

Postage on Book Packets

- *149. { Shri D.C. Sharma :
 { Shri Dabhi :
 { Shrimati Tarkeshwari Sinha :

Will the Minister of Communications be pleased to refer to the reply given to Starred Question No. 1411 on the 25th August, 1956 and state :

(a) whether Government have since completed consideration of the Report of the Committee set up to increase the postage on book packets: and

(b) if so, what is the decision thereon?

The Minister of Communications (Shri Jagjivan Ram): (a) and (b). Presumably, the reference is to the Report of the Committee which was set up to recommend to Government *inter alia*, the rates of postage to be prescribed for the transmission of "Books" in the inland post as distinguished from all other printed matter which may be allowed transmission at book packet rates. This Report is under the consideration of Government, and a decision is expected to be taken very shortly.

श्री भक्त बर्षन : क्या मैं यह जान सकता हूँ कि भारतवर्ष के प्रकाशकों ने जो यह मांग रखी है कि रेट घटा दिये जायें, उससे विभाग को कितनी हानि होने की आशंका है ?

श्री जगजीवन राम : जब इस तरह की मांग आई, उसी के बाद यह कमेटी बनाई गई थी। कमेटी की सिफारिशें आ गई हैं और उन सिफारिशों में रेट घटाने की भी कुछ बात है। उसका प्रसर क्या होगा, इसी बात की जांच की जा रही है।

International Tea Agreement

*150. **Shri Hem Raj:** Will the Minister of Commerce and Consumer Industries be pleased to refer to the reply given to Starred Question No. 774 on the 6th August, 1956 and state the exportable quota of tea fixed for India under the New International Tea Agreement?

The Minister of Consumer Industries (Shri Kanungo): The International Tea Agreement expired on 31st March, 1955. Its extension is still under negotiation.

2. In pursuance of Section 19 of the Tea Act, 1953, Government have authorised Tea Board to make a provisional allotment of export quota to tea estates to the extent of 50 per cent. of the crop basis.

Shri Hem Raj: If the export quota is increased, may I know whether there will be any extension in the area under tea cultivation and, if so, how will that be spread over the different States?

Shri Kanungo: No; even with the best increase on export quota there won't be any necessity of increasing the tea acreage as such.

Shri Dhusiya: In that case will the price of tea in India be enhanced?

Shri Kanungo: No, Sir.

Shri K. P. Tripathi: May I know whether it is under the consideration of Government to change or abolish this export quota system?

Shri Kanungo: There has been a recommendation to that effect by the Plantation Enquiry Committee and the matter is under consideration.

Shri C. D. Pande: In view of the fact that new tea-growing areas have come up in the world — East Africa and Rhodesia — whereby the place of India as a tea-growing country is going down day by day, is it realised that the linking of percentage with the production of tea is to the disadvantage of India and, therefore, should be revised?

Shri Kanungo: The hon. Member's assumption is not correct, because the quality and quantity of tea that we export is holding the round and we hope that in future also it will hold the ground.

Shri Velayudhan: Apart from the 50 per cent quota reserved for export of tea from India, is there any demand for additional quota to be exported from the Indian tea growers?

Shri Kanungo: The final quotas will be released when the crop assessments are made.

Shri Kaaliwal: The hon. Minister for Commerce said only yesterday that tea prices were rising. May I know whether the rise in tea prices is in any way going to affect the export?

The Minister of Trade (Shri Kar-markar): I think the hon. Minister for Consumer Industries requires notice on that question.