

(d) Nil, because the transactions were with countries with whom the State Trading Corporation has rupee payment agreements.

#### Indian Handicrafts

\*30. Shri J. B. S. Bist: Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state.

(a) the steps taken to popularize Indian handicrafts in the UK and the Continent; and

(b) whether Government propose to open permanent stalls in these countries to bring the Indian Cottage Industry products within the reach of ordinary persons?

The Minister of Commerce (Shri Kanungo): (a) and (b) Steps for the promotion of exports of handicrafts are being taken by the Central Government in respect of all countries including U.K. and Continent. Apart from the Indian Handicrafts Development Corporation which was set up in April, 1958 to look after activities connected with exports, publicity is being given through exhibitions, trade centres, etc. abroad. Trade Delegation of business executives from foreign countries was also invited to India to establish direct contacts with dealers and experts.

A proposal to set up Trade centres exclusively for handicrafts at Frankfurt (West Germany), Los Angeles and New York is under consideration.

#### Closure of Textile Mills in Bombay State

\*31. Shri Sonavane: Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to refer to the reply given to Starred Question No 1242 on the 19th December, 1958 and state

(a) the reasons for the total and partial closure of (i) Rajen Textile and (ii) Jayashankar and (iii) Lokamanya Textile Mills respectively of Barsa in Bombay State, and

(b) the manner and method of solving the problem from the points of

view of fall in production and unemployment of nearly two thousand workers?

The Minister of Commerce (Shri Kanungo): (a) Jayashankar and Lokamanya Textile Mills which were to be closed partially have extended their notices of closure of third shift. Rajen Textile are reported to have been closed from 1st January, 1959. The difficulties of these manufacturing units stem from outmoded machinery and accumulation of stocks.

(b) 1,321 workers are affected by the closure of Rajen Textiles there is no retrenchment in the other two Mills. The closed mill is to be surveyed this month by the Textile Commissioner's Office and the management will consider re-opening it in the light of the recommendations of the Survey Team.

#### Rebate on Handloom Products

\*32. Shri Sampath: Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state

(a) the latest position in regard to the amount of rebate dues to be paid to the handloom weavers co-operative societies in Madras State, and

(b) the steps taken to expedite the payment?

The Minister of Commerce (Shri Kanungo): (a) The State Government have reported that an amount of Rs 55,34,565 is necessary to meet the expenditure in connection with the claims of rebate due to co-operative societies as on 31st March, 1958.

(b) An amount of Rs 40 lakhs has been sanctioned.

#### Soap Manufacture

\*33 Shri Gza. Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state

(a) whether Government are aware of the difficulties experienced by indigenous non-motive power soap manufacturers in getting copra and caustic soda, and

(b) if so, what steps Government contemplate to relieve the difficulties?

The Minister of Industry (Shri Maanbhai Shah): (a) Yes, Sir

(b) Actual Users licences for import of copra are granted to the associations of non-motive power soap manufacturers. The imports of caustic soda are also being stepped up to meet the increased demand. The State Trading Corporation, through whom the imports are canalised and who are responsible for distribution of the imported caustic soda, are making efforts to meet the demand of soap manufacturers as much as possible. Further industrial licences have also been granted for the establishment of new units and expansion scheme to increase the indigenous production capacity of caustic soda in the country.

**European Common Market Scheme**

\*34 { Shri Rajendra Singh:  
Shri Assar  
Shri S M Banerjee:  
Shri Sadhan Gupta  
Shri Raghunath Singh:  
Dr Ram Subhag Singh

Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state

(a) whether Government have assessed the situation arising out of the formation of European Common Market,

(b) whether it will have any adverse or favourable effect on our export earnings,

(c) the names of the commodities and the extent to which their export will be affected, and

(d) the steps taken in the matter?

The Minister of Commerce (Shri Kanungo): (a) to (c) It is too early to make a precise assessment. But Government are watching developments and the situation is being kept under examination.

(d) Consultations are being held in the GATT with member States of the Common Market with a view to making this assessment and negotiating possible remedial measures.

**Import of Kashmir Shawls by U.S.S.R.**

\*35. Shri A. M. Tariq: Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government of U.S.S.R. have shown a keen interest in the import of Kashmir Shawls, Embroidery, Papier Mache and other artistic material produced in Kashmir; and

(b) if so, what action Government of India have taken or propose to take in the matter?

The Minister of Industry (Shri Maanbhai Shah): (a) Yes, Sir. Orders for the supply of Kashmir Shawls, and other artistic products have been received from U.S.S.R. during the last few years.

(b) A provision has been made in the Trade Agreement recently concluded with the Government of U.S.S.R. for export of Indian Handicrafts which should include Kashmiri Shawls etc. Financial assistance is being given to the State Government for developing production etc. of these handicrafts.

**Enquiry into Kerala Plantation Strike**

\*36. Shri Ram Krishan: Will the Minister of Labour and Employment be pleased to refer to the reply given to Starred Question No. 850 on the 11th December, 1958 and state.

(a) whether an enquiry into the Kerala Plantation strike from the point of view of the Code of Discipline has been made, and

(b) if so, the result thereof?

The Deputy Minister of Labour (Shri Abid Ali): (a) Not yet.

(b) Does not arise.