

ported from Thailand during the period from 1964 to 1967;

(b) whether Government are aware of any over-invoicing in such imports; and

(c) if so, the number of cases detected so far?

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Commerce (Shri Shaif Qureshi): (a) Figures of imports of Mesta from Thailand (no jute is produced in Thailand) are given below:

1964-65	0.24 lakh bales
1965-66	9.14 lakh bales
1966-67 (April-Jan.)	10.60 lakh bales

(b) and (c). There were some reports that Thai exporters had exported lower grade Mesta and misdeclared the quality in the shipping documents; It is understood that these reports are being enquired into by the Directorate of Enforcement.

Exports of Textiles to Australia

524. Shri Umanath:
Shri K. Raman:

Will the Minister of Commerce be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade has in its comprehensive market survey on Cotton Textiles in Australia pointed out that Indian Export have gone down considerably during the last 10 years;

(b) if so, the extent of this decline according to the official estimate;

(c) whether the survey has pointed out that India has never been able to supply fabrics of right qualities required by the Australian market and recommended "strict inspection of quality of consignments in relation to specifications detailed in the export invoice;" and

(d) the steps taken by Government thereon?

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Commerce (Shri Shaif Qureshi): (a) Yes, Sir. According to the

Market Survey Report of the Institute India's exports of quality-fabrics to Australia began to decline in 1967 because of the removal of restrictions by Australia on imports from Japan. The decline in exports from India became steep from 1960 onwards when countries like China, Taiwan, South Korea and Hong Kong started entering the Australian market in a big way.

(b) Exports of cotton piecegoods from India to Australia in 1957 were 460 lakh metres. Exports thereafter till 1960 continued to be of the same order. From 1961 onwards, exports registered a decline reaching a figure of 140 lakh metres in 1966.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) A Complaints Committee has already been set up by the Cotton Textiles Export Promotion Council, Bombay to investigate complaints about supply of inferior quality of textiles. The Textiles Committee has also introduced a compulsory inspection scheme with effect from the 1st December, 1966 in respect of weaving defects and dimensional particulars. Buyers wanting inspection in respect of specifications can also stipulate this condition in the contract with exporters in India and ensure that inspection is carried out in that respect.

Conversion of Joint Plant Committee into Statutory Body

525. Shri Yashpal Singh:
Shri S. C. Samanta:

Will the Minister of Steel, Mines and Metals be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to convert the Joint Plant Committee into a Statutory Body; and

(b) if so, the time by which a decision would be arrived at?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Steel Mines and Metals (Shri P. C. Sethi): (a) and (b). The question of the future constitution of the