

बीड़ी में इस्तेमाल करेंगे या हुकके में । लेकिन पिछले फ़ायनेन्स बिल के अन्दर यह तय हो गया था कि ख्वाहिश पर कि कहां इस्तेमाल करेंगे, इस पर ड्यूटी नहीं लगाई जायगी, बल्कि तम्बाकू की हैसियत को देखा जायगा । अगर तम्बाकू बीड़ी में इस्तेमाल करने लायक है तो उस पर ज्यादा ड्यूटी लगेगी और हुकके में इस्तेमाल करने वाली है तो उस पर कम ड्यूटी लगेगी ।

[**Shri Tyagi:** Formerly the excise duty on tobacco was levied on the basis of intention: i.e., whether it was to be used for manufacture of bidis or for hookah smoking. But in the last Finance Bill it was decided that the duty would not be levied on this basis but on the quality of tobacco. If tobacco is suitable for the manufacture of bidis it would be subjected to duty at a higher rate than the one charged for hookah-tobacco.]

NATH BANK LTD.

*279. **Shri A. C. Guha:** Will the Minister of Finance be pleased to refer to the reply given to part (f) of my Starred Question No. 296 asked on the 3rd March 1952 and state how much of the amount of 30 lakhs collected by the liquidators of the Nath Bank, Ltd., has been by settlement, i.e., by setting off deposit amounts against debts?

The Minister of Finance (Shri C. D. Deshmukh): The liquidators work under the direction of the High Court and Government are not in a position to give the information.

Shri A. C. Guha: Is it not possible for the Reserve Bank to give the information?

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. He is arguing now.

CONSTRUCTIVE SCHEMES FOR TRAVANCORE-COCHIN

*280. **Kumari Annie Mascarene:** Will the Minister of Finance be pleased to state whether any amount has so far been spent by the Government of India in Travancore-Cochin State for any constructive schemes or otherwise?

The Minister of Finance (Shri C. D. Deshmukh): A statement giving the available information, from 1948-49 to

1951-52, is being placed on the Table of the House. [See Appendix II, annexure No. 10.]

Kumari Annie Mascarene: May I know whether the State Government has made any contribution to these grants?

Shri C. D. Deshmukh: To most of the G.M.F. grants the State Governments make their own contribution.

Kumari Annie Mascarene: Has the Government made any enquiry into the progress of the work done there?

Shri C. D. Deshmukh: No, Sir. The Government does not make any enquiries but I have no doubt that the Planning Commission keep an eye on the implementation of the various schemes for which State Governments receive assistance from the Centre.

SLUMP IN COMMODITY MARKETS

*281. **Pandit Munishwar Datt Upadhyay:** Will the Minister of Finance be pleased to state:

(a) the causes of the slump in the commodity markets;

(b) what commodities were the worst affected;

(c) how the slump affected the entire economic structure of the country;

(d) how the progress of the slump was checked; and

(e) whether the slump is likely to occur again?

The Minister of Finance Shri C. D. Deshmukh: (a), (c) and (d). The hon. Member's attention is invited to my Budget Speech delivered on the 23rd May, 1952.

(b) From available information it appears that pepper, tea, *gur*, vegetable oils and oilseeds, raw cotton, raw wool, raw jute and jute goods were the principal commodities affected by the recent break in prices. Silver and gold were also affected.

(e) the various steps taken by Government in the direction of liberalising exports and relaxing controls are expected to revive demand. However, it is difficult to forecast the future and much will depend on the behaviour of prices abroad.

Pandit Munishwar Datt Upadhyay: Is the hon. Minister in a position to tell the House as to why particularly these commodities were badly affected?

Shri C. D. Deshmukh: It is difficult to give a general answer. Some are export commodities and some are commodities which are produced and used inside the country. I suppose a general answer would be a change in the relation between supply and demand.

Pandit Munishwar Datt Upadhyay: May I know whether it is a fact that the slump was welcome to many sections of people in the country?

Shri C. D. Deshmukh: I am not in a position to answer that question.

Shri Punnoose: Will the Minister be pleased to state whether the slump is due to the effective steps taken by the Government of India?

Shri C. D. Deshmukh: I have made it clear in the course of my speech that the so-called slump can be attributed both to international and domestic factors so that only part of the responsibility rests on action taken by Government.

Shri Jhunjhunwala: Was there any marked fall in the retail prices also, and, if so, to what extent?

Shri C. D. Deshmukh: I do not think, Sir, evidence is at hand so far to enable one to make a definite statement. The expectation is that the fall will, after a time lag, be communicated to the prices in retail trade.

Dr. Jaisoorya: With regard to answer to part (a), could the stock-piling in Western countries reaching saturation point be one of the causes of the slump?

Shri C. D. Deshmukh: Sir, I referred to international factors in the course of my speech and I might enumerate them here. One is the modification of the U.S. stock-piling programme, then the stretching out of the re-armament programme, then the success so far achieved by the International Materials Conference in allocating scarce raw materials, and increase in the world output of a number of commodities which were in short supply before.

Shri P. T. Chacko: May I know whether the Government have taken any steps to check the precipitous fall in prices in the plantation crops?

Shri C. D. Deshmukh: Well, so far as tea is concerned—I think it is one of the plantation crops—we are now sending a team to investigate all the economics of the tea industry. I am

not aware of any other plantation crop requiring a special enquiry.

Ch. Ranbir Singh: May I know the causes of the slump in the case of *gur*, jute and raw cotton?

Shri C. D. Deshmukh: Both, as I said, depend upon the relation between supply and demand.

Shri S. V. Ramaswamy: Has there been any fall in retail prices?

Mr. Speaker: That question was put and answered, not in that form but in a different form.

Shri Munishwar Datt Upadhyay: May I know what is the process that Government propose to adopt for reducing prices, as I think they do want to reduce prices?

Shri C. D. Deshmukh: That question illustrates a mixed attitude. I am asked to explain the slump and then I am asked to state the reason for the action taken by Government to induce a further fall in prices.

Mr. Speaker: I am going to the next question.

An Hon. Member: I tried to catch your eye several times.

Mr. Speaker: But each Member cannot be guaranteed success. He may try till he succeeds.

PERCENTAGE OF VOTING

*282. **Dr. P. S. Deshmukh:** Will the Minister of Law be pleased to state the percentage of electors who voted in the recent elections according to States for the election to the State Assemblies and for the election to the House of the People?

The Minister of Home Affairs and States (Dr. Katju): A statement showing the percentage of electorates who voted in the recent elections according to States for elections to the State Legislative Assemblies and for elections to the House of the People, prepared from the figures so far available with the Election Commission, is laid on the Table of the House. [See Appendix II, annexure No. 11.]

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: Have any attempts been made to find out the reasons for the low percentage of voting in those States?

Dr. Katju: I imagine it is due to the disinclination of the voters to take the trouble to go to the polling booths.