

(c) For what amounts have the Central and State Governments purchased coir products in 1952-53 for Government purposes?

(d) What is the stock position of coir products in the first quarter of 1953?

The Minister of Commerce and Industry (Shri T. T. Krishnamachari): (a) Since June 1952, there has been a gradual increase in exports of coir products. This indicates some improvement in the position.

(b) A statement is laid on the Table of the House. [See Appendix VIII, annexure No. 21.]

(c) and (d). Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House in due course.

Shri Achuthan: May I know what was the decrease in export due to the slump in money value?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: In 1951, the exports were for Rs. 11,58,64,000. In 1952, the figure was Rs. 7,35,71,000.

Shri Achuthan: It is said in the statement that the Trade representatives in the coir importing countries have been requested to help. How far have they succeeded by taking more?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: These Trade agreements have been going on for a period of time. It has not been possible to assess the results arising out of it exactly. There has been a slight improvement during the last January and February; certainly in January. We cannot say whether this is due to these people buying as per Trade agreements. We have not been able to allocate definitely whether anything has resulted from these Trade agreements.

Shri Achuthan: How many men have been thrown out of employment on account of the slump, roughly?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: That is a figure that has never been correctly assessed.

Shri Achuthan: Even roughly have Government no idea?

Shri T. T. Krishnaamachari: I have had no information in that regard.

Shri Punnoose: May I know what percentage of the factories are in production now and how many indigen-

ous, Indian, factories are at present closed down?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: In regard to the present position, we have asked for a report from the Travancore-Cochin Government. We are awaiting the report.

Shri Punnoose: May I know whether the Government are prepared to correct their impression that there is a community project at Trivandrum. There is none.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: That is another matter.

Shri Punnoose: May I know whether the Government are aware that the two community projects opened in the Travancore-Cochin State are at least more than 100 miles away from the centres affected by the coir crisis, and that they cannot give relief to the unemployed workers?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: It is quite possible.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: He does not know. We will go to Hirakud again.

Shri V. P. Nayar: One question, Sir. It is a vital matter. May I know whether the Government have taken any steps to conduct a survey with special details of the increasing starvation and incidence of disease consequent on the crisis in coir industry in the Travancore-Cochin State?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: We depend very largely for information of this detailed type on the State Government. The information furnished to us so far does not indicate these details which the hon. Member has in mind.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Next question.

Shri Punnoose: One question, Sir.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: I have allowed so many questions.

Shri N. Sreekantan Nair: This is an important matter.

Shri Punnoose: It is from my constituency. I must have an opportunity.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: The hon. Member can ask for a half-hour discussion. There are three more questions. Next question.

FINANCIAL CONTROL OF CHIEF ENGINEER,
HIRAKUD PROJECT

*1185. **Pandit Bingaraj Misra:** Will the Minister of Irrigation and Power

be pleased to state whether the Accounting System and Financial Control which was prevalent in the Hirakud Dam Project has been suitably modified so as to invest the Chief Engineer thereof, with powers similar to those enjoyed by the Chief Engineer of the Bhakra-Nangal Project, as recommended by the Advisory Committee in its Report of March 1952?

The Deputy Minister of Irrigation and Power (Shri Hathi): I would invite the attention of the hon. Member to the statement made by the Minister of Irrigation and Power in the House on the 27th March, 1953 while announcing the decisions taken by Government on the recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee, in their Sixth Report. As stated by him, the Comptroller and Auditor-General will be visiting Hirakud shortly for an on-the-spot study of the working of the Accounting System at Hirakud and his advice after such study will be accepted and given effect to by Government.

Pandit Lingaraj Misra: In view of the serious adverse remarks made by the Public Accounts Committee regarding the irregularities in expenditure in Hirakud, do Government propose to liberalise the system of financial control as suggested by the Advisory Committee?

Shri Hathi: As I just now said, the matter is left to the Comptroller and Auditor-General and his advice will be accepted by the Government.

Shri T. N. Singh: The statement just now made is slightly misleading if read with the previous answer. I want to know this. So far as the 16 general recommendations of the PAC are concerned, they having been accepted, the Auditor-General has to go into other matters left open.

Shri Hathi: I am sorry if there has been any misleading impression. All the 16 recommendations have been accepted. There is no doubt about that.

MANUFACTURE OF OYSTER SHELL BUTTONS

***1187, Shri Jhulan Sinha:** Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state:

(a) the areas where the industry to produce buttons from oyster shells exists in the country; and

(b) the extent to which the requirement of such buttons is met by the local production and the steps, if any, taken to develop the same to enable

the industry to meet the entire requirement?

The Minister of Commerce and Industry (Shri T. T. Krishnamachari):
(a) Bihar State, mostly in Champaran district.

(b) Reliable estimate of requirement and production of oyster shell buttons is not available. The Industry is looked after by the Government of Bihar.

Shri V. P. Nayar: May I know whether it is only in Bihar that oyster shell industry is carried on?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: I have got information only regarding Bihar.

Shri V. P. Nayar: May I know whether Government are aware that oysters generally mean only marine lamellibranchs?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: I can take that information from the hon. Member.

Shrimati Tarkeshwari Sinha: How many oyster shell concerns are working at present in Bihar? What is their annual production capacity?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: This industry is under Tariff protection up to 31st December of this year. At the time of the enquiry in 1950, the Director of Industries, Bihar, informed the Tariff Board that there were about 50 factories in Bihar engaged in the production of buttons from oyster shells.

Shrimati Tarkeshwari Sinha: Is it a fact that we are still importing large quantities of these buttons from Japan?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: I do not think so.

Shri G. P. Sinha: Are these cottage industries or is there any mill?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: I do not think there could be any mill in this matter.

Shrimati Tarkeshwari Sinha: The hon. Minister just now said, 'I do not know whether we import from Japan'. May I know whether it is a fact that we used to import these buttons from Japan, and from when that import has been stopped?