

lives with the poisonous effluents discharged by the Orient Paper Mill into the river?

SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI: The unit has been directed by the Central Pollution Control Board and the Madhya Pradesh Polluting Control Board to improve the quality of the treated effluents by 31st May, 1991.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUBHASHINI ALI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, honourable Environment Minister is doing a commendable job in preventing pollution. The atmosphere of this Parliament is being polluted. I would like to know from the Honourable Minister through you the steps she is going to take in order to make the atmosphere of this House pollution free... (Interruptions) May I know what she is doing to get rid of the elements responsible for spreading this pollution? People who should not have been here, are sitting in this House. What is the Honourable Minister doing to remove Shri Swamy from this

House? (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: This is not a question.

[English]

Export of Spices

*123. **SHRIBALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL:** Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been a sharp decline in the export of spices during the first four months of the current financial year;

(b) if so, the amount of loss in foreign exchange earnings due to decline in export of spices; and

(c) the measures being taken by the Government to augment the export of spices?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI SUBRAMANIAM SWAMY): (a) to (c). A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

(a) and (b). The export of spices during the first four months of the current financial year as compared to the corresponding period of the previous year has been as follows:—

April-July, 1989		April-July, 1990		Percentage Increase/decrease	
Qty. MTs	Value Rs. lakhs	Qty MTs	Value Rs. lakhs	Qty. MTs	Value Rs. lakhs
28503	8680.57	32940	8286.19	+15.5	-4.6

It would be seen that the export of spices during the first 4 months of financial year, 1990-91 has increased in terms of quantity compared to the corresponding period last year. However, the export earnings have declined marginally.

(c) The following measures are being taken to augment the export of spices:

1. Participation in Fairs

2. Export incentives such as Air Freight Subsidy for small cardamom, CCs, REP, etc.

3. Quality improvement programme

4. Product and market development

5. Buyer-Seller meets.

[*Translation*]

SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the statement laid on the table of the House does not provide complete information sought by me. It has been stated that the export earnings have declined marginally. As per my information, for the last three years. The export of spices has been marginal and the prices abroad are also declining. Both the farmers and the country are suffering due to reduced exports. The Government has taken several steps to promote exports and one of them is

[*English*]

export incentives such as air Freight Subsidy.

[*Translation*]

I would like to know whether the Government is reconsidering about giving incentives to encourage the export of spices. Farmers are suffering a lot because of decline in exports and lower prices of these items. So what does the Government propose to do in this regard?

[*English*]

SHRI SUBRAMANIAM SWAMY: Sir, the hon. Member is not quite correct in saying that the volume of exports has actually declined. In fact, if you take the period April-July, 1989 and the corresponding period of April-July, 1990, the export of spices actually increased by 15 1/2 per cent. What has happened is that the international price of spices has come down and so, the value of exports has gone down. But the quantity has not gone down. Now, he has asked as to what steps are being taken to augment our export in the field of spices. We have indeed initiated a number of steps. In particular, for the first time, we have decided to participate in fairs and make a presentation of our spices and we are giving export incentives which are mentioned in the written statement. We have launched a quality improvement programme also. These are the prin-

cipal steps which we have taken for the promotion of export of spices.

[*Translation*]

SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL: Sir, it is correct that the quantity of Export is increasing, but the Government must also ensure that the prices are also remunerative so that the farmers may earn more. Attractive incentives encourage people to export their produce. Secondly, Gulf crisis is another reason for its reduced demand causing fall in prices. So I would like to know the additional steps proposed to be taken by the Government to encourage exports to countries which are yet untapped? As solution to the Gulf crisis is not in sight, what additional incentives are proposed to be given to earn maximum foreign exchange?

[*English*]

SHRI SUBRAMANIAM SWAMY: My Ministry only deals with the fixing of the remunerative prices for cardamom and there the problem is that our domestic prices are already very high compared to the international prices. Consequently, the export of cardamom is naturally very difficult under the circumstances. On the contrary, there has been smuggling into the country of cardamom.

About the prices of other spices, the Ministry of Agriculture deals with it and I think, the proper thing for the Member would be to address a question to that Ministry.

SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARDHAN: Sir, dry chilli is also a spice item. Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh farmers are greatly affected by the ethnic problem in Sri Lanka. Dry chilli which was selling at Rs. 2500 to Rs. 3000 a quintal in 1986-87 is now being sold at Rs. 700 to Rs. 800 per quintal. It is all due to the ethnic problem in Sri Lanka. There are no buyers. Will the Government consider and make efforts to sell these to other countries like Korea so that the farmers who are suffering a lot for the last two years will be benefited.

SHRI SUBRAMANIAM SWAMY: The Member has made a very good suggestion. I will certainly initiate action in this matter.

DR. BIPLAB DAS GUPTA: I find that the share of India in the world trade is steadily declining. It was two per cent at the time of independence; it has now declined to slightly more than half per cent. It is a serious matter because countries like Singapore export twice as much as India does and Korea and Taiwan four times as much as India does. In view of this, may I ask the hon. Minister what measures he is proposing to take to raise the price of primary products. Now that there has been collapse of GATT negotiations, I would very much like to know what measures he is taking in consultation with other backward, under-developed and developing countries to see that the prices of primary products do not fall and there is collective action by all the primary producers in negotiations with the developed countries.

SHRI SUBRAMANIAM SWAMY: The hon. Member's question deals with a very wide area, but I will still attempt an answer. My Ministry has now activated in a big way our Agricultural Export Division. The next meeting of the Consultative Committee attached to our Ministry is going to consider the subject of agricultural export specially in depth. The GATT negotiations have not collapsed as the hon. Member has said. We have taken a recess and I am quite confident that we will be able to work out some agreement there. And if that agreement comes through, the prices of agricultural products in Europe and developed countries would go up and that would give us an opportunity to export more.

SHRI P.C. THOMAS: Sir, pepper and cardamom are two items which are earning a lot of foreign exchange. I would like to bring to the notice of the hon. Minister the serious plight of pepper cultivators. The pepper was being sold at approximately Rs. 60 per kg. about two years back, now the price has fallen to around Rs. 30 per kg. or even below that. There is another great difficulty also. There is one disease which has affected the pepper cultivation in a very grand scale now and no research has been properly conducted to find out the disease. The pepper

cultivation, especially in Kerala, is being destroyed to a great extent because of this disease. What steps will this Ministry be able to take to save the pepper plantations from this disease and also to raise the price for farmers?

SHRI SUBRAMANIAM SWAMY: Sir it is a fact that due to high production last year, the pepper price in the Cochin market has declined. But as I stated earlier, the floor price of pepper cannot be fixed by my Ministry.

12.01 hrs.

SHORT NOTICE QUESTION

Uruguay Round of GATT Negotiations

S.N.Q. 1. **SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL:** Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news item appearing in the Patriot dated 10 December, 1990 under the caption "GATT failure will hit India";

(b) if so, whether the actual short-fall in the export earnings for the current year as also for the year 1991-92 have been assessed;

(c) if so, details thereof; and

(d) steps taken or proposed to be taken to make up the shortfall?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI SUBRAMANIAM SWAMY): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) and (c). The Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations was to conclude with a Ministerial meeting at Brussels from 3-7 December, 1990. This meeting could not make definitive progress of any of the issues being negotiated because of disagreement on agriculture between developed countries. The Uruguay Round has been extended for a short period. The pic-