

RAJYA SABHA

Wednesday, 25th April 1956

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

MEMBERS SWORN

Shri Mehr Chand Khanna (Delhi).

Shri S. Venkataraman (Madras).

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

*26 to *28 (For answers, vide cols. 260—269 infra.)

RETURN OF INDIAN JEWS FROM ISRAEL

*29. SHRIMATI VIOLET ALVA: WUI the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether any Indian Jews who returned to India from Israel have gone back to Israel during the years 1953, 1954 and 1955; and

(b) if so, what are the reasons for their return to India and going back to Israel?

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE MINISTR? FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI LAKSHMI MENON): (a) Yes.

(b) Some of the Jews returned to India as they considered living conditions unsatisfactory in Israel. The Government are not aware of the reasons why they went back again.

SHRIMATI VIOLET ALVA: May I know whether these Jews who have returned to India from Israel came with Indian passports or Israeli passports?

SHRIMATI LAKSHMI MENON: They were free to return when they

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produced sufficient proof that they were Indian nationals.

SHRIMATI VIOLET ALVA: May I know whether there was any complaint of colour bar made by those who came back to India?

SHRIMATI LAKSHMI MENON: Many things are alleged. We do not know how far they are correct.

DR. RAGHUBIR SINH: May I know whether any investigations have been made into these allegations of colour prejudice there?

SHRIMATI LAKSHMI MENON: I did not hear the question.

SHRIMATI VIOLET" ALVA: Have any enquiries been made to see whether there was any colour bar there?

SHRIMATI LAKSHMI MENON: Whenever such letters are received, investigations are made and action taken accordingly.

PRODUCTION OF SOAP

•30. SHRIMATI VIOLET ALVA: Will the Minister for COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the total output in soap production by Lever Bros, in 1953, 1954 and 1955;

(b) the total output in soap production by Indian sector for the same years; and

(c) the installed capacity of the Indian and foreign managed sectors and the idle capacity of each sector in 1953, 1954 and 1955?

THE MINISTER FOR INDUSTRIES (SHRI N. KANUNGO): (a), (b) and (c): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

Total output and installed and idle capacity in soap production

(a) Information relating to individual units are not generally given. The output of foreign managed concerns was, however, as follows: —

1953	....	50,561 nns.
1954	....	50,381 tns.
1955	....	57,810 tns.

(b) Production in the organised sector was as follows: —

1953	....	32,786 tons.	
1954	....	38,100 tons.	
1955	....	42,530 tons.	

The production of the un-organised units is estimated at 1,20,000 tons in 1955.

(c) The nature of equipment used in the soap industry is such that the term 'installed capacity' has no precise connotation in relation to the soap industry, but for statistical purposes, the installed capacity of the organised sector is assessed at 2,45,000 tons, which is the aggregate of the figures given by each unit of the capacity it possesses.

Installed capacity of the organised Indian sector is estimated at 1,68,000 tons. The installed capacity of the unorganised Indian sector has not been estimated and so it is difficult to state the total idle capacity in the Indian sector.

Installed capacity of the foreign-managed sector is estimated at 77,828 tons. The idle capacity of the foreign-managed sector is 20,018 tons.

SHRIMATI VIOLET ALVA: In this statement it is stated that the nature of the equipment used in the soap industry is such that the term 'installed capacity' has no precise connotation in relation to the soap industry, and further down it is said that the installed capacity of the unorganised Indian sector has not been estimated. May I know the difference between the organised and unorganised sectors?

SHRI N. KANUNGO: Organised sector means the sector where soap is manufactured on a factory basis by the use of power and generally by automatic machines. Unorganised sector means the sector where power is not used and all the processes are manual.

SHRIMATI VIOLET ALVA: "The term 'installed capacity' has no precise connotation". What is meant by this?

SHRI N. KANUNGO: In the sense that in the case of several other industries you can estimate what the capacity of the plant is and how much it can produce. In the case of soap, the quantum of production is rather elastic, and therefore capacity can be mentioned in terms of optimums and not precisely.

SHRIMATI VIOLET ALVA: May I know whether it is true that the Minister for Commerce and Industry in the year 1953, addressing the Central Advisory Council of Industries, said that Lever Brothers were utilising 94 per cent, of their capacity? Today, Lever Brothers say that they are using only 71 per cent, of their capacity. May I know what the difference now is? Is it because the installed capacity has been increased, or is it because production has come down?

SHRI N. KANUNGO: Regarding the first part of the question, I would like to have notice. Regarding the second part, their request for increasing their productive capacity and additional machinery has been refused.

DR. RAGHUBIR SINH: May I know why a slab system of excise duty has not been introduced in the soap industry to safeguard the Indian-made soaps, whereas such a scheme has been used to bring down WIMCO's share from 70 per cent, to 50 per cent, in the match industry? May I know why this discrimination is made?

SHRI N. KANUNGO: The excise duty is levied on the soap industry on the basis of production. The duty varies according to the quantum of production.

SHRIMATI VIOLET ALVA: Today Lever Brothers is controlling the market up to 70 per cent. Why is this protective measure not adopted?

SHRI N. KANUNGO: In fact, the larger the production, the higher the duty, and this is one way of protection.

