

SHRI K. A. RAJAN: I seek your protection.

MR. SPEAKER: He is asking about certain unauthorised increases in production.

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH: That does not come under the Ministry of Civil Supplies. He will have to give notice to the Minister of Industries.

SHRI H. K. L. BHAGAT: I am not sure whether I should put this question to Shri Rao at this stage or not. The prices of soaps including the soaps manufactured by this Company and other important companies are rising like anything.

Is there any check in his Ministry or in any other Ministry? Is there any statutory control? If not, why not? Is the Government considering to take some statutory steps to ensure proper weight and proper price?

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH: Prices are controlled under the Essential Commodities Act. So far there is no price control on these commodities.

SHRI H. K. L. BHAGAT: Will you please look into it?

RAO BIRENDRA SINGH: It is a suggestion. We shall look into it.

Improvement of design and quality of leather products

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*455. **SHRI HARIHAR SOREN:**

SHRI ARIF MOHAMMAD KHAN:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Trade Development Authority (TDA) has undertaken a programme to help Indian firms to improve design and quality of their leather products; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by Trade Development Authority so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KHURSHED ALAM KHAN): (a) and (b). A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

The Trade Development Authority has recently undertaken a programme to assist the Indian firms manufacturing leather travel goods, small leather goods and ladies fashion bags for improving the designs and quality of these products. For this purpose, TDA has obtained the services of a product adviser with a view to:

- (i) assess the existing methods of production in the Indian Industry and discussing product development measures with the officials in TDA and other promotional organisations connected with the exports of finished leather and leather products;
- (ii) visit selected manufacturing units to study the designs, techniques and quality of and products;
- (iii) work with the technical personnel in the units and advise on the product development requirements;
- (iv) advise on plant lay-out, suitable modifications in the production processes, techniques to improve quality and suggest steps for cost reduction;
- (v) advise on the requirement and procurement sources of additional equipment for processing and finishing;
- (vi) advise on quality control and testing methods; and
- (vii) advise on the use of right quality of raw material.

2. The Adviser arrived in January 1981 and is expected to be in India till March end 1981, whereafter he will submit his report.

SHRI HARIHAR SOREN: In the statement laid on the Table it has been stated that the T.D.A. has obtained the services of a product adviser with a view to assess the existing methods of production. In this regard I would like to know the names of selected manufacturing units in the country. How many of them are situated in the State of Orissa?

SHRI KHURSHEED ALAM KHAN: This scheme has been undertaken because India is having the largest cattle wealth in the country but the leather that is produced is not very good. Therefore, the services of a Dutch expert have been acquired so that he may visit all the important units engaged in the manufacture of leather and then submit the report in regard to the technique of the persons working, the lay out, the machinery required, the chemicals required, so that the quality may be improved. As soon as this Report is received, we shall be able to indicate how many units have been visited by him, what are those units and what specific suggestions have been made by him.

SHRI HARIHAR SOREN: Is the Product Adviser likely to visit the firms situated in the State of Orissa?

SHRI KRUSHEED ALAM KHAN: This expert will be advised by the two Leather Export Promotion Councils. In consultation with the appropriate authorities, such industrial or production units which really deserve his attention will be selected.

SHRI A. C. DASS: As you are aware lot of skins are available in the State of Orissa throughout the year. There is no training centre to impart training to our Scheduled Caste boys who are engaged in this in our State.

In this context I would like to know has the Trade Development

Authority suggested to start training centre to impart training for production of leather goods.

SHRI KHURSHEED ALAM KHAN: This is a suggestion for consideration.

Purchase procedures for processed Mica

*456. **SHRI R. L. P. VERMA:** Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether purchase procedures for processed mica have been laid down by Government for guidance of the Mica Trading Corporation;

(b) whether it is also a fact that there being thousands of qualities of mica, the quality of processed mica is determined by judgement of the eye; and

(c) what are the reasons for giving free hand to the officers of the MITCO, to buy processed mica at any price in their individual discretion resulting in estimated loss of public funds to the tune of Rs. 30 to Rs. 50 lakhs?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND STEEL AND MINES (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c). A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) Mica Trading Corporation adopts the procedure of purchasing processed mica depending upon the market conditions prevent from time to time within the framework of policy as approved by the Central Government.

(b) The quality of mica is judged the world over by eye estimation. Indian Standards Institution have been approached for devising alternative means for quality determination of various grades of mica.

(c) MITCO has fixed purchase prices of mica. Purchases of mixed