

consideration as well, viz. the quality might be different. As you rightly mentioned, Sir, my answers to this sort of question can only be inferential and they cannot be definitive.

**Shri Pocker Saheb:** May I know the number of plywood factories in India, and also how many of them are situated in South India?

**Shri T. T. Krishnamachari:** I think there are about fourteen factories in Madras and Travancore-Cochin.

**Mr. Speaker:** He also wanted to know the total number in India.

**Shri T. T. Krishnamachari:** The total number is about sixty.

**Shri H. N. Mukerjee:** In view of the attitude of the British tea merchants, is it in the contemplation of Government to insist on Indian tea that is exported being packed in Indian-made plywood chests?

**Shri T. T. Krishnamachari:** I am afraid we have no such idea in contemplation.

**Shri Sarangadhar Das:** May I know what the Government is doing to improve the quality, for I understand from the inferential replies of the hon. Minister, it is the quality that puts the Indian product at a disadvantage?

**Shri T. T. Krishnamachari:** I can tell my hon. friend that yesterday I received a deputation of plywood manufacturers engaged in the manufacture of tea chests and I can assure him that when that deputation left they left perfectly satisfied with the attitude of Government. What we do is this. We have an Inspectorate and the manufacturers submit their goods to be inspected by Government. The reports generally are that the output is satisfactory now. I saw a report by a Tea Association which is predominantly European which says that the quality of Indian tea chests has materially improved and the rejections are very low. The position now is that about 70 per cent. of the needs of the tea industry are being supplied by Indian plywood manufacturers.

#### SPARE PARTS OF TRACTORS

\*2059. **Shri L. N. Mishra:** Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is obligatory on the part of tractor importing concerns to import spare parts also for the tractors; and

(b) if so, what steps Government propose to take against those concerns that have failed to import spare parts and have rendered many tractors to remain out of use for want of spare parts?

**The Minister of Commerce and Industry (Shri T. T. Krishnamachari):** (a) and (b). I take it that this question refers to 'Agricultural Tractors'. It is incumbent on the importers to arrange supplies of spare parts to the extent of 15 per cent. of the value of tractors imported. Those who fail to do so without proper justification, are debarred from getting any further licences for tractors.

**Shri L. N. Mishra:** May I know whether the attention of the Government of India has been drawn to the fact that a large number of heavy tractors of the Government of Bihar which are used for the purpose of wasteland reclamation are not working properly because of failure of the tractor importing concerns to supply spare parts and necessary attachments.

**Shri T. T. Krishnamachari:** This is the first time that I have heard this complaint.

**Shri L. N. Mishra:** May I know whether some restrictions have been imposed on the import of tractors from the U.S.A. and special facilities are afforded for the import of tractors from the continental countries?

**Shri T. T. Krishnamachari:** I am unable to answer this specific question excepting to say that the policy of the Government is as far as possible to encourage imports from non-dollar areas so as to save our dollar exchange.

**Shri L. N. Mishra:** Are Government aware of the fact that tractors from Czechoslovakia have proved unsuitable for Indian soil and cultivation?

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

**Shri Raghavaiah:** May I know whether it is a fact that the Government have restricted the sale of U.S.S.R. tractors in the Bombay Industrial Exhibition on the plea that spare parts are not available for them?

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

**Shri K. G. Deshmukh:** With reference to the answer given by the hon. Minister that the Government take

action against importers who do not take 15 per cent. of the spare parts, may I know what exact action is taken and in how many cases have the licences been cancelled?

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

**Shri T. S. A. Chettiar:** We understood that the Government were encouraging the manufacture of spare parts in India. Will not this compulsion that a certain percentage of the foreign spare parts must be taken discourage the manufacture of spare parts in this country?

**Shri T. T. Krishnamachari:** It is a question of timing. If there are a large number of tractors in this country, even this 15 per cent. of the spare parts may not cover their needs. So, the local manufacturers of spare parts are encouraged. But so as to provide the minimum quantity necessary for keeping the tractors going, Government insist on 15 per cent. of the spare parts being imported by tractor importers.

#### HINDUS IN EAST BENGAL

\*2060. **Shri A. C. Guha:** Will the Prime Minister be pleased to state:

(a) whether there have been any reports in recent weeks of any discriminatory and unfair treatment towards the Hindus of East Bengal; and

(b) if so, (i) in what particular areas (ii) of what form and nature, and (iii) the action taken by the Government of India in the matter?

**The Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister (Shri Satish Chandra):**  
(a) Yes.

(b) (i) Chiefly from the Districts of Khulna, Bakarganj, Faridpur and Sylhet, where economic conditions are said to be deteriorating.

(ii) (1) There are reports of discrimination in the grant of relief to distressed Hindus from Government relief funds.

(2) There have been reports that in Sylhet District, non-Muslim tea labourers are not being enrolled in the draft electoral rolls.

(3) Pressure is brought to bear upon employers not to employ non-Muslims in business concerns.

Apart from this, the old complaints of discriminatory measures continue, more specially in regard to requisitioning of houses.

(iii) Specific instances of discrimination and unfair treatment are taken up with the Government of Pakistan.

**Shri A. C. Guha:** Is the Government aware that very recently some circular has been issued to the Ansars indirectly to work against the Hindus, particularly in view of the coming elections?

**Shri Satish Chandra:** I am not aware of any such circular having been issued to the Ansars, but it is a fact that there has been some harassment of the Hindu minority at the hands of these Ansars.

**Shri A. C. Guha:** The Minister has stated that even in the distribution of relief in distressed areas there has been discrimination against the Hindus. May I know if the Government of India has drawn the attention of the Pakistan Government specially to this state of affairs?

**The Prime Minister (Shri Jawaharlal Nehru):** The hon. Member is aware that we are continually in touch with the Pakistan Government through our High Commissioner and our Ministers. Normally, it is rather difficult officially to take any action in regard to the internal working in the other State, but the Ministers I believe do draw attention to these facts from time to time.

**Shri A. C. Guha:** May I know whether the Government has drawn the attention of the International Red Cross Society or its Indian Branch to render relief to the distressed Hindus there?

**Shri Jawaharlal Nehru:** No, Sir. I do not think it would be proper at all to ask an international relief society to give relief outside our own territory. It is not normally done.

**Shri A. C. Guha:** The international Red Cross Society has been rendering relief to the distressed people all over the world. So the Indian Red Cross Society may take up the matter with the International Red Cross Society.

**Shri Jawaharlal Nehru:** The Red Cross, both Indian and International, are not an official body. They may privately help and they have given a great deal of help.

**Dr. N. B. Khare rose—**

**Mr. Speaker:** The question-hour is over.