

have decided to reduce direct shipment to London because of the unremunerative price ; and

(b) if so, what steps have been taken to export tea to other countries directly from India ?

**THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN TRADE (SHRI A. C. GEORGE) :** (a) Government are not aware of any move by tea producers to reduce direct tea shipment to London.

(b) Does not arise.

**SHRI MADHURYA HALDAR :** May I know what is the export position in comparison with the previous year ?

**SHRI A. C. GEORGE :** The export position of tea has definitely improved. In 1969 the export was down to 168 million Kg. whereas in 1970 the export was 208 million Kg. realising for us Rs. 148 crores in foreign exchange. Even in 1971, I am in a position to tell you that 8.26 million Kg. of tea has been exported to UK alone in the first five months in comparison to 5.12 million Kg. last during the same period.

#### Closure of Mahi Unit of Cannanore Spinning and Weaving Mills

\*1425. **SHRI A. K. GOPALAN :** Will the Minister of FOREIGN TRADE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to the closure of Mahi Unit of the Cannanore Spinning and Weaving Mills ;

(b) if so, the reasons for the closure ;

(c) the total number of employees rendered jobless owing to the closure ; and

(d) whether Government propose to take over this Mill through the National Textile Corporation ?

**THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN TRADE (SHRI A. C. GEORGE) :** (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The mill closed down on account of financial difficulties.

(c) About 600.

(d) The affairs of the mill have already been investigated under the Industries (Development and Regulation) Act, and the matter is under examination.

**SHRI A. K. GOPALAN :** May I know whether it is a fact that when the Minister visited Kerala the representatives of the union met him and gave him a memorandum and the Minister promised that he would try to have an inquiry into the matter and see that the Government takes over the mill ; if so, what has happened to that ?

**SHRI A. C. GEORGE :** It is true that the representatives of these two mills met me and represented the matter regarding the difficulties they are facing. Actually, investigation in regard to these two mills, the Cannanore Spinning Mill and the Mahi mill, is over. We have examined the report in consultation with the National Textile Corporation. Since these two units are functioning in two different areas, one in Pondicherry and the other in Kerala, we have informed the concerned State Governments that we are prepared to take over the mills provided the State Government is in a position to discharge their responsibility in connection with this.

**SHRI A. K. GOPALAN :** May I know if the National Textile Corporation had been asking some States in India that they are prepared to take over the closed down mills ; if so, will the Ministry approach the National Textile Corporation and ask them whether they would be able to take over closed mills ?

**SHRI A. C. GEORGE :** Yes, Sir, In such circumstances it is the responsibility of the State Government to take 49 per cent interest as far as the financial affairs are concerned.

#### Takeover of Balmer Lawrie's Tea Warehouse, Calcutta

\*1426. **SHRI DINESH JOARDER :** Will the Minister of FOREIGN TRADE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have since finalised their decision to take over Balmer Lawrie's Tea Warehouse, Hyde Road, Calcutta ; and