

used as a fissile material. Now what i we propose to do is to put up a reactor; a plant is being erected to treat the thorium-uranium cake which is produced as a by-product of the monazite sand processed in Travan-core-Cochin, and this and other medical uses are also kept in view. But obviously we cannot go very far till we have made some progress.

PROF. G. RANGA: Some time ago, a Resolution was passed here to enable the Government to reach an agreement with other countries in order to share the results of their researches and so on. May I know, Sir, whether Government has been able to reach any agreement with any other countries concerned, interested in it, for developing this power? And if so, with what results?

SHRI JAWAHARLAL NEHRU: Does the hon. Member refer to some Resolution passed here?

PROF. G. RANGA: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Resolution about the separation of the Atomic Energy Commission.

SHRI JAWAHARLAL NEHRU: I do not now recollect what that Resolution was, but in such matters, because there are very few Governments that are dealing with these things, well, they are not very forthright, they are very secretive. But as a matter of fact, we have been in touch with various Governments like the U. K., France, and to some extent, the U.S.A., and some other European Governments. And more especially with France we have had some dealings in this matter.

IDLE CAPACITY IN ENGINEERING INDUSTRY

*350. SHRI B. C. GHOSE: Will the Minister for COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to refer to the reply given in the House to Unstarred

question No. 51 on the 23rd February 1954 and state:

(a) what is the extent of the idle capacity revealed,

(i) in the engineering industry as a whole, and

(ii) in the different sectors in the engineering industry,

in the reports of the Engineering Capacity Survey Committee; and

(b) what measures have been adopted or are proposed to be adopted for the utilisation of this idle capacity?

THE MINISTER FOR COMMERCE (SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR): (a) and (b). I would invite the attention of the hon. Member to the reply given earlier today to Starred Question No. 348.

SHRI B. C. GHOSE: Do I understand that the Committee has not yet made any estimate of the idle capacity in the industry or in any sector of It?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: It has made a general survey, and a rough estimate shows that in certain sectors the spare capacity exists from 25 to 40 per cent.

SHRI B. C. GHOSE: Have they submitted any estimate about the idle capacity in this industry in the Howrah district in West Bengal?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: I should like to have notice.

SHRI B. C. GHOSE: Have they made any recommendations for the utilisation of this idle capacity?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: Yes, Sir. They have made some tentative recommendations.

SHRI B. C. GHOSE: And have the Government accepted and implemented those recommendations?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: We are considering them.

SHRI B. C. GHOSE: Are they still under consideration?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: Sir, I wish my hon. friend appreciates the answer that I gave to my hon. friend, Mr. Bhanj Deo. Sir, the position is like this. It is more in the nature of an advisory committee. It has gone into the problems now, for instance regarding measures for the relief of this idle capacity, and the problem as to why it has been there, and it has made some tentative recommendations in the capacity of an advisory committee. It gives its views, and naturally, we keep them under constant consideration, and wherever it is feasible, we accept the suggestions.

SHRI B. C. GHOSE: I would like the hon. Minister to appreciate that by the time they consider the suggestions and implement them, many of these small units in Howrah and round about would have gone out of existence.

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: I am not aware of that position.

SHRI H. P. SAKSENA: To what extent have Government succeeded in giving employment to the idle engineering industry?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: Sir, in the actual achievement of utilising that idle capacity, I should say that it is too early to expect Government to have any very definite results. The matter is being actively considered, and the various ways of utilising this idle capacity are also being considered.

SHRI H. P. SAKSENA: Is it not a fact that more than a year has elapsed since this Committee was appointed to devise ways and means of making use of the idle capacity?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: Sir, my hon. friend undoubtedly appreciates that the question is too big to be solved in one year's time. I can assure the hon. Member that this question is being seriously tackled, and I hope, within a measurable distance of time, Government will be able to see that at least part of this idle capacity is utilised.

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: May I know whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the state of affairs in Howrah either by the employers or by the workers who are being rendered unemployed?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: I could not follow the question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Has your attention been drawn, either by the employers or by the employees, to the state of affairs there, near Howrah?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: I read something about that in the newspapers last week.

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: My question is, whether the attention of the Government has been drawn.....

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: I am not aware of the attention of the Government having been drawn. I should require notice.

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: May I know, Sir, whether the attention of his Ministry or the attention of the Government as a whole.....

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: My hon. friend knows as much as I do about the constitution of the Government as a whole.

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: I know this constitution. But I am sure, Sir, that the attention of the Labour Ministry at least has been drawn to the state of affairs by the workers who have been rendered unemployed or are being rendered unemployed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes.

SHRI B. C. GHOSE: Is the hon. Minister aware of the fact that there have been reports in the newspapers that this Committee had examined the position of the small units round about Howrah, and had also made certain recommendations? Is that a fact?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: I think so.

SHRI B. C. GHOSE: If that is so, then my question was this. What were the recommendations made by this Advisory Committee for resuscitation of the small units round about Howrah?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: My hon. friend will doubtless appreciate that it is not always possible for us to state anything in detail regarding every recommendation made about every locality. But if my hon. friend is interested in any particular locality, I wish he sets down a question, and we shall do our best to answer it.

SHRI S. MAHANTY: May I know why this capacity in the engineering industry, from 25 to 40 per cent., is lying idle, whether it is due to the imports of such machineries from abroad or due to the low purchasing capacity at home?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: Sir, different reasons have been given by different parties. Now, the different reasons indicated are:

- (1) shortage of essential raw materials—pig-iron and steel,
- (2) shortage of working capital for the medium and small units,
- (3) shortage of finance for the purchase of machinery and equipment essential for modernisation of the factories, and

i4) outstanding problems of labour, and labour-management relationship.

These are the various reasons indicated, and we are doing our best to do what we can.

AIRPORTS MAINTAINED BY C.P.W.D.

*351. SHRIMATI PARVATHI KRISHNAN: Will the Minister for WORKS, HOUSING AND SUPPLY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of airports which are maintained by the Central Public Works Department;

(b) at how many of these airports the work-charged staff required for the maintenance of those airports have been provided with Government accommodation; and

(c) what is the total number of quarters provided at each of those airports?

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS, HOUSING AND SUPPLY (SARDAR SWARAN SINGH): (a) 84.

(b) 37.

(c) A statement is laid on the Table of the Rajya Sabha. [See Appendix VIII, Annexure No. 105.]

SHRIMATI PARVATHI KRISHNAN: Is the hon. Minister aware of the fact that a majority of these aerodromes are situated about 10 to 15 miles away from the cities, and therefore, it entails a great deal of difficulty for the employees—the work-charged staff—to go to work? May I also know whether the Ministry has any plan to provide accommodation to all the work-charged staff, and how long will it take to provide such accommodation?

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: I do admit that at present the accommodation