

particularly to the Soviet Union and other countries during the past few years;

(b) if so, the reasons thereof; and

(c) the details regarding the current Year's targets regarding the export of foot-wear to the Soviet Union?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND STEEL AND MINES (SHRI KHUR-SHEED ALAM KHAN): (a) Export of footwear to USSR has registered a downward trend during the last few years. Total export of footwear to other regions are generally on the increase, except in the case of North America.

(b) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

(c) There is no separate export target for the current year for export of footwear to the Soviet Union.

Statement

The decline in export to USSR is mainly attributable to the fact that the quality of foot-wear demanded is not commensurate with the prices offered. Besides, USSR is shifting her interest from purchase of shoes to shoe uppers for utilising indigenous production capacity.

Exports to North America are mainly comprised of Sandals, Chappals and casual wears. Exports to this market had been adversely affected due to recessionary trend and also on account of prolonged cooler summer.

SHRI CHINTAMANI JENA: Since exports to the USSR have declined, may I know from the hon. Minister what action Government propose to take or has taken, so that the exports of footwear will increase?

SHRI KHURSHEED ALAM KHAN: Exports to USSR only have declined because they have been asking for more uppers than complete shoes because they wanted shoes to be prepared mechanically from one particular unit,

and that was not possible because in our country the shoes are prepared by various small units and are supplied to the customers. Besides this, they had raised the standard of the quality of shoes but at the same time they had not raised the price. That was the difficulty. Therefore, they have not been taking more complete shoes, but they have been placing orders for uppers.

श्री बालकृष्ण राव सारण : मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से यह कहना चाहता हूँ कि जो जूतों का विदेशों में निर्यात होता है, जो छोटे कर्मचारी हैं, हाथ से काम करने वाले हैं या हाथ की मशीन से काम करने वाले हैं, उनकी विशेष प्रशिक्षण देकर उनके जूतों को बाहर भेजा जाए और उनके विशेष योगदान देने के अवसर क्यों प्रदान नहीं किए जाते हैं।

श्री सुशील धारम साहू : मैंने भी वही कहा है कि रूस का जो आर्डर कम हुआ है, वह इस लिए कम हुआ है कि मशीन से बने हुए जूते ज्यादा चाहते थे, लेकिन हम चाहते थे कि जो छोटे कारीगर हैं, उनके हाथ से बने हुए जूते ज्यादा एक्सपोर्ट किये जायें।

Crisis in Tea Industry in Darjeeling

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(a) whether the tea industry in Darjeeling in West Bengal is facing a crisis;

(b) if so, whether Government have since identified the causes thereof; and

(c) what steps Government propose to take to remove the causes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND STEEL AND MINES (SHRI KHUR-SHEED ALAM KHAN): (a) and (b). The Tea Industry in Darjeeling has some special problems. The Tea Board had commissioned a comprehensive Techno-Economic survey of Darjeeling Tea Industry. The special problems identified in the survey are low yield,

high cost of production, low profitability, ineffective management in some tea estates, natural calamities, restricted market, etc.

(c) A scheme for revitalisation of Darjeeling Tea Industry proposed by the Tea Board is under the consideration of the Central Government. Meanwhile, the rate of subsidy for Darjeeling gardens under the Tea Board's replantation subsidy scheme has been enhanced from Rs. 5,000/- per hectare to Rs. 15,000/ per hectare.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: The reply refers to a comprehensive plan being formulated by the Tea Board. May I know what are the details of the comprehensive plan and the financial implications involved therein?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND STEEL AND MINES (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): It is not possible just to indicate the details of it. One of the components is that they suggested that we should give more replantation subsidy to Darjeeling tea so that it becomes competitive because one of the basic problems is that their yield per hectare is low. Naturally, they cannot compete with others. But, on the other hand, we have a very good market for Darjeeling tea. The details we are considering and when it is formulated, we will give the details of the scheme. Particularly, there are sensitive items like taxation and either way, I cannot react to that proposition.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: I want to know whether the government is aware of the fact that certain gardens are already falling sick in Darjeeling and if the government is aware of that, does the government propose to take over those sick units in the Darjeeling area.

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: Whenever the proposals come we will consider them and we take the decision on the merits of each individual case.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: I would like to know to what extent exports of our tea to the European Economic Community are likely to be affected by the fact that for the first time now they have given some quota to the Chinese also—for importing Chinese tea into the EEC market. I want to know whether the proportionate share between India and China will be affected in such a way that our exports are likely to be reduced.

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: The danger is there—but not immediate. Naturally, if the Chinese tea comes in the market, we will have more competition and stiff competition. But, so far as the present trend is concerned, it is little encouraging in the sense that we are having nearly 40 per cent growth compared to last year. For instance, in absolute numbers, this year upto October, tea exports have been of the order of 124 million kg which is 30 per cent more than that of the corresponding period last year. But the danger is there; if not in the immediate but in the reasonable future it is there, because the competition is there.

SHRI ANANDA PATHAK: We are told that the yield per hectare in the Darjeeling Hills is low. For that, is it not a fact that apart from the topographical position and the climatic conditions, the tea bushes there are very old and some of them are even more than 100 years old?

Then, secondly, we came to know that the government is coming forward with substantial assistance for the rejuvenation of the tea gardens. I want to know the concrete proposals about it.

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: I can just say that I agree with the hon. Member that it is one of the reasons why the yield is very low because of the old age. That is why we have enhanced the replantation subsidy from Rs. 5000 to Rs. 15,000 per hectare. This is one of the schemes recommended by the Tea Board and we have already implemented it.