

**STANDARDS OF WEIGHTS AND MEASURES  
RULES**

Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri: I beg to lay on the Table, under sub-section (3) of Section 17 of the Standards of Weights and Measures Act, 1956, a copy of the Standards of Weights and Measures Rules, 1958, published in Notification No. S.O. 2408 dated the 22nd November, 1958. [Placed in Library, See No. LT-1100/58].

12-03 hrs.

**PRESIDENT'S ASSENT TO BILL**

Secretary: Sir, I lay on the Table the Tea (Alteration in Duties of Customs and Excise) Bill, 1958 passed by the Houses of Parliament during the current Session and assented to by the President since a report was last made to the House on the 17th November, 1958.

12.03½ hrs.

**PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE****TENTH REPORT**

Shri Ranga (Tenali): I beg to present the Tenth Report of the Public Accounts Committee on the Excesses over Voted Grants and Charged Appropriations disclosed in the Appropriation Accounts (Civil), 1955-56.

12-03½ hrs.

**STATEMENT RE: SUPPLEMENTARY  
DEMANDS FOR GRANTS  
FOR 1958-59**

The Deputy Minister of Planning (Shri S. N. Mishra): On behalf of Shri B. R. Bhagat, I beg to present a statement showing Supplementary Demands for Grants in respect of the Budget (General) for 1958-59.

12-03½ hrs.

**CALLING ATTENTION TO A  
MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC  
IMPORTANCE****FALL IN JUTE PRICES**

Shri Rajendra Singh (Chapra): Under Rule 197 I beg to call the attention of the Minister of Commerce and Industry to the following matter of urgent public importance and I request that he may make a statement thereon:—

'the plight of jute growers in the country due to the sharp fall in jute prices.'

The Minister of Commerce and Industry (Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri): Some Hon'ble Members have shown concern about the recent fall in jute prices, and I am, therefore, taking this opportunity to place the facts of the situation before the House and to state the steps which have been taken or are proposed to be taken to arrest the downward trend.

The production of jute and mesta in the country has during recent years shown an appreciable increase. In 1953-54 the production amounted to 37.47 lakh bales and the area under jute and mesta was about 18.84 lakh acres. The production in 1958-59 of both jute and mesta is estimated at 62 to 65 lakh bales and the area under cultivation is only 18.94 lakh acres. On almost the same acreage productions has shown a steep increase. It is realised that the increased production is largely due to the special efforts made by the cultivator coupled with the assistance rendered by the Government under the Grow More Jute programme towards improved methods of cultivation, utilisation of better seeds etc.

The average price for Assam middle in 1953-54 was Rs. 29.5 per maund. The price which prevailed in the recent months for this same quality ranged from Rs. 24 to Rs. 27 per maund. Though there has been some

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Decline in prices in the recent months, the return to the cultivator taken as a whole cannot be deemed to be unduly low having regard to the increased production from the same acreage. Nevertheless in the interest of continuing increase in production and maintaining steadiness in price, the following measures have been taken recently.

The East India Jute and Hessian Exchange has fixed margins which would be payable if prices went below certain level.

The Indian Jute Mills Association has reaffirmed its intention to stick to the minimum prices for Hessian and Sacking fixed in February 1958.

The Association has also asked the member-mills to increase their purchase of raw jute upto three months' consumption. The mills are now being persuaded to purchase and hold stocks upto four months' consumption. Mill purchases of jute during the period July to October 1958 amounted to 21.94 lakh bales against 18.14 lakh bales during the same period in 1957 showing an increase of 3.8 lakh bales.

Import of raw jute has also been considerably curtailed during this year. For a short period from the end of May upto the middle of July, licensing was practically suspended. During the period 15th July to 15th November 1958, licences have been issued for the import of only 4.8 lakh maunds against 15 lakh maunds licensed during the same period in 1957. It has also been decided that import of raw jute should be restricted to qualities not produced in India but needed essentially to meet the requirements of the foreign market.

With a view to firming up further the internal prices, it is proposed to canalise the export of a limited quantity of raw jute through the State Trading Corporation.

Special measures are being taken to provide adequate wagons for the movement of jute from the producing areas to Calcutta.

From the long term point of view consideration is also being given to the question of increasing the holding power of the cultivator by measures such as the acceleration of the programme for the establishment of co-operative marketing societies, warehouses and godowns.

The position is being closely watched by Government and further measures will be taken if found necessary.

Shri A. C. Guha (Barasat): I gave notice of a motion on this subject. The statement made today is quite unsatisfactory and inadequate to meet the situation. I expect you would allow a discussion on the subject, which affects the entire rural economy of atleast three eastern States in India.

Mr. Speaker: I will consider it.

Shri A. C. Guha: There may be a discussion on the subject. A copy of the hon. Minister's statement may be circulated to all the Members.

Mr. Speaker: So far as the copy of the statement is concerned, it will be circulated to all Members. Regarding the discussion, in view of the Statement, I will consider if further discussion is necessary.

12-08 hrs.

**SECURITIES CONTRACTS (REGULATION) AMENDMENT BILL\***

The Deputy Minister of Planning (Shri S. N. Mishra): On behalf of Shri Morarji Desai, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to amend the Securities Contracts (Regulation) Act, 1956.

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