

MR. CHAIRMAN: Rock salt or sea salt?

SHRI H. P. SAKSENA: Salt as a whole, rock or sea-water salt.

SHRI K. C. REDDY: We are not only self-sufficient but we are also exporting some outside India.

DR. P. C. MITRA: Are the Government aware that rock salt is not available in the ration shops and the fair price shops?

SHRI K. C. REDDY: Maybe, Sir, that it may be available.....

DR. P. C. MITRA: No, it is not available.

SHRI K. C. REDDY:but we do not know whether it is pure rock salt or something going under the name of rock salt.

SHRIMATI CHANDRAVATI LAKHANPAL: May I know, Sir, the cost of production per seer of rock salt and of sea salt?

SHRI K. C. REDDY: The rock salt which is being mined in Mandi costs about Rs. 2 per maund, inclusive of a cess of annas three and a half whereas the production of the so-called sea salt is about twelve annas.

PROF. G. RANGA: Is there any truth in the complaint made in the Press that the price of rock salt is Rs. 8 per maund in Pakistan whereas it is being sold at Rs. 40 per maund on this side and also that 40 wagons of rock salt were being smuggled into this country which were seized by the Government?

SHRI K. C. REDDY: Yes, Sir, the Government is aware of the incident. Government have confiscated the 40 wagons and proceedings are going on in the court.

PROF. G. RANGA: Then, how have the Government come to the conclusion that we are more than self-sufficient when so much stuff is needed on this side and is being smuggled?

SHRI K. C. REDDY: My friend obviously has not understood my answer. I said that we are self-sufficient in salt as a whole; I did not say that we were self-sufficient in rock salt.

CULTURAL FUNCTIONS HELD IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES

*362. SHRI M. VALIULLA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of foreign countries where cultural functions similar to 1953 New York Indo-America Week celebrations were held;

(b) the years in which they were held; and

(c) what was the response to these functions by the nationals of those countries?

THE PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS AND DEFENCE (SHRI JAWAHARLAL NEHRU). (a), (b) and (c). Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

SHRI M. VALIULLA: Are the Government of India thinking of making this an annual feature, Sir?

SHRI JAWAHARLAL NEHRU: Wherever it is possible, it is being done.

PROF. G. RANGA: We have some information about the New York Indo-American celebrations. What were the special features of it, and did we spend any money on it?

SHRI JAWAHARLAL NEHRU: I believe we have spent some money but I have not got any figures.

PROF. G. RANGA: What was the nature of the celebration? What were the special features?

SHRI JAWAHARLAL NEHRU: I am afraid I have no precise recollection of the details. Questions have been answered previously also; I did not take much interest in the matter

and so I do not know. But, I think, there were talks, discussions, speeches, films, discussions about "Mahatma Gandhi and his philosophy and that sort of thing went on.

SHRI C. G. K. REDDY: Sir, may I know whether Indian residents of New York or some other place where these cultural functions are held are invited to these functions? Have Government any information on that?

SHRI JAWAHARLAL NEHRU: It all depends on the residents, and the mere fact of being a resident might not be very helpful. If it is an intellectual discussion Indians interested in such discussions will be invited, not a shopkeeper who is not interested in such things. It is a select gathering where discussions take place and certainly many Indians interested in the subject do go there; but not all of them. There are thousands and thousands and they are not all invited.

SHRI C. G. K. REDDY: Are these cultural functions meant for intellectuals only or are they also intended for the purpose of bringing the two peoples together?

SHRI JAWAHARLAL NEHRU: It depends on the nature of the function. If it is a symposium for discussion on a subject only, a few people are invited. But if it is a big show, something in the nature of public meetings, then everybody is invited.

SHRI V. K. DHAGE: When this information is collected, will the Prime Minister be pleased to place it on the Table of the House?

SHRI JAWAHARLAL NEHRU: Of course.

EXPORT OF IRON ORE

*363. SHRI M. VALIULLA: Will the Minister for COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the entire Sandur iron ore is exported outside India;

(b) for how long it would last at the present rate of exploitation;

(c) whether foreigners are exploiting that ore;

(d) whether export agents also are foreigners;

(e) whether Government have any proposals to start an iron and steel plant in South India to make use of the iron ore there: and

(f) whether the Sandur iron ore is one of the richest kind in India?

THE MINISTER FOR COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI T. T. KRISHNA-MACHARI): (a) Information is not available, since statistics of iron ore exports are not maintained on a regional basis.

(b) It is estimated that the reserves are about 130 million tons and the average annual output of ore is about 31,000 tons.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Information is not available for the reason stated in reply to part (a).

(e) No, Sir.

(f) Yes, Sir. It is somewhere about 63 to 67 per cent.

SHRI M. VALIULLA: May I know if iron ore is being exported from ports in Madras State to foreign countries?

SHRI T. T. KRISHNAMACHARI: I cannot answer the question precisely. It may be that some export takes place from Madras or Marmagaoa or Bombay.

SHRI B. RATH: Sir, the hon. Minister is not at all audible.

PROF. G. RANGA: May I know whether recently some restrictions were imposed by Government on those people who usually export iron ore from these places—Bombay and other places?

SHRI T. T. KRISHNAMACHARI: It is not a restriction that was imposed. It was merely a rearrangement of the facilities.