

is possible that revised schemes may come forth in the light of the comments made on the earlier ones. If so, they will be further examined.

Shri Punnoose: The statement shows that in 1951-52 caustic soda import was 62,713 tons, while in 1952-53 it is 25,543 tons. May I know how this reduction in import is explained?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: In the previous period there was a certain amount of free licensing. You will also find in the case of soda ash the same thing has happened. We found that it was interfering with local production, and therefore, imports had to be regulated.

Shri V. P. Nayar: From the statement it is seen that during 1952-53 we have had to import 81,588 tons of soda ash. Can I know the approximate value of this quantity?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: I would require notice.

COFFEE RELEASED BY INDIA COFFEE BOARD

*646. **Shri Heda:** (a) Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state the quantity of different grades of coffee released through auction by the India Coffee Board in the months of May, June and July 1953?

(b) What are the comparative stocks released in these months in 1951 and 1952?

The Minister of Commerce and Industry (Shri T. T. Krishnamachari): (a) and (b). A statement is laid on the Table of the House. [See Appendix III, annexure No. 42.]

Shri Heda: From the statement I find that coffee was released in greater quantity this year, particularly in the month of June. In spite of this fact, there has been a rise in the price of coffee as well as scarcity in the market. What are the reasons that Government attribute to this?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: The prices of coffee in June-July are more or less approximate to the prices fixed

by the Marketing Committee of the Coffee Board. Therefore, it is certainly higher than the previous period, because the Marketing Committee of the Coffee Board has fixed the prices higher, as in their opinion, the cost of production has gone up. So far as scarcity in the market is concerned, I am unable to explain it, particularly in view of the fact that larger releases are made. If scarcity obtains, it must be that there is some trouble in regard to movement or the trade is not doing its own share in arranging for equitable distribution.

Shri Heda: If the Government have come to the conclusion that the trade is not doing its part, what measures are Government contemplating to take to see that the trade does its part and prices come down?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: Government happen to be a third party in the scheme of coffee distribution. At the present moment all that it can do is to suggest the varying methods of selling to the Coffee Board. In fact, towards the end of last year—I think it was on 31st December—I did tell the Board that I would prefer to give up this question of auctions, and try to distribute on a dealer basis. They said they tried it once before and that it was not successful, and there was resistance to adopting the idea. Constant communication is going on between Government and the Coffee Board and perhaps something will result in due course, but at the moment, as I have said, the hon. Member must bear in mind that Government is a third party in this scheme.

Shri N. Somana: Has it come to the notice of the Government that in spite of the sales there is a large stock of 15,000 tons still with the growers now?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: Yes, I have heard about it.

Shri N. M. Lingam: May I know whether Government contemplate export of coffee this year, and if they have taken any decision in the matter?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: So long as prices do not come down appreciably

ly. Government will not venture into approving of any scheme of export.

Shri A. V. Thomas: In view of the large stock of 15,000 tons of coffee held in the country, what is the policy of the Government regarding export, and have they decided what quantity they are going to allow to be exported?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: I would repeat the answer I gave to the other hon. Member. Until prices come down, Government will not contemplate permitting export.

Shri A. V. Thomas: Is the Minister aware of the distress caused to coffee growers by holding this large stock of coffee worth Rs. 8 or 9 crores.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: We are only arguing the matter. There are purchasers in the country.

Shri A. M. Thomas: The hon. Minister has given figures with regard to releases through auction. Can I know the quantity of all types released in the corresponding period in the previous year?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: If the hon. Member puts down a question, I can give it. I cannot remember these figures. I do not carry them in my mind.

Shri A. M. Thomas: If the hon. Minister cannot give the figures, is he in a position to say how the offtake in 1952 compares with that of 1953, whether it has been higher or lower?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: The figures that I have supplied indicate that there has been a slight increase in the offtake. Very possibly the offtake will increase, if the prices come down further.

Shri Heda: From the replies given by the hon. Minister it appears that Government are not satisfied with the India Coffee Board. What measures or amendments in the law Government propose to adopt in this regard to safeguard the interests of the consumers?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: The House knows that we have an amend-

ing Bill for the Coffee Market Expansion Act. Very possibly if the House approves of that Bill in that form or in some other form and Government is armed with a little more power, we might be able to remedy a situation which seems, at the moment, irremediable.

Kumari Annie Mascarene: Since the export is not encouraged, the incentive to production is discouraged.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: All that is known. There is no good arguing this matter. Next question.

DISPUTES REFERRED TO CENTRAL ELECTRICITY AUTHORITY

*647. **Shri Heda:** (a) Will the Minister of Irrigation and Power be pleased to state the number of disputes that arose between the State Governments or State Electricity Boards and were referred to the Central Electricity Authority (i) in the year 1952 and (ii) in the first half of 1953?

(b) How many of these have been decided by the Authority?

(c) How many are still pending?

The Deputy Minister of Irrigation and Power (Shri Hathl): (a) to (c). None, Sir.

INDIAN FEDERATION OF WORKING JOURNALISTS

*648. **Shri A. N. Vidyahankar:** (a) Will the Minister of Information and Broadcasting be pleased to state whether Government propose to codify the system of accreditation of news-cameramen with the Government of India?

(b) If so, is it a fact that the Indian Federation of Working Journalists has protested against it?

The Minister of Information and Broadcasting (Dr. Keskar): (a) The question of framing rules for the accreditation of press photographers and newsreel cameramen at the headquarters of the Government of India is under consideration.

(b) Government have received a copy of a resolution passed by the