

[15th February 1934]

INCREASE OF DRUNKENNESS IN COAL FIELDS AT DHANBAD.

14. Babu MANINDRA NATH MUKHARJI : (a) Will Government be pleased to state if their attention has been drawn to the serious increase in drunkenness, among employees in the coalfields, in the Dhanbad subdivision, since the re-introduction of outstill system there ?

(b) Is it a fact that owners of collieries and merchants and other residents in the coalfields of the Dhanbad subdivision have complained to Government that it is getting increasingly difficult for decent people to go about after nightfall owing to drunken brawls and rowdyism on roads and roadside places all over the coalfields ?

(c) Is it a fact that the Deputy Commissioner of Manbhum recently visited the coalfields to enquire into general complaints of serious increase in drunkenness in the coalfields of the Dhanbad subdivision ?

(d) If the answer to clause (c) be in the affirmative, will Government be pleased to lay on the table a copy of the report of the Deputy Commissioner of Manbhum.

Mr. W. G. LACEY : (a) and (b) Representations to this effect have been received by Government.

(c) Government have no information.

(d) Does not arise.

Babu MANINDRA NATH MUKHARJI : Sir, I want to put a supplementary question arising out of answers to (a) and (b). Will Government be pleased to state how many representations were received by Government ?

Mr. W. G. LACEY : Sir, three representations were received from Associations.

Babu MANINDRA NATH MUKHARJI : Will Government be pleased to state what steps they have taken on receipt of those representations ?

Mr. W. G. LACEY : The Excise Commissioner was asked to make an enquiry into the facts stated in the representations.

Babu MANINDRA NATH MUKHARJI : Will Government be pleased to state the result of the enquiry of the Excise Commissioner ?

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Mr. W. G. LACEY : The Excise Commissioner spent the Christmas holidays in Dhanbad and made careful enquiry into all the complaints made and submitted a very full and detailed report to Government. I do not think it is possible, by way of question and answer, to give an adequate summary of that report; but the general purport of it was that the Excise Commissioner found the complaints to be greatly exaggerated. Where legitimate grievances were brought to light, steps have already been taken to remove the cause of complaint.

Babu MANINDRA NATH MUKHARJI : Since the report of the Excise Commissioner, have Government any information that drunkenness has decreased to any extent ?

Mr. W. G. LACEY : The Excise Commissioner is of opinion that, when the outstills were first opened in this area, there was a certain amount of excessive drinking, but that since then this has very largely decreased.

Babu MANINDRA NATH MUKHARJI : Will Government be pleased to place on the table a copy of the report of the Excise Commissioner ?

Mr. W. G. LACEY : Sir, I am afraid Government cannot place a copy of the report on the table.

Babu MANINDRA NATH MUKHARJI : Not even the purport of the report ?

Mr. W. G. LACEY : I am not clear what the hon'ble member wants. If it is that Government should prepare a precis of this report, I do not think it will be possible for them to do so.

Babu MANINDRA NATH MUKHARJI : Sir, arising out of clause (c). Did Government enquire from the Deputy Commissioner of Manbhum whether he visited the coalfields ?

Mr. W. G. LACEY : No, Sir : they received no report from the Deputy Commissioner of Manbhum, and there was no reason why they should make an enquiry from him.

Babu MANINDRA NATH MUKHARJI : Will Government be pleased to state why no enquiry was made from the Deputy Commissioner ?

Mr. W. G. LACEY : Because there was no necessity, Sir.

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Rai Bahadur SATIS CHANDRA SINHA : Sir, with regard to answer (c). Did Government enquire, after receipt of the notice of these questions, from the Deputy Commissioner whether the Deputy Commissioner enquired about this affair ?

The Hon'ble the PRESIDENT : Government have already replied that they did not make any enquiry from the Deputy Commissioner.

Rai Bahadur SATIS CHANDRA SINHA : Did the Excise Commissioner enquire whether the Deputy Commissioner enquired before him ?

Mr. W. G. LACEY : Government have no information whether the Deputy Commissioner made any enquiry.

Rai Bahadur SATIS CHANDRA SINHA : Is not the Deputy Commissioner a part of Government ? (*Laughter.*)

Mr. NANDA KUMAR GHOSH : Will Government be pleased to state from whom they received the representations ?

Mr. W. G. LACEY : They received representations from the Indian Mining Association, the Indian Coal Merchants' Association and the Indian Colliery Owners' Association.

Mr. NANDA KUMAR GHOSH : Will Government be pleased to state if these representations were laid before the Hon'ble Minister.

The Hon'ble Sir GANESH DATTA SINGH : Yes, I have read them.

Mr. NANDA KUMAR GHOSH : Will Government be pleased to state if the report by the Commissioner of Excise is confidential ?

Mr. W. G. LACEY : Yes, Sir.

Mr. NANDA KUMAR GHOSH : Will Government be pleased to state if they are prepared to supply information to members of this Council from certain portions of the report which are not confidential ?

The Hon'ble the PRESIDENT : Government have already said that the whole report is confidential.

Mr. NANDA KUMAR GHOSH : Is the whole report confidential ?

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Mr. SACHCHIDANANDA SINHA : Yes, the whole thing from top to bottom (*Laughter*).

Mr. W. G. LACEY : Government will be prepared to supply information contained in the report if the hon'ble member will raise the subject in debate.

Mr. NANDA KUMAR GHOSH : Thank you, Sir.

Babu GODAVARIS MISRA : Am I to understand that in cases where there is serious increase in drunkenness in a particular area the report of the District Officer concerned is not called for by Government ?

Mr. W. G. LACEY : I don't think it is necessary for the hon'ble member to assume any such thing. In some cases Government ask for a report, in others they do not.

Babu GODAVARIS MISRA : In what cases reports are called for and in what they are not ?

Mr. W. G. LACEY : They are called for when it is considered necessary to do so.

Babu GODAVARIS MISRA : In what cases do Government consider it necessary in their opinion and in what cases they do not ?

(No answer.)

IMPOSITION OF THE MOTOR-VEHICLES TAX IN THE DISTRICT OF MANBHUM.

15. Babu MANINDRA NATH MUKHARJI : Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) (i) what amounts were actually realized from the district of Manbhumi as motor vehicles tax, year by year, since the imposition of the said tax up to the date for which figures are available,

(ii) whether the entire amount realized was paid to the district board of Manbhumi,

(iii) if the answer to sub-clause (ii) be in the negative what deductions were made and why ; and

(b) if they instruct district boards or other recipients of the motor vehicles tax to earmark such amounts only for the construction, maintenance and improvement of roads ?