

we are importing large amounts of sulphur costing crores of rupees, about 4 lakh to 6 lakh tonnes. May I know whether the Government is taking active steps to manufacture sulphur from pyrites and smelter gas in Sindri and, if so, what are the steps taken for the early implementation of the project?

SHRI K. RAGHURAMAIAH: The time-schedule is in accordance with the terms of the agreement. The trial run would be made in September and it is expected that by November, 1968 it would go into production.

D. A. ARREARS IN P. F. ACCOUNT

*39. **SHRI S. S. MARISWAMY:** †
SARDAR RAM SINGH:
SHRI CHITTA BASU:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Minister of State for Finance has sent letters to trade unions requesting them to appeal to the Central Government employees not to withdraw the amount credited to their provident fund accounts in lieu of D.A. arrears due to them for the period February-August, 1967;

(b) if so, the details of the total amount of D.A. arrears payable to the employees for the period in question; and

(c) what is the reaction of the trade union leaders in this regard?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI (JAGANNATH PAHADIA): (a) Yes, Madam. Letters were issued to the Trade Union Leaders and Representatives of Central Government employees, who attended the meeting convened by Deputy Prime Minister

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri S. S. Mariswamy.

on 29th August, 1967 in connection with the grant of D.A. for Central Government employees with effect from 1-2-1967 and 1-6-1967.

(b) The estimated figure of the total amount of arrears of dearness allowance payable for the period 1-2-1967 to 31-8-1967 to the Central Government employees is about Rs 24.2 crores

(c) From the replies received from Trade Unions/Representatives of the Central Government employees, the reaction has been 'mixed'. While the President N.F.I.R. has issued an appeal to the employees not to withdraw the amount of dearness allowance arrears and credit it to the P.F. Accounts, some other trade union leaders have not found it possible to do so.

SHRI S. S. MARISWAMY: The D. A. is given only because there is a rise in the price of essential commodities, and that D.A. is given by one hand and by the other hand the Government is trying to take it away by saying that they will not allow it to be withdrawn immediately. The fact is that the object of giving the D.A. is vetoed by the action of the Government. Will the Government come forward and see that the D.A. whatever is granted, is given to the employees immediately?

SHRI MORARJI R. DESAI: The hon. Member is not justified in arguing that the D.A. given is vetoed. It is credited to their accounts. It is a saving for them and it is a saving for the time during which they had already undergone expenses. Therefore, there is no question of putting them to hardship. This hardship they had undergone, and therefore this is a saving to them. It benefits them. Also it benefits the economy because then it does not increase prices or does not lead to increase in prices to that extent. This is a matter which was considered by us along with their representatives.

SHRI S. S. MARISWAMY: For the hardship which they have undergone if they had taken loan, mortgaged their property and had sustained some other inconvenience, why not the same amount be given now so that they can live in peace now at least?

SHRI MORARJI R. DESAI: If they want to withdraw it, I have not said "no". But they had agreed at that time that they would appeal to them not to withdraw this amount. (*Interruption*). It is no duress. How can people hold labour leaders to duress? They hold me to duress. Therefore, there is no meaning in this duress business. Neither am I prepared to be held in duress, nor am I prepared to hold them in duress. Why should it happen? This is a matter which was discussed at that time and decided. It would have been much better if the whole amount had been given to the Provident Fund.

SARDAR RAM SINGH: In how many essential cases the D.A. has been paid to the employees and in how many cases it was deposited in their account?

SHRI MORARJI R. DESAI: That is not available.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: You know that the increase in D.A. has not been in full neutralisation of the rise in the cost of living index and also the price of essential commodities is on the rise. May I know from the hon. Minister why the particular Minister of State of Finance considered it desirable to make such a fantastic appeal to the Central Government employees . . .

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please come with your question.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: I am coming to the question. Why did the Minister at all consider that particular appeal desirable which is to me a fantastic one because the Central Govern-

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That is a matter of opinion. You better put a question if you want an answer.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: Why did the Government at all consider it desirable to make such an appeal?

SHRI MORARJI R. DESAI: If the hon. Member is suffering from any fantasy, I cannot help it, but I have not made any fantastic appeal. This was agreed to in discussions with the labour leaders themselves. They said Government may appeal to them and they will support it. That is what they said. It is therefore that the appeal has been made. Otherwise I would not have made an appeal. If there was any fantasy, it was on the side of my hon. friend.

SHRI ANANT PRASAD SHARMA: A large number of Central Government employees' representatives participated in the discussions in August last year at the time of the settlement of the D.A. question. Only it appears that the National Federation of Indian Railwaymen have appealed to their members and workers not to withdraw the money. In view of the others not responding to Government appeal, is Government going to make any new appeal asking their members not to withdraw it?

SHRI MORARJI R. DESAI: What is the use of making an appeal to people who do not respond to this?

SHRI ARJUN ARORA: May I know if the Government will leave it to the discretion of individual Government employees to decide whether to withdraw it or let it remain in the Provident Fund or will the Government take a general decision for all employees?

SHRI MORARJI R. DESAI: The hon. Member does not seem to understand the position at all. Every Government servant is free to do so if he wants to do so. I am not putting any embargo on it.

SHRI D. THENGARI: We were told that after March the issue will be reopened. Now we want to know if the Government has ascertained the total membership of the unions who are in favour of depositing this D.A. amount in Provident Fund and what is the membership of those unions who want cash payments.

SHRI MORARJI R. DESAI: I do not want the unions to fight.

ALLOTMENT OF ACCOMMODATION IN
R. K. PURAM

*40. SHRI A. G. KULKARNI:†
SHRI M. M. DHARIA:
SHRI G. R. PATIL:

Will the Minister of WORKS, HOUSING AND SUPPLY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government Servants were made to sign in token of having accepted the offer of accommodation in sector 8 of R. K. Puram, New Delhi where there is no electricity and there is acute water shortage;

(b) whether it is also a fact that one of the clauses of conditions stipulates that the electricity would be supplied only in a year's time;

(c) if so, the reasons for the insertion of such clause in the conditions of offer;

(d) what impediments and handicaps are in the way of providing electricity immediately; and

(e) the steps taken by Government to provide electricity immediately in order to avoid undue

hardships to the occupants of accommodation during the ensuing summer?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF WORKS, HOUSING AND SUPPLY (SARDAR IQBAL SINGH): (a) and (b) Having regard to the acute shortage of quarters and persistent demand from employees, it was decided to make allotment of unelectrified quarters in Sector-VIII, Ramakrishnapuram. Such allotments were made only to those who had shown their willingness in advance to accept such quarters. Water supply is available on restricted basis. The first batch of quarters was allotted on 30th October, 1967.

It was made clear to the applicants before they gave their acceptance, that it might take about a year or so to provide electricity. But due to strenuous efforts electricity has been made available to the first batch of quarters on 13th April, 1968.

(c) to (e) There was disagreement between the Delhi Electric Supply Undertaking and Government over the basis of payment to be made to the Undertaking for electrification work. After a good deal of persuasion, Delhi Electric Supply Undertaking agreed to start work and the electrification work in S. VIII has been completed. They have already started giving domestic connections on receipt of applications from the allottees.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: In view of the fact that the agreement has been to the effect that within a year they were going to provide electricity and water, does the Government know that for the last three days there is not even a drop of water available in Ramakrishnapuram, Sectors VIII and IX? Why should the tenants be under duress because your negotiations with the Delhi Administration failed on electricity account? What is the

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri A. G. Kulkarni.