

RAJYA SABHA

Thursday, the 1st September, 1960/
the 10th Bhadra, 1882 (Saka)

The House met at eleven of the clock,
MR. CHAIRMAN in the Chair.

MEMBER SWORN Shri

I. T. Lohani (Gujarat)

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

SHORTAGE OF PAPER

*573. DH. A. N. BOSE; Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is acute shortage of paper in the country and the existing paper mills are not able to meet the requirements of various Government printing presses resulting in acute shortage of forms in Government Departments; and

(b) whether it is a fact that the shortage of paper has seriously affected the publishing business and consequently the cause of education and learning?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MANUBHAI SHAH): (a) and (b) Yes. Sir. There is some shortage being felt in the availability of paper. But the supply position has considerably improved due to a very big rise in the internal production of paper from about 200,000 tons a year in 1957 to about 350,000 tons in the current year. The demand has also picked up and therefore the Government are importing cheap printing paper through the State Trading Corporation to meet the gap between demand and supply.

DR. A. N. BOSE: Have the Government made any survey of the production of the existing mills and of their stocks and found out the exact amount of deficit?

521 RSD.—1.

SHRI MANUBHAI SHAH: That is a continuous thing. They send us their production as well as supply figures. Nowadays, because of increased production, the supply position has also considerably eased.

DR. A. N. BOSE: Is the Government aware that cornering and profiteering are indulged in by some of the paper merchants and, if so, what steps have been taken to check this evil?

SHRI MANUBHAI SHAH: That is exactly what I replied. The supply position has considerably eased owing to some increase in the local production, almost by 75 per cent, and the quantity, to the extent of the margin, being imported. There may be some rare complaints in respect of certain varieties of paper, but broadly speaking we have not, in recent months, received any major complaints in regard to printing paper.

SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA: May I know whether it is a fact that licences have been given for setting up certain small-scale industries for manufacture of paper on a very large scale, but these licences are not being used because the necessary machinery is not available?

SHRI MANUBHAI SHAH: I am very glad that the hon. Member has raised that question. We have approved 71 small-scale schemes ranging from two, five and ten tons per day and 39 of those schemes have already been issued import licences. In the meantime, some happy development has taken place; we have started manufacturing these machines completely in this country, and all the schemes which have been approved are being diverted to the indigenous-machinery manufacture.

SHRI N. SRI RAMA REDDY: Is it a fact that consumption of paper in India is the lowest?

SHRI MANUBHAI SHAH: Yes, that is true.

SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA: May I know, Sir, whether raw materials for these small-scale plants will be available in India or will they have to be imported from abroad?

SHRI MANUBHAI SHAH: India is fortunate in having the large availability of raw materials for paper manufacture.

*574. [The questioner (Shri Dahyabhai V. Patel) was absent. For answer, vide col. 3061 infra.]

ACTIVITIES OF WEST GERMAN MECHANICS AND ENGINEERS AT ROURKELA

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA

DR. R. B. GOUR:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether his attention has been drawn to a report about the activities of the West German mechanics and engineers at Rourkela;

(b) whether it is correct, as the report says, that the Prime Minister took up the allegations against these mechanics and engineers with the West German Ambassador in Delhi; and

(c) whether these allegations by a West German journal against their own experts at Rourkela were adequately and effectively brought to the notice of the Bonn Government?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI LAKSHMI MENON): (a) Government's attention was drawn to certain reports in the foreign Press.

(b) and (c) As these reports, on enquiry, were found to be incorrect or grossly exaggerated, there was no question of taking up these allegations

fThe question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Bhupesh Gupta.

with the Ambassador of the Federal German Republic in India or of bringing them to the notice of the Bonn Government.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Sir, I have got the entire article translated from German into English; it runs into 21 close-type pages, and the paper is called "Der Spiegel", a West German weekly magazine. May I know whether, in particular, the Prime Minister's attention was drawn to this portion? I will read out the portion. It says:

"India's Prime Minister Nehru turned to the German Ambassador in New Delhi, Dr. Wilhelm Mekhers. The Ambassador said on that occasion: 'We have reported about the bad situation in Rourkela to the Foreign Office, our report was also forwarded to the firms. But the gentlemen of industry were offended and said that Rourkela was none of the Embassy's business.'"

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, they have seen the report. Now you can put a question.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: May I know whether the Government have seen this portion and a number of serious allegations against the manner in which some West German mechanics were doing their work and also the allegation against our own country and our own people?

SHRIMATI LAKSHMI MENON: Government have seen all these reports and also the reports which have appeared in other papers, other than "Der Spiegel". Some enquiry was made and, as I have already stated in the answer, these things were found to be grossly exaggerated or groundless.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: May I know whether it is not a fact that in the article in question, the article to which I have referred, certain German mechanics and others who came to India, this country, have been quoted and their own words have been quoted?