

SHRI L. N. MISHRA : European Common Market is not the main reason. Mainly the structure and pattern of our import has changed. From Africa and rupee-payment countries it has increased, especially in the case of raw materials. In the case of Western Europe it has gone down. The import of wheat from Canada and America has gone down considerably.

SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE : Will the hon. Minister give concrete figures about the decline in imports from Western countries year-wise ?

SHRI L. N. MISHRA : The import from West has declined from 67 per cent in 1967-68 to 56 per cent in 1968-69 and 53 per cent in 1969-70.

SHRI BISWANARAYAN SHASTRI : The hon. Minister has stated in the statement.

"To some extent there was a fall in the import demand for certain capital goods in the country due to the industrial recession."

May I know whether there is any decrease in production due to the decrease in the import of capital goods from foreign countries ?

SHRI L. N. MISHRA : As the hon. Member knows, the recession is in the engineering industry. So, there has been less of imports of capital goods required by the engineering industry.

International News Agency

*818. **SHRI M. KATHAMUTHU :** Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether exploration of the possibility of starting an International News Agency with Asian participation and financial assistance from the UNESCO has been suggested by the Mass Communication Sub-Commission of the Indian National Commission for co-operation with the UNESCO;

(b) whether Government have examined this suggestion; and

(c) if so, the decision taken thereon ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI DHARAM BIR SINHA) : (a) Government's attention has been drawn to a draft summary record of discussion at a meeting of the Mass Communication Sub-Commission of the Indian National Commission for Cooperation with UNESCO where such a recommendation has been made. The approved record of this discussion has, however, not been communicated to Government yet.

(b) In the circumstances mentioned in reply to part (a) of the Question, Government have had no occasion to examine the suggestion.

(c) Does not arise.

SHRI M. KATHAMUTHU : I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether it is a fact that some time back the Government had proposed to set-up an independent news agency. If so, what has happened to that proposal.

SHRI DHARAM BIR SINHA : The Government's decision is to promote and support a news agency but not to set-up a news agency of its own.

SHRI M. KATHAMUTHU : In view of the fact that most of the world news agencies dominated by Western imperialist interests are giving distorted news about the developing countries. I would like to know whether the Government of India feels it necessary to set-up an independent news agency ? If so, will the Government pursue the matter ?

SHRI DHARAM BIR SINHA : The Government of India feels the necessity of supporting an Indian international news agency because the effective dissemination of news from and to India is not to the extent which the Government desires.

श्री शशि सूचन : ब्रिटेन और फ्रांस में रायटर जैसी न्यूज एजेंसी क्या इंडिपेंडेंट है ? अगर वह सरकार से 99 परसेंट पैसा पा कर चल सकती है तो हमारे अपने देश में ऐसी न्यूज एजेंसी आप क्यों नहीं बना सकते हैं जो एशिया अफ्रीका तथा दूसरे समाजवादी देशों की खबरें हमें दे सके और अपने देश की खबरें उन तक

पहुँचा सके ? मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि इसके लिये सरकार क्या कार्रवाई कर रही है ?

श्री धर्म बीर सिंह : सरकार चाहती है कि ऐसी समाचार एजेंसी की स्थापना हो जो भारत से अफ्रीका, एशिया या लैटिन अमरीका के देशों को भारत से जाने वाले समाचार भारतीय दृष्टिकोण से और वहाँ से भारत आने वाले समाचार उन देशों के दृष्टिकोण से भेज सके। सरकार अपने तर्ज इस प्रकार की समाचार एजेंसी बनाने का इरादा नहीं रखती है। लेकिन अगर इस तरह की कोई एजेंसी देश में बने तो उसको सरकार हर तरह की सहायता देगी।

SHRI ANANTRAO PATIL : The Minister has said that the government does not desire to start but to promote and assist the news agency. I would like to know whether any attempt has been made to promote the international news agency after the recommendation of various newspaper organisations ?

श्री धर्मबीर सिंह : न्यूजपेपर मार्गनाइजेशन की तरफ से ऐसा कोई प्रतिवेदन का ज्ञान नहीं है (इंटरफ़ॉज)

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI NANDINI SATPATHY) : May I add to the reply given by my colleague that Government is aware of the necessity of such an international news agency and also Government has examined this point and some study has been made in this respect.

Export of Cashew Kernels

*819. **SHRI M. K. KRISHNAN :** Will the Minister of FOREIGN TRADE be pleased to state :

(a) whether cashew kernels exports from Kerala to foreign countries have decreased during the year 1970-71 as against 1969-70 ;

(b) if so, the main reasons for the same; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to improve the export of cashew kernels ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN TRADE (SHRI A. C. GEORGE) : (a) Statewise export figures are not available. As regards overall exports from India during 1969-70 and 1970-71 they stand at Rs. 57.42 crores and Rs. 52.03 crores respectively.

(b) Less off take by the USSR.

(c) The market has since considerably improved. Efforts are being made to develop new markets. S.T.C. has also been asked to take up exports to non-traditional destinations.

SHRI M. K. KRISHNAN : In his reply the Minister had said that steps are being taken to develop new markets. What all steps have so far been taken to develop markets other than the principal buyers, the USSR and the USA ?

SHRI A. C. GEORGE : We are trying to persuade the USSR to buy their usual quota under the trade agreement. Apart from that, we are trying to develop new markets in Canada, Japan and Hong Kong. Over and above this, Western European markets have since been studied recently by a senior official of this Ministry from the point of view of undertaking promotion measures there.

SHRI M. K. KRISHNAN : In view of the fact that our export mainly depends on the import of raw nuts and also in view of the fact that we have to face keen competition from the cashew growing countries, such as Mozambique and Brazil, do Government propose to set up indigenous production of raw nuts in our country itself ?

SHRI A. C. GEORGE : Yes, Sir ; the hon. Member is very correct in saying that we are now dependent for more than 70 per cent of our processing on import of raw materials from Kenya, Tanzania and other East African countries. In view of our overdependence for raw material on foreign countries, we have an ambitious programme for cashew plantation. Already, the Kerala Government has pushed through a cashew