

THE
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(Part I—Questions and Answers)

OFFICIAL REPORT

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HOUSE OF THE PEOPLE

Monday, 9th June, 1952

The House met at a Quarter Past
Eight of the Clock.

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

MEMBER SWORN

Shrimati Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit
[Lucknow District (Central)].

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

COCOANUT PRICES

*574. **Shri Velayudhan:** Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state what action Government took to see that the price of coconut does not fall further?

The Deputy Minister of Commerce and Industry (Shri Karmarkar): Government could take no action since the fall in the price of coconut was a part of the general fall in prices, the causes of which were beyond our control.

Shri Velayudhan: May I know whether the price of coconut began to fall considerably after allowing imports of coconut and coconut oil from Ceylon and Malaya into India freely?

Shri Karmarkar: No, Sir.

Shri Velayudhan: May I know what quantity of coconut and coconut oil was imported into India from Ceylon and Malaya after the bilateral agreement entered into with these countries in the matter of the import of coconut and coconut oil?

Shri Karmarkar: In respect of the particular quantities imported from Ceylon and Malaya I should like to have notice.

Shri Punnoose: May I know the price of coconut and coconut oil during the last four years?

Shri Karmarkar: I shall oblige the hon. Member for two years. The price of coconut oil (Cochin), as compared with the pre-war price of Rs. 63-9, was Rs. 616-9 in April 1950 and Rs. 413 in May 1952. In between these two dates the price has fallen.

Shri A. M. Thomas: May I know whether there has been a reduction both in the import duty as well as the tariff duty on copra?

Shri Karmarkar: I suppose tariff duty and import duty are the same, and there has been a reduction recently.

Shri P. T. Chacko: May I know whether the Government consulted the Coconut Committee before changing the former policy regarding imports?

Shri Karmarkar: I am not sure, Sir.

Shri Nambiar: In view of the fact that this fall has created a serious situation among the growers, may I know whether Government propose to reconsider this question of tariff?

Mr. Speaker: He is making a suggestion.

Shri Pocker Saheb: May I know whether Government has considered the advisability of restoring the import duty on copra?

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. That is also a suggestion.

Shri Velayudhan: May I know whether the soap manufacturers of India were demanding a lowering down of the duty on copra from Ceylon?

Shri Karmarkar: Yes, Sir. They did urge for that with a view to lowering prices.

PRODUCTION OF METALLURGICAL COAL

*575. **Shri Velayudhan:** Will the Minister of Production be pleased to

state whether the Railway Collieries are producing metallurgical coal with the result that lower grade coal production has been reduced?

The Minister of Production (Shri K. C. Reddy): The railway collieries do produce metallurgical coal but the production of lower grade coal has not fallen on that account.

Shri Velayudhan: May I know whether the coal merchants of Bihar have represented to the Government of India that the production of this metallurgical coal has affected the cost of the other coal?

Shri K. C. Reddy: So far as I am aware, that Association has not represented to that effect. But they have made some representations mentioning their grievances with regard to making available to them siding facilities for the transport of their coal.

Shri Velayudhan: May I know whether the production cost of the lower grade coal is lesser than that of the other one?

Shri K. C. Reddy: I want notice of that question.

COTTON (EXPORT)

*576. **Dr. Ram Subhag Singh:** Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state the quantity of cotton exported from this country during the latter half of the year 1951-52?

The Deputy Minister of Commerce and Industry (Shri Karmarkar): 2,430 bales of 400 lbs.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: Has this cotton export of the latter part of 1951-52 exceeded the export figure of the first half of that year?

Shri Karmarkar: No, Sir.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: Has it come to the notice of Government that some of the Indian mills are not buying Indian cotton?

Shri Karmarkar: That was true two months back, but now Indian mills are buying a lot of Indian cotton.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: Do Government propose to reduce the import of cotton?

Shri Karmarkar: No, Sir. The idea is to stagger the imports. Already a specific quantity has come in according to our programme. We are extending the period of the licence with a view to staggering the imports.

Jonab Amjad Ali: Is it possible for the Government to give the quantity

of short staple and long staple cotton exported from India, and particularly from the Garo Hills of Assam?

Shri Karmarkar: The total exports of raw cotton during 1951-52 came to 1,26,277 bales, and almost all of it is short staple cotton. We don't export any medium or long staple cotton.

Jonab Amjad Ali: Is it a fact that during the year under review the export of cotton from Garo Hills, Assam went down on account of high export duty?

Shri Karmarkar: I think the hon. Member is referring to what is known as Comilla cotton. I should like to have notice of that question.

Shri Punnoose: Are there cases of cotton mills closing down on the ground that they do not get cotton?

Shri Karmarkar: Not that I am aware of.

Shri Badshah Gupta: May I know if the cotton was exported because there was no demand for it in the country, and may I know to which country it was exported?

Shri Karmarkar: With regard to the latter part of the question I want notice. As regards the former part, we used to export only the unspinnable cotton, cotton that was not useful to us.

SALT (EXPORT TO PAKISTAN)

*577. **Dr. Ram Subhag Singh:** Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state the quantity of salt exported to East Pakistan since January, 1952?

The Deputy Minister of Commerce and Industry (Shri Karmarkar): 3,94,235 maunds of salt was exported to East Pakistan during the period January—April 1952.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: May I know whether we import any kind of salt from Pakistan?

Shri Karmarkar: We used to, from West Pakistan. But now I think we are not importing anything.

Shri Nana Dass: Is it the policy of the Government to encourage salt production in our country?

Shri Karmarkar: Yes, Sir.

Shri R. N. Singh: May I know which salt was exported to Pakistan—whether it was Sambhar, Kharaghoda, Dhrangdhra salt or sea salt?

Shri Karmarkar: I should like to have notice as to what salt it was.