to suffer during the current financial year are due to various factors including the price variations of cotton.

(b) Details will be available at the close of the financial year.

SHRIMATI HAMIDA HABIB. ULLAH: Mr. C. R. Guha, who is the Chairman of the eastern region of the NTC estimates that in three months from May, 18 mills suffered a total loss of 3442 working hours because of unscheduled load shedding, meaning a production loss of Rs. 56.64 lakhs. But for this, the Corporation's loss might have been lower. I would like to ask the hon. Minister whether anything can be done by this unscheduled load shedding.

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES; I do not think anything can be done about unscheduled load shedding, because it touches the overall power generation

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shrimati Hamida Habibullah.

of the country and that will take time.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Second supplementary.

SHRIMATI HAMIDA HABIB. ULLAH: Since details are going to come later, I do not want to put my second supplementary question.

श्रीमती लक्ष्मी कुमारी चूडावत : श्रीमान, चूँकि इस सवाल के संवघ में डिटल नहीं बताई गई है, इसलिए मैं प्रश्न पूछना उचित नहीं समझती हूँ ।

SHRI RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRA-BARTI: Sir, the NTC in West Bengal is suffering more than the NTC as a whole because of non-equalisation of the freight rate of cotton. What is the hon. Minister going to do about the equalisation of freight of cotton, so that in West Bengal the loss suffered by the NTC is reduced?

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: We are considering the entire problems that the NTC and the cotton textile industry are facing. We will come forward with a policy very soon.

SHRI DEORAO PATIL: Is it a fact that from January to August, there has been a substantial increase in the wholesale price index of cloth, whereas there has been a substantial decrease in the price of cotton?

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: I shall require notice.

SHRI N. G. RANGA: Sir, this is very strange. There is another question, No. 354 on this subject. Only the other day there was a 'dharna' and boycott by the cotton-growers in Punjab.

This was because the price of Rs. 250/- which was offered was much too low. At one time, the minimum price was Rs. 350/-. How is it that the National Textile Corporation which has taken over useless or inefficient mills for management has now begun to complain about the high prices of cotton as a reason for their losses? Is it not a fact that they have been losing because of their inefficient management and out-moded machinery and so on? On the other hand, the cotton growers are not being paid properly and even the minimum price.

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: Sir, as I have said, the losses which the N.T.C. are likely to suffer are due to a variety of reasons which include obsolete machinery. There are various other circumstances in which we had to take over those mills. All those factors are there. But the mismanagement was at the hands of the private sector which necessitated the nationalisation or the takeover of those mills after they had gone sick. So far as the price of cotton is concerned, the hon. Member has tried to introduce one other question which is listed for subsequent answering. It is constantly suggested that Rs. 255/- is the price of cotton. Rs. 255/- is the support price for cotton. Rs. 255/- is not the market price. As of now, the ruling prices for cotton in Punjab for J-34 variety are around Rs. 390/- to Rs. 413 per quintal and in Haryana it is between Rs. 380/- and Rs. 415 per quintal against the support price of Rs. 255. But there is this constant suggestion that Rs. 255 is the price and that Rs. 255 is not a remunerative price.

*340. [The questioner (Shri Veerendra Patil) was absent. For answer vide col. 39 infra]

*341. [The questioners (Shri Sitaram Kesri and Shri Dharamchand Jain) were absent. For answer vide col. 39 infra.]