

Dhoties AND Sarees (PRICES)

*319. **Shri Barman:** (a) Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state the factors that are considered in fixing the controlled price of dhoties and sarees?

(b) How do such factors vary in 1952 as compared to those in 1939 in the case of coarse, medium, fine and super-fine dhoties and sarees?

The Minister of Commerce and Industry (Shri T. T. Krishnamachari): (a) The factors that are considered in fixing the control prices of dhoties and sarees are:—

- (i) Prices of cotton.
- (ii) Manufacturing charges.
- (iii) Processing charges.

(b) As there was no control on cloth prices in 1939, it is not possible to make a comparative study of the costings of these factors in 1939 and 1952.

Shri Barman: May I know whether the cotton that is imported into this country is given to the mill owners at a price that is equalised, that is, at an equal price to all the mills or whether the mill owners purchase their cotton from outside countries at their own price and debit it to the cost?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: There are no pool prices. The mill owners have certainly to pay the prices which are charged for.

Shri Barman: In case there is large variation in the purchase price of cotton from other countries, varying from mill to mill, do Government take that into consideration while fixing the cost?

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. I think this is a mere suggestion for action or a hypothetical question.

Shri Barman: I was asking for this information from the Government to ascertain whether the cloth that is produced in Indian mills is costed on an equitable basis in case the price of cotton purchased by the different mill owners varies at different stages or at different times.

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: The position is very complex. Foreign cotton is only used in the case of fine and superfine cloth. Naturally, when the price of fine and superfine cloth is fixed, the price of foreign cotton is taken into account. With regard to purchase by mills at various times and

at varying prices, it presents a problem. The Textile Commissioner did suggest to the mill trade generally that they should accept a scheme of weighted averages in determining prices. At the last meeting of the Advisory Committee, the mill owners by and large preferred what is called the Tariff Board formula about which I mentioned in answer to another question. The question whether there should be weighted averages or we should go only by the Tariff Board formula is a matter which has to be decided by the mills themselves. We take into consideration generally the majority view in this matter.

Shri K. G. Deshmukh: May I know what percentage is allowed to the mill owners when fixing the prices and what percentage to the agents?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: The Tariff Board formula is framed on the basis of 6 per cent. margin on gross block; so far as margin to the trade is concerned, it is 14 per cent. for cloth and 12½ per cent. for yarn.

Shri B. K. Chaudhury: Has the Government, as an economy measure, issued any instruction to the mill owners that the length of the dhotis and sarees should be restricted to 4½ and 5 yards respectively?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: Undoubtedly, very rigorous standards are laid down in regard to dhotis and sarees not merely in regard to the type of yarn to be used, but also in regard to reeds and picks as also in regard to the counts used for warps and wefts. The instructions are so complex that with a fortnight's study I have not been able to master them. My hon. friend can rest assured that Government are taking every precaution to see that the mills observe all the production standards.

Shri Gurupadaswamy: May I know how the prices of dhotis compare with the prices of sarees?

Mr. Speaker: He means to say in terms of yardage if he is serious about the question?

Shri Gurupadaswamy: I am serious.

Mr. Speaker: We will proceed to the next question.

FLATS FOR M.L.'S.

*321. **Sardar Lal Singh:** Will the Minister of Works, Production and Supply be pleased to state:

(a) the total cost of constructing flats meant for Members of Parliament

on North and South Avenues indicating the total number of flats of each type as also accommodation in each type of flat;

(b) the cost per square foot of the plinth area;

(c) the cost of a single flat of A, B and C type on North Avenue;

(d) the amount of furniture supplied and cost of the same in each type of flat; and

(e) how the rent per month has been calculated both on account of house and furniture?

The Minister of Works, Housing and Supply (Sardar Swaran Singh): A statement containing the required information is placed on the Table of the House. [See Appendix II, annexure No. 22]

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: A gist of the answer may be given.

Sardar Lal Singh: Is the Government aware that the bungalows on the Ferozshah Road, Queensway and Windsor Place have got double the accommodation of that available on the North and South Avenues, and yet the charges are much lower?

Sardar Swaran Singh: I could not say whether the accommodation is exactly double; but it is correct that the accommodation in bungalows is greater than that of the flats. The rent also is lower on account of the lower cost of construction.

Mr. Speaker: I think these questions may be discussed with the hon. Minister privately. They are not so important in the House.

Sardar Lal Singh: Would the Government consider the desirability of pooling all these houses and revising the.....

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. Let us not go into all these details. It is more or less an argument as to how it has to be adjusted. Hon. Members may take up these matters also with the House Committee of Parliament. That would be the proper procedure.

TEA PLANTATION LABOUR FROM ORISSA

*322. **Shri Sanganna:** (a) Will the Minister of Labour be pleased to state the number of labourers of scheduled tribes and castes that have been recruited in and forwarded from the Koraput and Phulbani Districts (Orissa) by the Tea District Labour Association, India, during each year of the last five years?

(b) Is it a fact that these labourers are landless and compelled to leave their ancestral hearths and homes under pecuniary circumstances?

(c) What safeguards and precautions have been made and taken and what kind of agreement is subsisting between the Tea District Labour Association and these labourers for the general welfare and upkeep of the labourers at the Tea District Labour Association Colonies?

(d) Is there any guarantee that these labourers are paid reasonable wages regularly with reference to the present high cost of living?

(e) Is there any provision for imparting education to the children of these labourers working in the Tea District Labour Association Colonies?

The Minister of Labour (Shri V. V. Giri): (a) Separate figures of recruitment in respect of scheduled tribes and castes are not available. A statement showing the recruitment made by the Tea Districts Labour Association from the Orissa State for the last five years is placed on the Table of the House. [See Appendix II, annexure No. 23]

(b) Government have no precise information as to the circumstances in which labourers volunteer for work in the Assam tea estates. The majority of them must be landless labourers though some possess some lands which may not be sufficient to support them.

(c) The Tea Districts Emigrant Labour Act, 1932, under which recruitment is made, does not regulate the welfare of assisted emigrants once they reach their places of employment. Under the Act, it is, however, obligatory on the employing interests to supply an information-sheet to each of the assisted emigrants before his recruitment, giving information regarding the conditions of life and work in the Assam tea estates. This information sheet serves as an agreement between the employer and the labourer and the rules made under the Act provide that supply of incorrect or inadequate information shall be punishable. Adequate arrangements for transport, and in transit, are statutorily required. Welfare measures in plantations will now be regulated by the Plantations Labour Act, 1951, which will be brought into force shortly.

(d) Minimum wage rates for plantation workers in Assam have been fixed by the State Government under the Minimum Wages Act, 1948. It is obligatory on employers to pay wages at those or higher rates.