

customs duty on tea import, and if so, to what extent; and

(b) the extent to which export of Indian tea to France is likely to improve during the year as a result of this concession?

The Minister of International Trade (Shri Manubhai Shah): (a) and (b). A statement is laid on the Table of the House. [Placed in library. See No. LT-2427/64].

Handloom Weavers

*366. { **Shri Dinen Bhattacharya:**
Dr. Saradish Roy:
Dr. Ranen Sen:

Will the Minister of **Industry** of be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that adequate amount of yarn is not made available at present to the handloom weavers specially in West Bengal;

(b) if so, reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken to remedy it?

The Minister of Industry (Shri Kanungo): (a) to (c). No such report has been received from handloom weavers of West Bengal. Government are however aware of some shortage in yarn of higher counts in relation to the steadily-increasing demand for such counts. The Textile Commissioner has been assisting the handloom sector by making special allotments from mills. It is not possible to augment substantially the supply of high-count yarn to meet the increasing demand as such yarn is produced out of imported cotton involving extra expenditure of foreign exchange.

Price of Woollen Goods

*367. **Shri E. Madhusudan Rao:** Will the Minister of **Industry** be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons for the extraordinary increase in the prices of wool and woollen cloth this year;

(b) the steps Government have taken to check this; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to increase the raw wool production in the country?

The Minister of Industry (Shri Kanungo): (a) to (c). A statement is laid on the Table of the House. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-2428/64].

Industrial Trade Fair in Bangkok

*368. **Shrimati Maimoona Sultan:** Will the Minister of **International Trade** be pleased to state:

(a) whether India participated in the second Bangkok Industrial Trade Fair;

(b) if so, the aspects of Indian Industry which were displayed in the Fair; and

(c) how far the prospects of Indian trade with Thailand have improved thereby?

The Minister of International Trade (Shri Manubhai Shah): (a) The Government of India did not officially participate in the Fair but the Cotton Textiles and the Silk and Rayon Textiles Export Promotion Councils at Bombay were given assistance to put up a joint stall.

(b) (i) Cotton textile fabrics and hosiery items;

(ii) Rayon and synthetic textiles fabrics; and

(iii) Light engineering goods like fans, sewing machines, batteries and air-conditioners were displayed.

(c) The Indian exhibits displayed at the Fair have created a favourable impression, and it is reasonable to expect some improvement of trade as a result of the interest created.