

[The Minister of Education and Natural Resources and Scientific Research (Maulana Azad): The Government have taken charge of it, but they are paying rent.]

DISPOSAL OF STOCKS OF HANDLOOM TEXTILES

*1124. **Shri M. D. Ramasami:** Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state:

(a) what steps the Government of India have taken to concert measures for the disposal of the accumulated stocks of handloom textiles in the country; and

(b) whether efforts to regain foreign markets for these textiles would be made?

The Minister of Commerce and Industry (Shri T. T. Krishnamachari): (a) Short term measures to help to clear the accumulation of stocks of handloom textiles are undertaken by the appropriate State Government. Government of India have taken steps to help the industry as such and a Statement is laid on the Table of the House of the action taken by the Government. [See Appendix VIII, annexure No. 3].

(b) Yes.

Shri Muniswamy: May I know whether the Government intend to purchase handloom textiles, for all their requirements of cloth?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: I would like to refer the hon. member to the Government Resolution dated the 20th June 1952, issued by the Ministry of Works, Housing and Supply, wherein Government policy in regard to cottage and small scale industries and their products is clearly stated.

Shri S. V. Ramaswamy: What is the accumulated quantity of handloom cloth, what is its value, and how much of it has been liquidated?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: The question, as I said, may be directed to the appropriate State Governments.

Shrimati Tarkeshwari Sinha: Have the Central Government requested the State Governments to purchase these handloom clothes for the purpose of the Government uniforms, and if so, how many State Governments have already started purchasing them?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: In a matter like this, which is the primary responsibility of the State Government, it will be impertinent on the part of the Central Government to advise the State Government.

Shri T. S. A. Chettiar: May I know whether any State Government has asked for loans, so that they may purchase and stock these handloom clothes, for sale at a convenient time later?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: Loans for purchase of handloom cloth?

Shri T. S. A. Chettiar: Loans for advancing to co-operatives, so that they may stock handloom clothes now and sell them at a later time, at favourable prices.

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: No, Sir. I do not think any request has come for this specific purpose.

Shri G. P. Sinha: May I know whether the low off-take is due to lack of bleached finishing and processing of these handloom clothes?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: It is a matter of guessing. These may be contributory causes.

Shri Muniswamy: May I know whether the question of sending out a trade mission to study the foreign markets for handloom textiles is in the contemplation of Government?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: Hon. members of the House know that we had sent out a person attached to the Textile Commissioner's Office. The Handloom Board is now seized of this matter. At the last meeting of the Standing Committee, they have been thinking of a scheme for expanding our export markets, by the establishment of emporia in various places, such as Singapore, Bangkok, Dacca, Baghdad, Rangoon and Colombo, and the appointment of commercial travellers to act as liaison between Indian exporters and overseas importers.

Shri Achuthan: As a result of the action taken by the State Governments and the Centre, what is the position now with regard to the handloom industry and its stocks?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: The reports that I hear from our own officers in various States indicate that in most places the situation is a little better now. So far as exports are concerned, the export figures for 1952 which are now available are the best within the last four years.

Shri N. Sreekantan Nair: May I know whether as per the statement placed on the Table of the House, the duty on mill-made cloth has already been levied, and if so, what is the legality of such levy?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: It is being levied, because a Bill has been introduced in this House, and the

House had allowed by the introduction of the Bill and the collection of such a levy. That Bill contains a provision to that effect. Under the Provisional Collection of Taxes Act, the cess is being levied, and according to my information and my knowledge, it is perfectly legal, because the House has authorised the levy of the cess.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Hon. members cannot be called upon to give opinions.

Shri Veeraswamy: May I know the main grievances of the handloom weavers in Tamilnad, and what the Government have done or propose to do, to redress those grievances?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: I am afraid that question must be directed to the Government which administers Tamilnad.

Shri Balakrishnan: May I know whether the Government are aware that there is an agitation in the country that mills must be prohibited from producing bordered dhoties, and if so, what is the opinion of the Government on this matter.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: No opinion need be asked. I think the hon. member means what action the Central Government have taken.

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: Government are aware of some such agitation, and it is in response to that agitation perhaps that the Government have made the mills produce only 60 per cent. of their peak production of dhoties.

Shri S. C. Samanta: In the statement, the hon. Minister has stated that one of the steps taken is the formation of the Handloom Advisory Board at the Centre. May I know whether Government have in contemplation, the formation of provincial boards also? If so, what will be their constitution?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: As soon as the funds are available, i.e. when this House puts its seal of imprimatur on the Bill for levying a cess on mill-cloth, it is the intention of this Government to ask the State Governments which are interested in the handloom industry, to constitute State Handloom Boards. And their constitution must be largely left to the States concerned. It is our intention to address them on that subject.

Shri Nambiar: May I know whether the Government are considering the feasibility of selling the handloom goods to the Government servants on longterm loans?

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: That is a suggestion for action.

TEA CHESTS

*1125. **Shri M. D. Joshi:** (a) Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state the number of tea chests manufactured in India and the number imported every year?

(b) Has the deterioration of tea industry affected the demand for tea chests and if so, how much?

(c) Is the present output of tea chests in India adequate to meet the demand of tea industry?

(d) If so, do Government propose to consider the question of stopping imports of foreign tea chests in order to protect the home tea chest industry?

(e) Is it a fact that imported foreign tea chests are in demand more by North Indian tea planters than by South Indian ones?

(f) If so, what are the reasons therefor?

The Minister of Commerce (Shri Karmarkar): (a) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

(b) To the extent that there may be a slight fall in the production of tea during 1953, there may be a proportionate reduction in the demand for tea chests.

(c) No.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) and (f). Government have no information that preference for imported tea chests is greater in North India than in the South.

STATEMENT

Tea Chests

	Production		Import	
	(Quantity in million sets).	Quantity (In million sets)	Quantity (In million sets)	Value (In Lakhs of Rs.)
1951	3.37	1.83**		1,25.36*
1952	4.35	1.51		92.25

*Value is for full year 1951.

**Quantity is being recorded only from April 1951. The figure given is only for 9 months i.e. April 1951 to December 1951.

Shri Karmarkar: Since the statement is brief, Sir, I should like to tell the House that during 1951 our production was 3.37 million sets and