

Manufacture of Fountain Pens

*622. **Shri Pangarkar:** Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state:

(a) the number of fountain pens manufactured in India during 1959;

(b) whether any fountain pens were exported during the above period; and

(c) if so, the value thereof?

The Minister of Industry (Shri Manubhai Shah): (a) Approximately 11 to 12 million pieces in the large scale sector. Precise information from units in the small scale sector is not available, though it is estimated to be over 10 million pieces of fountain pens.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Rs. 1,57,000—export of fountain pens during the period January–November, 1959.

Shri Pangarkar: May I know whether any financial assistance has been given to the pen manufacturing units in India during the year 1959?

Shri Manubhai Shah: No financial assistance is generally needed. It needs technical assistance, facilities for raw material and import licences.

Shri Pangarkar: May I know whether it is a fact that a large number of pens are smuggled in India from Japan and West Germany? If so, what steps have been taken by the Government to check that?

Shri Manubhai Shah: There has been a total ban for the last two years on their import because we are more than self-sufficient. As the hon. Member must have noticed from the answer, we are actually exporting and are trying to have more exports. It is still possible that some small quantities are being smuggled like any other commodity.

Shri Radha Raman: May I know whether the quality of fountain pens that are manufactured in India compares favourably with the quality of

fountain pens that were imported before? How do their prices compare?

Shri Manubhai Shah: As far as the prices are concerned, they are much cheaper on an average from quality to quality. Regarding quality, several of the makes are of first-class standards. We have recently tried to group them into A, B and C categories according to price and are considering to provide technical experts to enforce standards of qualities so that they become better than what they are now. On the whole, the quality is very satisfactory.

Shri Radha Raman: May I know whether the fountain pens that are manufactured here employ totally indigenous material or there are certain parts which are still being imported in order to manufacture them?

Shri Manubhai Shah: I am glad that the hon. Member has raised this question. As against the import of total parts and components of more than Rs. 6 crores two years ago, the present imports of all kinds of components amount to about Rs. 20 lakhs only. That shows that mostly fountain pens are indigenous. We mean to see that during the current year these imports are also reduced to practically nil.

⤵ Floods in Chilka Lake Area

*623. **Shri Chintamani Panigrahi:** Will the Minister of Rehabilitation and Minority Affairs be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 1677 on the 18th December, 1959 and state:

(a) what steps have been taken so far in repairing the embankment and draining out the flood water from the lands near Chilka Lake which had affected the land allotted to refugees; and

(b) whether the work has been completed by now?

The Deputy Minister of Rehabilitation (Shri P. S. Naskar): (a) and (b). The flood water has since receded from the lands. The work of repairing the embankment has been entrusted to the State Public Works Department and is in progress.

Shri Chintamoni Panigrahi: May I know, whether the Government is aware that although the flood water has receded in submerged lands, flood water is still there and the land has remained uncultivated because water has not been drained out?

Shri P. S. Naskar: We have been informed by the State Government that the water has receded and that due repairs to the embankments are in the process of completion.

Shri Chintamoni Panigrahi: May I know the acreage of land which was submerged and affected by these flood waters and the compensation or help that was rendered to these refugees who suffered?

Shri P. S. Naskar: The total acreage that was submerged is about 1,100 acres, out of which only 700 acres were in the possession of D.Ps. on which the crops were there. We have asked the State Governments to take necessary precautions for the future so that there is no more breach in the embankment.

Shri Chintamoni Panigrahi: May I know whether the State Government has asked for any financial aid for repairing this embankment and, if so, whether any assistance has been extended to the State Government?

Shri P. S. Naskar: So far no financial help has been asked for by the State Government. As and when a request is received from the State Government, it will be considered.

Labour Bank

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*624. { **Shri P. G. Deb:**
Shrimati Ila Palchoudhuri:
Shri Bibhuti Mishra:
Shri Madhusudan Rao:
Shri S. M. Banerjee:
Dr. Ram Subhag Singh:
Pandit D. N. Tiwari:
Shri Mohan Swarup:
Kumari M. Vedakumari:
Shri Khushwaqt Rai:

Will the Minister of Planning be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a proposal to open a 'labour bank' where people could donate working hours is under the consideration of Government;

(b) if so, the details of the proposal; and

(c) when a final decision is likely to be taken?

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour and Employment and Planning (Shri L. N. Mishra): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c). Recently the Planning Commission sent to the State Governments its tentative suggestions for the fuller utilisation of man-power resources in the rural areas. A copy of the Commission's paper on the subject is laid on the Table of the House. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-1965/60]. The proposals are being considered by the State Governments.

Shri P. G. Deb: May I know if the Government have considered the absorption of retired agricultural officers in order to increase agricultural production and create community assets?

Shri L. N. Mishra: It is a matter of detail. We have not yet examined this aspect of it.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: I want to know whether it is the same scheme as donating Rs. 100 worth of extra work which was decided upon by the Planning Commission. If so, is it a fact