

exchange basis. How is the price line for the cotton going to be maintained in this country?

Shri Manubhai Shah: Hon. Members are aware that there is a link between the scheme of export promotion and the import of certain varieties which do not directly contribute to export promotion. Therefore, the prices are interlinked at that level.

Shri Iqbal Singh: At what price are we purchasing from foreign markets and how do those prices compare with the Indian prices?

Shri Manubhai Shah: I will not be able to take up contractwise; neither is it desirable to do so. But generally the internal prices today are slightly higher than the imported prices.

Shri Daji: Is it a fact that this year's production is below last year's and the year before and if so has the Government ascertained the cause of low production of Indian cotton and what steps are taken to improve the production?

Shri Manubhai Shah: Most of the reasons are monsoonic. There were some floods in certain parts of the country and in some other parts, there were drought conditions. But we are not going to rely on nature alone in the long run. We are taking every step of the economic type such as stock piling and buffer stocks. Agricultural programmes and measures are also there to increase internal production. We are also encouraging larger production of synthetic fibres and yarn.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Inventions Promotion Scheme

*148. **Shrimati Maimoona Sultan:** Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state:

(a) what important inventions were made under the Inventions Promotion Scheme, in the year 1981;

(b) what was the cost involved on the scheme during the year;

(c) what provision is proposed to be made for these schemes during the ensuing year; and

(d) what are the more important inventions in respect of which studies are at present going on?

The Minister of International Trade in the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (Shri Manubhai Shah): (a) to (d). A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

(a) and (d). A brochure giving details of the Inventions that were awarded prizes in the year 1961-62 by the Inventions Promotion Board, has been placed in the Library of Parliament. Besides the award of prizes, the Board gave financial assistance during the same period to persons working on 72 inventions. At present, the Board have under consideration 40 proposals for grant of financial assistance in respect of possible inventions.

(b) Rs. 1,45,271.

(c) Rs. 2,00,000.

Indian Labourers for Bhutan

*149. **Shri Nath Pai:** Will the Prime Minister be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government of Bhutan have requested to the India Government for the loan of the services of 26,000 unskilled Indian labourers;

(b) if so, whether Government have considered the demand of the Bhutan Government; and

(c) what would be the terms of contract in this connection?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of External Affairs (Shrimati Lakshmi Menon): (a) No Sir. The Government of Bhutan have not requested the Government of India for the loan of any unskilled labourers.