

(c) To what extent did the freight charges increase the sale price of that salt?

(d) What was and is the rate of freight per ton from Vishakapatnam to the port of Calcutta?

(e) What steps have been taken by Government to export salt from Vishakapatnam to Calcutta?

The Minister of Production (Shri K. C. Reddy): (a) Approximately 3:85 lakh tons.

(b) The Freight on salt consignments from Kathiawar-Kutch to the port of Calcutta was Rs. 34/8/- per ton during 1952. The present rate effective from 1st January, 1953 is Rs. 30/12/- per ton.

(c) The present freight charges raise the price of Kathiawar/Kutch salt in the Calcutta market by about 5 pies per seer above its price in the producing areas.

(d) Freight from Vishakapatnam to the port of Calcutta is not known as there has been no shipment of salt from that place in recent years.

(e) Government have taken no steps to export salt from Vishakapatnam to Calcutta as there has been no demand for such despatches either from the manufacturers or the general trade. There is however no restriction on such exports.

Shri Nanadas: May I know, Sir, what steps Government propose to take to develop salt production in the eastern coast in view of the fact that it is cheap to export to Calcutta?

Shri K. C. Reddy: The question is too general, Sir. Every possible step is being taken for the production of salt in all parts of India, and salt production even in the east coast has gone up. It is open to any private manufacturer to come forward to manufacture more salt in the east coast, and the Government will be glad to help him.

Shri Nanadas: May I know, Sir, if Government propose to enquire into the freight charges from Vishakapatnam to Calcutta?

Shri K. C. Reddy: I do not see why the Government should enquire into this matter?

Shri Punnoose: Is there a complaint that the freight charge is high?

Shri K. C. Reddy: I am not aware of any such complaint, Sir.

*1329. **Shri Nanadas:** (a) Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state the quantity of Jaffna chewing tobacco imported into the Indian Union during the last year?

(b) How does the quality of Jaffna tobacco differ from that produced in India?

(c) Do Government propose to allow imports of Jaffna chewing tobacco in 1953-54 and also in future?

The Minister of Commerce (Shri Karmarkar): (a). 354,149 lbs. in 1952.

(b) The Jaffna Tobacco is said to have a specially attractive taste not found in chewing tobacco produced in India.

(c) Yes.

Shri Nanadas: What steps have the Government taken to produce the Jaffna variety of tobacco in India itself?

Shri Karmarkar: The total production of the Indian variety similar to the Jaffna variety is at present estimated to be somewhere between 4 to 5 million lbs. and it is likely that in the near future the entire demand from Travancore-Cochin may be met.

Some Hon. Members: We could not hear.

Mr. Speaker: It is likely that the entire demand will be met in a few years' time.

Shri Punnoose: He said something about Travancore-Cochin. What is that?

Shri Karmarkar: That is the area largely consuming the Jaffna tobacco. Therefore, I referred to it.

Kumari Annie Mascarene: May I know whether Government has entered into any agreement with any company in Jaffna to import Jaffna tobacco for the next ten years?

Shri Karmarkar: I don't think so, Sir.

POSTS IN A.I.R. AND PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU

*1330. **Prof. D. C. Sharma:** (a) Will the Minister of Information and Broadcasting be pleased to state how many posts in A.I.R. and Press Information Bureau are held by persons who were recruited directly and not through the Union Public Service Commission?