

Shri Tangamani: I wanted to know another point. What is the total assistance which is going to be given for the construction of the balance of nearly 75 units, for which work has already started in 1957-58?

Shri Manubhai Shah: 75 in Guindy estate?

Shri Tangamani: Not only in Guindy, but in Madras State in eight centres various factory units are going to be set up. The number of units that are going to be set up according to the statement is 126. Already 54 units have been completed. I would like to know how much money is going to be set apart by way of loan and by way of grants for the year 1958-59, because the statement only gives for the years 1955-56, 1956-57 and 1957-58.

Shri Manubhai Shah: Out of Rs. 79.5 lakhs for Industrial Estates for Madras State in the Second Plan about Rs. 20 lakhs will be spent in 1958-59.

Consumption of Coir and Coir Products

*1975. **Shri Kumaran:** Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state the progress so far made by the Coir Board and Government in their programme of increasing the internal consumption of coir and coir products?

The Minister of Industry (Shri Manubhai Shah): A statement is laid on the Table of the Lok Sabha. [See appendix VIII, annexure No. 93.]

Shri Kumaran: It is said in the statement that the use of coir mats and mattings has been recommended by this Ministry to other Ministries of the Government of India and to all State Governments. If my information is correct, this recommendation was made by this Ministry some two years ago. May I know how far this recommendation has been accepted by the other Ministries of the Government of India and the State Governments?

Shri Manubhai Shah: Practically all the Ministries as also the State Governments have accepted the policy of giving very favourable consideration to the purchase of coir mattings and coir products.

Shri V. P. Nayar: It is understood that this recommendation is two years old but one does not find any coir floor furnishing, either mats or mattings, in the huge buildings which the Government of India have put up in Delhi, for example the Asoka Hotel or Janpath or Krishi Bhavan. I want to know the total value of the purchases of the Central Government through the W.H.S. Ministry or any other Ministry of coir mats and matting subsequent to the order.

Shri Manubhai Shah: As far as such details are concerned, I do not think the statistics would be available, but I will attempt to find out from the W.H.S. Ministry if they have maintained such separate records.

Rebate on Tea Duty

*1977. **Shri Jinachandran:** Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the Ceylon Government's decision to give relief to the low priced teas meant for export by granting rebate on tea duty on a graded sale; and

(b) if so, what steps Government are going to take to enable Indian tea to compete favourably with Ceylonese tea in foreign markets?

The Deputy Minister of Commerce and Industry (Shri Satish Chandra): (a) and (b). Government of Ceylon have issued a communique introducing a scheme of rebate on duty to be allowed to producers of lower priced teas. The question of sustaining the inherent strength of Indian tea in the world market is under our consideration.

Shri Jinachandran: May I know the amount of contribution made by India

to the International Tea Board for propaganda? Has this Board in any way helped us in our export trade?

Shri Satish Chandra: There is no contribution at present. We are not members of the International Tea Board. We have ceased to be Members. I think for two years we have not been Members.

Shri Jinachandran: May I know to what extent our export trade has fallen during the last six months?

Shri Satish Chandra: I will require notice for that question to give exact figures. There has been some reduction in our exports, but I have said several times in this House before that there are fluctuations from month to month and year to year, and we cannot judge our total exports by taking a month or a period of months into account. It is only by looking into a longer period that we can come to a conclusion.

Shri Rameshwar Tanti: In March and early April the hon. Finance Minister as well as the Commerce and Industry Minister told the House that they were considering export duty on common duty. Since the tea season has come, may I know whether the Government will announce its policy soon?

Shri Satish Chandra: The matter is under active consideration, and we hope to arrive at a decision very soon.

Shri P. C. Borooah: Is it a fact that to give relief to common tea producers, all teas selling at or under Rs. 1.50 per pound at Colombo auctions, the Ceylon Government are giving a rebate to the extent of 60 cents per pound, and to make up the resultant loss, they have increased the export duty on high price tea from 65 to 70 cents per pound?

Shri Satish Chandra: It is not correct to say that only high price teas are to pay 70 cent. All teas are to pay 70 cents as export duty. But the common teas are to be given a rebate equal to the difference between one rupee and fifty cents and the lower

price fetched by them, with a maximum of 50 cents.

