

[*Translation*]

SHRI VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether there would be any scope for improvement in the Doordarshan, with the mere formation of the Board? Now, crores of people watch Doordarshan. As far as the equipment available and the people working in Doordarshan are concerned, there is neither a complete professional outlook there, nor are there all the necessary equipments. Therefore, there can be no scope for improvement, with the mere formation of Board. Doordarshan programmes should reflect the hopes and expectations of the people. We have not seen any improvement during the last one hundred days. I would like to know from the Hon. Minister what steps are being taken to bring equipment and infuse professionalism in order to bring about specific reforms in the working of Doordarshan and whether he believes that the formation of Board would bring about the needed improvement? In the matter of sports, you must have seen that programmes are shown but they are interrupted in the nick of time. What steps are being taken by Doordarshan in this regard?

SHRI P. UPENDRA : Mr. Speaker, it is not that the mere formation of the Board would bring about the improvements but the Board would endeavour to bring about the improvement. As the hon. Member has said, we are initiating several schemes in the 8th Five Year Plan for soft ware, hard ware and further improvements

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV: Independent Finance ?

SHRI P. UPENDRA : The Finance Minister is present in the House and it would be included in the 8th Five Year Plan.

[*English*]

DR. THAMBI DURAI: Just now, the Minister said that he would announced the names of the persons who were going to be in the Advisory Board for looking after the

Doordarshan. I would like to know whether the Minister would include some of the Members of Parliament as representatives in the Board.

SHRI P. UPENDRA: The Members had an opportunity when the Bill was introduced and we had a discussion in the Consultative Committee also. They will have an opportunity when the Bill is taken up for consideration and passing in the House. I do not think, we should include them in the Advisory Board.

SHRI SAMARENDRA KUNDU: I would like to know from the Minister whether he is going to encourage small feature films for telecast in Doordarshan.

During the last regime, one film, 'Voices of Baliapal' was not allowed to be serialised on T.V. Now, this film got an international award and has received a prize of more than Rs. 2 lakh. I would very specifically like to know from the Hon. Minister whether he will show this film on T.V. or not.

SHRI P. UPENDRA : Sir, is the supplementary within the scope of the main question?

MR. SPEAKER: It does not come within the scope of the main question but if you want, you can give answer.

SHRI P. UPENDRA: Sir, generally we are encouraging such films and that film also will be screened.

Foreign Purchasers of Indian Tea

* 354. **SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL:** Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether major foreign purchasers of tea quote directly in the Indian Tea auction taking advantage of competitive Indian prices and cheap India labour;

(b) whether the tea so purchased against rupee payments is re-exported to hard cur-

rency markets resulting in further pressure on rupee-value ;

(c) whether Government propose to make any change in the existing system; and

(d) if so, details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND TOURISM (SHRI ARUN KUMAR NEHRU):

(a) to (d). A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

- (a) Indian tea is not cheaper when compared to teas of other origin. However, it is a fact that major foreign buyers, both Rupee payment and General Currency Area, prefer to buy tea from primary auctions in India.
- (b) No such case has come to the Government's notice.
- (c) There is no such proposal at present.
- (d) Does not arise.

[*Translation*]

SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the high-quality orthodox, C.T.C. and Darjeeling tea's produced in India are exported abroad. The inferior quality teas are left to be distributed in the Indian markets. The hon. Minister's reply does not state whether the tea so purchased by the U.K. and U.S.S.R. is re-exported to hard currency markets. The Tea Board and the Indian Consulates in U.K. and U.S.S.R. will co-operate with the Government in this matter. U.S.S.R. participated in the tea auction held in London in 1989. Sir, 70% of the tea exported by India is purchased by

U.S.S.R. and Iran. The tea purchased by the U.S.S.R. is sold by it in the auction.

MR. SPEAKER: Please ask your question.

SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL: I am coming to my question. The National Dairy Development Board is not supplying milk in the villages. People have switched over to drinking tea instead of milk but even tea is not available... (*Interruptions*).

MR. SPEAKER: This is not the question. Please ask your question. ... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL: The Soviet Union Purchases tea in June from India. In 1989, tea was sold to them at the rate of Rs. 35% per kg. which resulted in a loss of crores of rupees to the national exchequer. May I know if the Government will try to rationalise the export policy and take steps to curb the re-export of tea bought from the Indian market ?

