

number of urban refugees will also be sent.

Shri Badshah Gupta: May I know, Sir, the special difficulties due to which they have returned to India again?

Shri A. P. Jain: Forty-eight families have returned. The reasons are said to be three-fold: (1) Some of the businessmen who went there were not industrious—and hard work is essential in a comparatively undeveloped place like Andamans; (2) Some displaced persons could not adjust themselves to the new environments and returned to India; and (3) Some of these displaced persons who had been sent to Andamans got information from East Bengal that conditions had comparatively settled down there and they preferred to go back to their homes.

COFFEE (SALE PRICE)

*83. **Shri P. T. Chacko:** Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have directed the Indian Coffee Board that its propaganda units should sell coffee at the market rates;

(b) whether the Coffee Houses were not selling coffee at a rate lower than the market rate;

(c) whether Government have consulted the Indian Coffee Board before issuing this directive; and

(d) the reasons for giving such a direction?

The Deputy Minister of Commerce and Industry (Shri Karmarkar): (a) Yes, Sir; but Government's directive to this effect has been held in abeyance pending consideration of the representations received.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The directive was the result of detailed but informal discussions held with some of the prominent members of the Indian Coffee Board.

(d) The reason for the issue of the directive was that it was found that it was no longer necessary to give a weightage to sales ex-Coffee Houses.

Shri P. T. Chacko: May I know, Sir, how the market price of coffee compares with the price at which the Coffee Board was selling coffee in retail inside Coffee Houses?

Shri Karmarkar: I should like to have notice, but the rate in the Coffee

Houses is very reasonable as compared with the market rate.

Shri P. T. Chacko: May I know whether any arrangements have been made to enable the producers to get the enhanced rate?

Shri Karmarkar: Sir, it gives me an opportunity to explain. The real purpose of attempting to shut coffee sales in coffee houses was that we now produce roughly about 20,000 tons and our internal consumption rose up to 19,000 tons, almost consuming the whole production. Prewar, out of a total of 16,000 tons we used to export 8,000 tons. So with a view to encourage export and also to help the producer we thought of discouraging sales via the coffee houses; also we did not want our people to be more addicted to coffee at the present moment. Obviously pending consideration of the representations, the directive was held in abeyance.

Shri P. T. Chacko: How much are we exporting?

Shri Karmarkar: This year, subject to correction, I think we have already allotted for export purposes about 1,200 tons and another 1,000 tons were recently allotted.

Shri P. T. Chacko: Am I to understand that the Government are intending to introduce coffee prohibition?

Shri Karmarkar: There is no question of prohibition, Sir.

Mr. Speaker: Order, order.

Shri Velayudhan: May I know, Sir, whether the price of coffee was increased because of advance bulk purchases by U.S.A. and U.K.?

Shri Karmarkar: I am afraid, Sir, my hon. friend has shot wide of the mark. The question does not relate to increase of price. The question related to discouragement of sales in coffee houses with a view to induce greater export.

SILK INDUSTRY

*84. **Shri P. T. Chacko:** Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the Silk Industry in India is faced with a hard struggle for existence on account of the fall in prices;

(b) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to criticisms that the violent fluctuations in prices are