Shrimati Mafida Ahmed: In view of the fact that the heavy export duty levied on tea is causing a stumbling block in our competition with other countries, may I know the reason why Government are sticking to the existing export duty?

Shri Satish Chandra: As I said, the matter is under consideration. Export duties are not peculiar to India. They are being charged in Ceylon also.

Shri Ramanathan Chettiar: In view of the fact that the oft-taken of tea is coming down in the United Kingdom, and in view also of the fact that Indonesia is competing with Indian tea along with Ceylon, may I know what steps Government will take to give relief to the industry in order to earn more by way of exports?

The Minister of Commerce and Industry (Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri): As my colleague has just now said, the question of relief is under the active consideration of the Finance Ministry, and I hope an announcement would be made very soon.

What I want to tell the House is that besides concentrating on exports to U.K. or U.S.A., who have also to tackle new grounds. We want to cover other countries also, and try to increase our exports to those countries. With that point of view, it is now proposed to send a delegation of tea experts and tea producers to Russia, East Germany and Poland etc. We want that delegation to go to these countries before the end of the next month. So, I hope it would thus be possible to promote our exports in so far as tea is concerned.

Shri P. C. Borooah: May I know whether it is a fact that to discourage bad teas coming into the market, the Ceylon scheme provides no rebate for the teas which fetch a price of less than 80 cent. per lb.?

Shri Satish Chandra: Yes, it provides no rebate for those teas which fetch less than 60 cents a lb.,— not 50 cents.

Shrimati Mafida Ahmed: In view of the fact that since the termination of the International Tea Agreement, Indian tea has entered into severe competition in foreign markets, may I know whether any efforts are being made to get the agreement renewed in the long-term interests of the tea industry in India?

The Minister of Commerce (Shri Kanungo): It is not correct that the export of tea has dropped down after the end of the agreement. In fact, it has increased considerably in certain years. Apart from that, we are trying to have an agreement with the main tea-producing countries for the purpose of collaboration, but we have not succeeded yet.

Shri Tyagi: May I know whether any efforts are being undertaken by Government to improve the condition of tea gardens in India?

Mr. Speaker: This question relates to rebate on tea duty.

Shri Kanungo: We are organising a Development Department with the Tea Board to look after the technical side of it.

Shri Tyagi: May I know the average foreign exchange earned every year from the tea trade, and also whether the bulk of the export of tea is in the hands of foreign firms?

Mr. Speaker: Anything can be asked on any question relating to tea. This question relates only to rebate on tea duty.

Shri Tyagi: It is a question of competition in trade.

Mr. Speaker: True; but shall we have a general discussion on the progress of the tea industry?

Shri Tyagi: This is a matter of competition with other countries. We are keen to see that our foreign exchange earning do not go down.

Mr. Speaker: Next question.

Manufacture of Pre-stressed Concrete Poles

*1978. **Shri Yajnik:** Will the Minister of Works, Housing and Supply be pleased to state:

(a) whether instructions are being given to the Central Public Works Department to buy pre-stressed concrete poles from the Hindustan Housing Factory;

(b) whether it is a fact that some State Governments including the Uttar Pradesh are importing such and similar steel poles though the Factory can produce far more poles than it is doing now;

(c) the number of concrete and steel poles imported into this country during the last 5 years and the value thereof; and

(d) the number of pre-stressed concrete poles produced by the Company and the maximum number that can be produced by it within the installed capacity?

The Deputy Minister of Works, Housing and Supply (Shri Anil K. Chanda): (a) Instructions were issued in May 1957 to all departments of Central Government, including of course the C.P.W.D., that they should obtain their requirements of articles manufactured by Hindustan Housing Factory from it. Pre-stressed concrete poles are one such item.

(b) and (c). The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House in due course.

(d) In all 33,000 pre-stressed concrete poles were produced upto the end of March 1958. It can produce upto 30,000 poles per annum.

Shri Yajnik: May I know whether it is a fact that thousands of steel poles are still being imported in India, in spite of the fact that the Government's own factory can supply more concrete poles that can serve the same purpose?