

SHRI N. KANUNGO: There is no Khadi Commissioner. There is only the Khadi Commission. There is no such officer as the Khadi Commissioner.

(Several hon. Members stood up.)

MR. CHAIRMAN: When Dr. Mitra is called, he is the last speaker on the question.

CONSTITUTION OF A PEPPER BOARD

*332. SHRI A. V. KUNHAMBUR: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state whether Government propose to constitute a Pepper Board, like Rubber Board, to improve the conditions of pepper cultivation?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI N. KANUNGO): No, Sir.

SHRI A. V. KUNHAMBUR: Has the Government received any memorandum from the pepper growers of Kerala urging upon Government the desirability of setting up a Board for pepper similar to that of the Rubber Board, the Coffee Board, the Tea Board, etc. to help improve cultivation of pepper and also to expand the export market?

SHRI N. KANUNGO: We have received a copy of a representation which has been submitted to the Government of Kerala.

SHRI A. V. KUNHAMBUR: Does the Government know that with the entrance of Indonesia as a major exporter of pepper, the price of Indian pepper has declined sharply?

SHRI N. KANUNGO: Yes, Sir, the price has declined because demand has gone down. The quality of Indian pepper is much better than pepper produced in Indonesia and other countries.

SHRI A. V. KUNHAMBUR: In view of this unhealthy competition in the export market, does the Government contemplate calling a conference of

the countries producing pepper to fix up a world price so as to avoid such competition?

SHRI N. KANUNGO: No, Sir, it is not under contemplation but we are trying to stimulate the export markets and, to that effect, a delegation had gone out.

SHRI B. P. BASAPPA SHETTY: May I know the annual production of pepper in India and the countries to which it is exported?

SHRI N. KANUNGO: I have not got the production figures with me at present.

SHRI B. P. BASAPPA SHETTY: At least approximate figures would do.

SHRI N. KANUNGO: No, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: He will never commit himself to approximate estimates.

DR. SHRIMATI SEETA PARMANAND: What measures have Government taken to stop the large-scale adulteration of papaya seeds with pepper and also to check the sale of pepper at one rupee per bottle when the price of pepper is Rs. 18 per pound?

SHRI N. KANUNGO: This is the first time I hear of adulteration in pepper.

DR. SHRIMATI SEETA PARMANAND: It is known all over the country.

SHRI N. KANUNGO: I am talking of the export trade and the international trade. It is quite possible that some retailer may be doing some adulteration. Regarding prices, prices of Indian pepper are higher because the quality is superior.

SHRI PERATH NARAYANAN NAIR: May I know whether the large users of pepper, meat-packing countries like Australia, New Zealand, etc., have been explored by Government?

SHRI N. KANUNGO: That is exactly the purpose for which the Export Promotion Council sent out a delegation but the main difficulty is that the quality of Indian pepper is better and, therefore, the prices are higher than pepper produced in other countries. The consuming countries are satisfied with lower quality and lower prices.

TRAINING OF APPRENTICES

*333. SHRI B. SHIVA RAO: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of Government was drawn on the 29th April, 1954 by the Chairman of the Employment Exchanges Committee to the offers made by the representatives of Industrial concerns and engineering firms to co-operate actively with the Government in the training of apprentices;

(b) whether the State Governments were requested to find out the possibilities implicit in such officers; and

(c) if the answer to part (b) above be in the affirmative, with what results?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI ABID ALI): (a) Yes.

(b) Yes.

(c) Proposals are being received from State Governments.

SHRI B. SHIVA RAO: With the letter to which reference is made in part (a) of the question, a memorandum was also submitted giving the details of the actual offers by various engineering firms and business concerns in the country. Will the hon. Deputy Minister consider placing this memorandum on the Table of the House?

SHRI ABID ALI: I will consider this, Sir.

SHRI B. SHIVA RAO: Is the training of apprentices entirely under the

control of the Ministry of Labour or has the Ministry of Education also some schemes under its control?

SHRI ABID ALI: No Sir, this has been transferred to the State Governments and they have allocated this work to other departments besides Labour.

SHRI B. SHIVA RAO: I notice that this letter and the accompanying memorandum was sent at the end of April, 1954. We are now at the end of August 1957, almost 3½ years. Am I to understand that nothing has been done beyond what has been stated by the hon. Deputy Minister?

SHRI ABID ALI: I may submit, Sir, that an officer of the D.G.R.E. was specially deputed to go round the States and contact important employers and prepare draft apprentice schemes. This has been included in the Five Year Plan and a provision of Rs. 130 lakhs has been made in the Plan and 7,050 seats have been reserved.

COAL MINES IN PENCH AND KANHAN VALLEY

*334. DR. SHRIMATI SEETA PARMANAND: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of coal mines in the Pench and Kanhan Valley area of Madhya Pradesh;

(b) the number of such mines, in which the statutory requirements with regard to dispensaries, pit-head bath and creches have been complied with; and

(c) what action, if any, has been taken against the owners of coal mines who have not complied with these requirements?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI ABID ALI): (a) 24.

(b) 22 mines have provided creches and one has provided pit-head bath. Provision of dispensaries is not a statutory requirement.