

THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN TRADE (SHRI L. N. MISHRA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The new Trade Arrangement was signed on 16th October 1971 and will run from July, 1971 to September, 1972. Under this plan India is to import from Egypt cotton worth Rs. 35 crores, and distilled glycerine, kaolin and rice worth Rs. 1.5 crores. Against this, India will export goods like engineering goods, jute manufactures, tea, steel items, cotton yarn, chemicals, tobacco, tyres and tubes, dyes and drugs and pharmaceuticals, etc. for an equal amount, namely of Rs. 36.5 crores.

(c) India's trade with Egypt as with any other country, is a continuous process with both sides desirous of a balanced trade. At the end of the previous plan period at 30 June 1971, Egypt had a favourable trade balance of approximately Rs. 4.5 crores. Egypt does not owe any amount for goods supplied against old contracts except for contracts on deferred payment terms for whose instalments falling due for payment during the year 1971-72 provision has been made in the current trade plan.

Export of Cigarettes

223. SHRI HARI KISHORE SINGH : Will the Minister of FOREIGN TRADE be pleased to state :

(a) the amount of cigarettes exported by India during the year 1971-72 and 1st April, 1971 to 1st October, 1971;

(b) the foreign exchange earned as a result of this export; and

(c) the steps taken or proposed to be taken to boost the export of cigarettes ?

THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN TRADE (SHRI L. N. MISHRA) : (a) and (b). 186 thousand Kgs. of cigarettes valued at Rs. 29.00 lakhs and 1323 thousand Kgs. valued at Rs. 185 lakhs were exported during 1970-71 and April '71 to September '71 respectively.

(c) The Tobacco Export Promotion Council, Madras sponsored by the Government of India is carrying out, on a continuous basis, a number of measures like maintaining liaison with exporters in India and importers abroad, dissemination of market information, conducting market surveys and publicity abroad through exhibitions, fairs and sending out trade delegations and distribution of publicity folders etc. In order to provide the necessary imported inputs, a scheme of replenishment licence is being operated under which import licences upto 10% of F. O. B. value are permitted.

Report of panel appointed to Examine Desirability of continuance of Export Promotion Councils

324. SHRI HARI KISHORE SINGH : Will the Minister of FOREIGN TRADE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the panel appointed to examine the desirability of continuance of the Export Promotion Councils has since submitted its report to Government;

(b) if so, the main recommendations of the panel;

(c) the decision taken by Government on the report; and

(d) whether a copy of the report will be laid on the Table ?

THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN TRADE (SHRI L. N. MISHRA) : (a) to (d). Government have not appointed any panel to examine the desirability of continuance of Export Promotion Councils. However, a Committee was set up by Government early this year to review the working of these Councils. The Committee is of the view that these Councils have fulfilled the need for creating an export consciousness in the country and trade and in projecting India's image as a country that can supply quality goods at competitive prices. The Committee has made certain suggestions for improving the working of these Councils which are receiving Government's attention.