SHRIMATI VIOLET ALVA: I am talking about Lever Brothers as against the Indian sector.

SHRI N. KANUNGO: Lever Brothers are paying the highest duty.

SHRI B. C. GHOSE: Is there any foreign concern other than Lever Brothers? Here, the language used is 'foreign-managed concerns'. Are there any firms other than Lever Brothers?

SHRI N. KANUNGO: There are several others.

SHRI B. C. GHOSE: What is the proportion of production of Lever Brothers and the others all taken together?

SHRI N. KANUNGO: As I have said, the statistics that we get under the Act.....

SHRI B. C. GHOSE: Out of the 58,000 tons in 1955, what is Lever Brothers' production?

SHRI N. KANUNGO: Under the Act, as passed by Parliament, we are not supposed to give figures relating to the output of individual units.

SHRI D. NARAYAN: May I know how much production is non-power production?

SHRI T. T. KRISHNAMACHARI: Non-power production is 1,20,000 tons.

SHRI B. C. GHOSE: In view of the fact that the installed capacity of the organised Indian sector is about 1,68,000 tons, but the actual production is only about 42,000 tons. Are the Government taking any steps to see that their production is expanded so

that their position may be a little better than what it is now?

SHRI T. T. KRISHNAMACHARI: The answer to that cannot be so simple. We cannot divulge the production of individual units, but there is one Indian unit which produces up to about 70 per cent. of its capacity. When one unit can do this, I don't see why others cannot do it. It is merely because they do not have the selling organisation or they are not interested.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: May I know whether soap production has increased or declined?

SHRI T. T. KRISHNAMACHARI: It is slightly on the increase.

SHRI D. NARAYAN: May I know whether Indian soap is being exported?

SHRI T. T. KRISHNAMACHARI: A small quantity, yes.

DR. RAGHUBIR SINH: Are these soaps manufactured by Indian units or by Lever Brothers?

SHRI T. T. KRISHNAMACHARI: Many Indians go abroad, and I cannot say if it is the hon. Member who goes abroad or somebody else. Similarly soaps manufactured in India are exported. I cannot say that these are soaps manufactured by any particular concern.

SHRI B. C. GHOSE: In view of the plight of the Indian sector, what is the reason for the Government not setting up a Development Council for this industry, so that they might go into the question and find out ways and means for improving their position?

SHRI T. T. KRISHNAMACHARI: As I have said, there is one Indian factory which is one of the most efficient units. It is for the others to set their houses in order. It is not possible for Government to sell soap; merely the setting up of a Development Council will serve no purpose.

SHRIMATI VIOLET ALVA: Are there not Development Councils for many other industries?

SHRI T. T. KRISHNAMACHARI: Yes, there are.

SHRI D. NARAYAN: Have any representations been received by the Government from a conference of these soap manufacturers?

SHRI T. T. KRISHNAMACHARI: Representations galore come from all kinds of conferences.

APPEAL TO THE C.P.W.D. CONTRACTORS REGARDING WORKERS' REQUIREMENTS

•31. SHRIMATI VIOLET ALVA: Will the Minister for WORKS, HOUSING AND SUPPLY be pleased to state:

(a) whether he recently made an appeal to the Central Public Works Department contractors to adopt a more humane and sympathetic approach towards the workers' requirements; and

(b) if so, what has been the reaction to his appeal?

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS, HOUSING AND SUPPLY (SARDAR SWARAN SINGH): (a) and (b). I did avail myself of an opportunity that occurred at the third annual conference of the Builders Association of India and also at an informal meeting of the Central Public Works Department contractors to suggest to them that a humane and sympathetic approach towards the workers' requirements was very necessary. While I cannot say the extent to which this will find practical implementation, my impression is that the suggestion was received with sympathy.

SHRIMATI VIOLET ALVA: From the answer given it is presumed that there is room for improvement as far as relationship between the contractors and the labour goes. May I know if any measures are contemplated to be adopted by the Government to blacklist those contractors that cheat their labourers?

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: The suggestion which is implicit in the first part of the question put by the hon. Lady Member is correct. There is always scope for improvement and we never say that we have really achieved the target on that score. The Labour Department and the public relations officers are always trying to improve the relations between contractors and workers. So far as amenities are concerned, it is a fact that the contractors in some cases are not giving the amenities which they should and pressure is constantly being exercised to compel them to provide those amenities.

SHRIMATI VIOLET ALVA: I asked whether any of them were blacklisted for this purpose. When you find this sort of grievance is growing and it is genuine, do you blacklist those contractors?

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: I could not say off-hand but some action is surely taken against the contractors who do not provide the amenities which they should, according to the labour legislation and the terms of the contract.

DR. RAGHUBIR SINH: What kind of action is taken? Is it only limited to the past or also to the future?

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: Action about the question, I thought, related only to the past and for the future, I have already indicated that it is our intention to put pressure upon the contractors to treat their labour with all the amenities to which they are entitled.

SHRI B. K. MUKERJEE: Is it not a fact that tenders are called for letting out these contracts?

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: Yes, most of the contracts are awarded as a result of invitation of tenders.

SHRI B. K. MUKERJEE: May I know whether it is permissible for the Central P.W.D. to accept a tender which is not the lowest one?