

masons have increased. The number is not so much but when we compare it from 1947 to 1953, the wages have increased.

SHRI S. MAHANTY: The question is, is it not a fact also that the percentage of these mazdoor labourers is much more overwhelming than the regular labourers?

SHRI J. S. L. HATHI: I do not think it is much more overwhelming than the regular labourers.

SHRI S. MAHANTY: Sir, the hon. Minister can take the information from me that the mazdoors are much more than the regular labourers and so I am asking him as to how this increase in the wages of labour can be adduced as a reason for the increase in the estimate.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is one of the reasons.

SHRI S. MAHANTY: No, Sir, it seems to be the contrary.

SHRI J. S. L. HATHI: For the first part, I take the information and as to the second part, I want to say that when compared with 1947, the wages have actually risen.

SHRI S. MAHANTY: Every year the estimate has gone on rising like malaria temperature.

SHRI LALCHAND HIRACHAND DOSHI: What was the wage paid for a mazdoor in 1947 and what is it that is being paid now?

SHRI J. S. L. HATHI: It was something like twelve to fourteen annas in 1947 and now it is Rs. 1/8.

SHRI V. K. DHAGE: What are the main causes that contribute to the rising expenditure?

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is given in the statement. The statement says so many things, increased scope of investigation, cost of compensation.

wages, cost of machines and the rest of it.

SHRI S. MAHANTY: It has been stated, Sir, that increased compensation is also one of the causes but is it not a fact that the people who have not yet been re-settled so far have as their major grievance that no compensation has been paid to them?

SHRI J. S. L. HATHI: This is after all, an estimate. We have already paid some compensation to some persons. In 1947 compensation was calculated at Rs. 200 but now in actual practice it has been found to be Rs. 450 and therefore there has been increase over estimate in actual payment.

PRICE OF SHAVING BLADES

*633. SHRI H. C. MATHUR: Will the Minister for COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that during the last few months the prices of certain articles such as shaving blades have risen by 50 to 100 per cent; and

(b) if so, what are the reasons for such rise in price and what steps Government propose to take in the matter?

THE MINISTER FOR COMMERCE (SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR): (a) It is reported that the prices of imported shaving blades have risen. It is not clear what other articles the hon. Member has in view.

(b) This may be due to the limited supply of imported blades. The matter is receiving attention.

I should like to add also, Sir, that this supposed shortage may well be due to the activities of hoarding which occur sometimes somewhere when the Import Advisory Council is likely to have a session.

SHRI H. C. MATHUR: What is the extent of rise in prices? Does the hon. Minister concede that it is from 50 per cent, to 100 per cent.

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: I am trying to find out, Sir. I should like to have notice.

SHRI RAJAGOPAL NAIDU: Sir, in view of the enormous rise in the price of the blades, is it not advisable for every Member to grow a beard?

(No reply.)

DR. P. C. MITRA: Are razor blades manufactured in India?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: Have I to answer the question for the hon. Member who is not interested in this, Sir?

DR. P. C. MITRA: Are razor blades manufactured in India?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: Yes, Sir.

DR. P. C. MITRA: What is the quantity of razor blades imported from abroad?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: Roughly, Sir, about fifty million blades are imported from abroad and the local production is about sixty million blades per year.

DR. P. C. MITRA: Is it not a fact, Sir, that the using of blades leads to unemployment among the barbers?

(No reply.)

SHRI H. C. MATHUR: Is this state of affairs due to the fact that Government is ignorant of the market conditions and of the stock position? If it is so, what steps do Government propose to take to keep themselves in touch with market conditions? It appears from the answer given today that they are not aware of them when they pass orders. I wish to know whether it is due to the fact that the Government is ignorant of the market conditions and of the stock position and, if it is so, what steps they propose to take to keep themselves in touch with market conditions.

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: There is nothing like a serious state of emergency or affairs. The only thing is that we settle our import policy twice a year and when we fix an import policy, we do measure the quantum of imports *vis-a-vis* local production. In this particular case of razor blades, there is already some local production and so we limit the import of razor blades. However, it does sometimes happen that either the wholesalers or the retailers take advantage of the situation and our friends, the people who have a fancy for imported goods, render an artificial shortage by hoarding blades. As I have said, when the Import Advisory Council meets, in order to force Government into larger imports of foreign articles, an artificial shortage is made to be felt by the consumers so that questions like this might be put and we might be perhaps coaxed to increase the quantum of imports.

SHRI LALCHAND HIRACHAND DOSHI: Is it not a fact that the prices of Indian blades have not gone up?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: Yes, Sir, they have not gone up and they are very reasonable.

DR. P. C. MITRA: I want to know whether the import duty on blades has been relaxed or tightened from time to time? i

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: No, Sir, on this particular item it is neither relaxed nor tightened from time to time.

SHRI H. C. MATHUR: Has this rise in price followed some restrictions placed on import?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: Sir, our import quota was fixed as far as back as December 1953 and, as I have said, so far as our policy was concerned, there was no reasonable cause for this supposed shortage and the rise in prices.

SHRI H. P. SAKSENA: The hon. Minister informed me last year that.

he was using Indian made blades. I would like to know what has happened to those blades and how much progress there has been made in the manufacture of blades in India.

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: I throw away the blades that I use. Indian manufacture is progressing. I recently paid a visit to a factory in Bombay and I found that this industry has been recording progress.

SHRI H. P. SAKSENA: I am afraid I have to request you to repeat the answer because not a word has been audible.

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: My friend asked as to what happened to the razor blades.....

MR. CHAIRMAN:..... which you personally use and you said that you throw them away.

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: As regards the next point, I have told the House that the industry is showing some progress. Recently I had occasion to visit a factory. They are trying to adopt modern methods of manufacture and day by day, local production is improving though it could not stand comparison with the best of foreign production.

PRODUCTION AT SINDRI FERTILISER FACTORY

*634. SHRI H. C. MATHUR: Will the Minister for PRODUCTION be pleased to state what has been the production of fertilisers at Sindri Fertiliser Factory during each month since January 1954?

THE MINISTER FOR PRODUCTION (SHRI K. C. REDDY): A statement containing the information is laid on the Table of the Council.

<i>Statement</i>	
1954	Monthly Production
January	... 18,527 tons
February	... 17,853 "
March	... 21,203 "
April	... 21,544 "

SHRI H. C. MATHUR: May I know the capacity of the factory and whether production has been.....

SHRI K. C. REDDY: The factory is designed to produce.....

MR. CHAIRMAN: He has not finished the question. "What is the capacity of the factory and....."

SHRI H. C. MATHUR:..... whether this production has been to the full capacity.

SHRI K. C. REDDY: The factory is designed to produce about 960 tons per day and, as yet, we have not reached that target.

SHRI H. C. MATHUR: Is it not a fact that this factory is capable of producing one thousand tons per day? Is it also not a fact that in the past it produced to that extent but that there were some troubles with the plant as a result of which the plant has failed you and that accounts for the reduction to this extent?

SHRI K. C. REDDY: It is true, Sir, that some time in 1953—in the beginning of 1953—.....

SHRI LALCHAND HIRACHAND DOSHI: We can't hear on this side.

SHRI K. C. REDDY:.....the factory produced a thousand tons per day—in the month of February, to be exact, but that amount of production was explained by the large accumulation of stocks of ammonia in the previous months. So, it was only a very exceptional situation, and I think certain difficulties which have cropped up in the plant will have to be tackled. We have consulted the original consultants who helped us in the erection of this plant, namely the Chemical Construction Company; they have deputed four engineers who have gone into the question thoroughly and have made certain recommendations. The Board of