

(b) if so whether the matter has been examined in the light of criticism made and whether in the opinion of Government the present strength is justified;

(c) the comparative strength of the staff in various wings of the Embassy three years ago as compared to the present strength; and

(d) what has necessitated the increase in staff since then ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH) : (a) Yes, Sir. There was a recent report in the 'Hindustan Times', on this.

(b) The Foreign Service Inspectors have inspected the Mission recently and they will no doubt take into consideration all aspects including some mentioned in the press report, while submitting their report.

(c) and (d) The requisite information is furnished in the statement Laid on the Table of the House. [*Placed in Library. See No. LT- /69*] The present strength of the Mission is less than what it was three years ago.

Effect of Rupee Trade on India's Tea Exports

1579 SHRI R. K. BIRLA : Will the Minister of FOREIGN TRADE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news item published in a local English daily of the 30th September, 1969 in which references have been made to certain adverse aspects of the rupee trade on India's tea exports;

(b) if so, whether Government have made any survey in the matter in the light of the report;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps being taken by Government to prevent the diversion of India tea by the rupee-trade countries ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN TRADE (SHRI CHOWDHARY RAM SEWAK) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) . This has been a matter under continuous study. During the trade negotiations care is taken to see that export of tea to rupee trade countries is in accordance with the requirements of their domestic consumption. Sporadic cases of diversion at the enterprise level have come to the notice of Government from time to time. However, the quantum has been negligible.

Export of Bananas

1580. SHRI R. K. BIRLA : Will the Minister of FOREIGN TRADE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the world trade in bananas during the year 1968 rose by 3 percent and earned roughly \$ 500 million from the exporting countries;

(b) if so, India's share in trade in bananas in 1968; and

(c) the names of countries where India's bananas are exported ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN TRADE (SHRI CHAUDHARY RAM SEWAK) : (a) The information is not available.

(b) and (c) . Country-wise export of bananas during 1968 was as under :-

| Countries | Quantity (Tonnes) | Value ('000' of Rs.) |
|--------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| Bahrein Is. | 2072 | 1014 |
| Japan | 971 | 55 |
| Kuwait | 4811 | 2393 |
| Or. Tr. Oman | 850 | 436 |
| Others | 121 | 109 |
| Total | 8825 | 4007 |

Permission to Exporters to Export non-traditional Goods to Afghanistan

1581. SHRI R. K. BIRLA : Will the Minister of FOREIGN TRADE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to permit exporters who