

crude oil which are badly needed by India ; and

(d) if so, what efforts are being made to utilise this opportunity of trade expansion to the fullest possible extent ?

THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN TRADE (SHRI L. N. MISHRA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(c) India is already importing substantial quantities of essential raw materials from countries in the region such as cotton from UAR and Sudan, and Rock phosphate from Jordan. The possibilities of importing other commodities as crude oil and sulphur is being actively explored.

(b) and (d). There is a good demand for both our traditional products such as tea, jute manufactures, cotton textiles, spices including cardamom and non-traditional products such as engineering goods, chemicals and plastics. The following steps are being taken to increase the volume of trade with these countries and, in particular, to promote the exports of non-traditional items :

- (i) *Trade Agreements* :—have been concluded with UAR, Sudan, Jordan, Iraq and Syria and with the first four special arrangements are concluded from year to year which provide for an element of growth in our exports.
- (ii) *Trade Fairs and Exhibitions* :—We participate in a number of fairs each year where special emphasis is laid in exhibiting exports. Recently two wholly Indian exhibitions have been held in Khartoum and Jeddah.
- (iii) *Participation in large value tenders and turnkey projects* :—Exporters are encouraged and assisted to compete successfully in winning the tenders ; large value contracts for textile machinery, setting up of cement plants in two countries in the region, exporting transmission lines and supplying railway equipment have been secured. Further, taking advantage of the development plans of these countries by obtaining consul-

tancy contracts is being encouraged.

- (iv) Other measures include exchange of official and unofficial delegations, conducting market surveys and area surveys, fixing appropriate targets and taking steps to assist in their fulfilment, assisting exporters with their special problems, etc. The above list is only illustrative and not exhaustive.
- (v) Exports from India to Middle East countries, which were at a level of Rs. 80 crores in 1967-68 are expected to exceed Rs. 150 crores during the current year. A substantial part of the increase is due to non-traditional items.

Report of USAID to set up Tobacco Corporation

*673. **SHRI YAMUNA PRASAD MANDAL** . Will the Minister of FOREIGN TRADE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have since received the report of the U. S. Agency for International Development which has recommended to set up a Tobacco Corporation in the Public Sector to give a boost to India's exports of Tobacco ; and

(b) if so, the main features thereof and the decision taken by Government thereon ?

THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN TRADE (SHRI L. N. MISHRA) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Restoration of Bombay-Delhi Air Mail Service

*675. **DR. KARNI SINGH** : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether regular mail service between Bombay and Delhi takes as much as 48 hours to reach destination and mail posted in the Mail Van on a Saturday took as long as five days to reach Delhi ; and

(b) if so, the steps Government propose to take to restore the overnight delivery of mail by air as used to be the case ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA) :

(a) Previously, on account of the use of a smaller type of aircraft on the night air mail service, the entire bulk of mails was not being air-lifted and the left over mails were being carried through morning air service resulting in delivery of mails at Bombay on the third day. Normal air services have been restarted with effect from 15-5-71 and there is no detention of mails on the night airmail service now and articles are generally being delivered on the second day of their posting, both at Bombay and Delhi.

As for mails posted in the RMS Mail Van on a Saturday at Bombay, they reach Delhi on Sunday evening and get delivered on Monday morning.

(b) Does not arise.

Telegrams in Devanagari Script

*678. SHRI T. S. LAKSHMANAN : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether telegrams in all the languages listed in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution can now be sent in Devanagari Script ;

(b) the arrangements made in the case of those regions where Devanagari Script is not known ;

(c) the reasons for the bias in favour of Devanagari Script *vis-a-vis* the regional languages ; and

(d) the difficulties to be encountered in accepting telegrams in the respective script of regional languages ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Besides the facility of accepting telegrams in Devanagari script in some telegraph offices, arrangements exist for accepting telegrams in Roman script in all the Telegraph offices in all regions.

(c) Besides Hindi being an official language of the Union, telegrams can be accepted in Devanagari script also, because it has been possible to develop and manufacture teleprinters for transmitting and receiving in that script.

(d) As the exact phonetic reproductions of the script of regional languages require

separate sets of Morse code and teleprinter machines, provision of telegraphs facilities in each language would require extraordinarily large investment besides special course of training and opportunity for the staff to keep up practice and speed. Proliferation of such sets of codes and teleprinter machines representing all or a number of regional languages is not practicable.

Export of Handicrafts

*680. SHRI S. R. DAMANI : Will the Minister of FOREIGN TRADE be pleased to state :

(a) the total exports of handicrafts during 1970-71 and for the two preceding years ;

(b) the major items and the countries which offer sizeable permanent market ; and

(c) how many times the Handicrafts Export Corporation participated in exhibitions outside India and which are the new markets captured as a result thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN TRADE (SHRI L. N. MISHRA) : (a) Total exports of handicrafts during April, 1970—November, 1970 (for which figures are available) amounted to Rs. 55.10 crores. Exports for the two preceding years *i.e.*, 1968-69 and 1969-70 amounted to Rs. 75.24 crores and Rs. 83.29 crores respectively.

(b) A list of major items of exports of handicrafts and the names of the important markets are given in the statement laid on the Table of the House. [*Placed in Library. See No. LT-505/71.*]

(c) The Handicrafts and Handlooms Exports Corporation of India Ltd., participated in the important International exhibitions, as given in Annexure II. The Corporation's participation in the International exhibitions has enabled India in developing a new market in Japan to maintain the tempo of increase in exports of handicrafts to U.S.A. and Canada.

Enquiry into Robbery Committed in Punjab National Bank, New Delhi

*681. SHRI RAMACHANDRAN KADANNAPPALLI : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the enquiry held in the