SHRI ARUN KUMAR NEHRU: First of all, the U.S.S.R. purchases the tea through the auction. India exports 100 million to 120 million kilos of tea to the U.S.S.R. According to information given by the Tea Board, the U.S.S.R. does not export the tea that it purchases from us. Tea consumption in the U.S.S.R. is 500 million kilos while the production of tea is 120 million kilos. According to the hon. Member, 70% of the tea purchased by the U.S.S.R. is re-exported by it in the international market. If the hon. Member can furnish any evidence in this regard, the Government can conduct an inquiry into the matter. As far as Iran is concerned, it comes under the general currency area and in the auction it buys the tea in hard currency. How can we stop them from re-exporting the tea elsewhere ? India's total tea exports are valued at Rs. 600 crores while tea exports of all tea-producing countries taken together amount to Rs. 28,000 crores. So the export policy cannot be changed for just one product. How can we stop any country from buying anything from India?

SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, let me explain the reason for my asking this question. Sir, the price of tea has doubled over the past two years but there has been no increase in either the cost of production or the wages of labour. This is the result of a faulty policy. With the change in Government there should be change in policy also. Today, the common man is getting tea of inferior quality. Will the Government ensure that the common man in India gets superior quality tea? About a year-and-a-half back, the price of tea was Rs. 23/- per kg. and now it has increased to Rs 45/- per kg. What steps are being taken by the Government to bring down the price of tea?

SHRI ARUN KUMAR NEHRU : Due to scanty rainfall, last year in South and North East India, production of tea has fallen short by 20-25 million tonnes. When we saw that the price of tea was rising, we reduced the quota for export and this led to fall in auction rates... (*Interruptions*).. I can give you the auction price of the Tea Board but not the retail price. The Government does not regulate tea prices and the tea auctions are held according to the supply and demand position. Due to a fall in production, exports were reduced with a view to stabilizing prices. The price-rise was also due to increase in levies, sales tax and duties by the West Bengal and Assam Governments. The Central is discussing this matter with these Governments.

SHRI RAGHAVJI: Sir, may I know from the hon. Minister the names of the tea-exporting countries in the world and what is India's share in the international market?

SHRI ARUN KUMAR NEHRU: There are many multi-national companies in Africa, Indonesia and South America. Presently, India, Sri Lanka and Kenya are major exporters. Production of tea is increasing all over the world. Every year production is increasing by 110 million kilos and consumption is increasing by 55 million kilos. There are new entrants in the international market and their cost of production is low. The quality of Kenyan tea is inferior and Indian tea is in great demand. When auctions are held in the

international market, Indian tea gets the maximum realisation.

SHRI NANI BHATTACHARYA : Sir, recent events in Eastern Europe indicate that sale of tea can be increased if sale outlets are opened over there. What is the Government's thinking in this matter? May I know the results of the promotional campaign launched by the Tea Board for the purpose of domestic consumption?

SHRI ARUN KUMAR NEHRU: Sir, we are exporting tea to Eastern Europe and to the rupee payment areas. The system will be changed in future, be it in the general currency area or the rupee payment area. Secondly, the Tea Board has many schemes for increasing tea production. If you want, I can read out the list. It is a long and comprehensive list. ... (*Interruptions*)...

[*English*]

Sir, these are also very important. I do not mind ; I will just give the headings. It will not take much time. They are; Tea Plantations Finance Scheme, Tea Machinery and Equipment Hire-Purchase Scheme, Tea Replantation Subsidy (for old plantations), Tea Area Consolidation Scheme, New Tea Units Financing Schemes and Darjeeling Interest Subsidy Scheme. (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Now Question 355 - Mr. Chiranji Lal Sharma is not here. Question 356-Shri Pyarelal Khandelwal, Dr. A.K. Patel-both are not here.

[*Translation*]

They give notices of questions and then don't remain present here. This is not proper.

[*English*]

Newsprint Allocation Policy

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*357. **SHRI LOKANATH CH-
OUDHARY:**

SHRIMATI J. JAMUNA:

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state: