

SHRI P. GOPALAN : The Tashkent Declaration has clearly laid down the necessity of setting up an Indo-Pak joint machinery to discuss what further steps should be taken to normalise Indo-Pakistan relations. I would like to know from the hon. Minister what steps have been taken and how far such steps have been successful and whether there is any proposal with the Government to take the initiative to sign a no-war pact with Pakistan along with the setting up of a joint machinery to discuss and settle outstanding disputes.

SHRI DINESH SINGH : One meeting between the Ministers of the two countries had taken place shortly after the Declaration was made. Since then it has not been possible to hold another meeting. We are quite ready to go to a meeting or to invite the Pakistanis to come here, but they have not shown any inclination to continue this dialogue.

Regarding the no-war pact, it has been already stated in this House on a number of occasions that Pakistan wanted machinery to be set up and we had said that we would be willing to set up a machinery to discuss all outstanding differences between Pakistan and India.

Export of Tea to U. K.

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- *514. **SHRI JYOTIRMOY BASU :**
SHRI K. HALDER :
SHRI BHAGBAN DAS :
SHRI B. K. MODAK :
SHRI GANESH GHOSH :

Will the Minister of FOREIGN TRADE be pleased to state :

(a) the quantity of shipment of tea to U. K. during the first eight months of the years 1968 and 1969 from North and South India, separately ;

(b) whether it is a fact that tea prices have fallen so sharply in U. K. that producers in North and South India have cut their shipments for sale in London auction ; and

(c) if so, the Unit value of tea shipped to London during the above period and the steps, if any, being taken to improve the position ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN TRADE (SHRI RAM SEWAK) : (a) to (c). Sir, A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) The quantities of tea shipped to the U. K. during the first eight months of 1968 and 1969 from North and South India were :—

	1968	1969
North India	41.06 million kg.	26.94 million kg.
South India	8.46 million kg.	4.32 million kg.

(b) Yes, Sir. Following a steady decline in tea prices realised in the London auctions there has been some diversion of tea to the auctions in India.

(c) The unit values of tea realised in the U. K. during the first eight months of 1968 and 1969 were Rs. 8.40 per kilogram and Rs. 7.38 per kilogram respectively.

With supply in excess of demand in the export market and with the increase in production particularly in the East African Countries reliance is primarily put on international action to stabilise tea price. As an immediate measure, producing countries have agreed to withhold 90 million lbs. of tea from their estimated exports during 1970. An international Consultative Committee on Tea has been established under the Food and Agriculture Organisation to keep the market situation under constant review and to make recommendations on short-term and medium term measures and later to develop longer-term schemes for stabilising tea prices on equitable and remunerable level.

Producing countries are also considering measures to continue and intensify the campaign for promotion of tea in the U. K.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BASU : We are facing a real crisis. We are giving 42 per cent of our total export earnings for servicing foreign loans and also as interest, and unless we can really get full value for all the export that we make to foreign countries, we shall be doomed for good. We would like to know from the Government what specific steps they have taken to establish the image of Indian tea as an

identity in the world market, because I may point out that when the French wine manufacturers were approached by the Algerian wine manufacturers to blend the two and market it in one bottle, the French manufacturers opposed it because they said the image of French wine would be destroyed with the customer.

I would also like to know what steps have been taken to negotiate with foreign countries where there is heavy import duty on tea to reduce the import duty.

THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN TRADE (SHRI B. R. BHAGAT) : The question of duty is an internal matter, and every country has the right to levy duty. We enter into discussions with them.

SHRI RANGA : There is the Kennedy Round.

SHRI B. R. BHAGAT : It is true in the Kennedy Round there has been a dismantling of duty. So far as the European Common Market is concerned, we have taken steps to see that the restrictions on the entry of tea, both quantitative and fiscal, are brought down, and therefore we are engaged on this question all the time. Wherever this difficulty comes in, we certainly enter into dialogues with the country concerned. So, at the moment, the question is not of the import duty as such, but the question is that in the world market the supply of tea is more than the demand. The demand for tea is rising by less than one per cent every year, and therefore the main thing is to increase the demand for tea. All over its consumption should grow. For example, coffee consumption every year is growing much faster than tea.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BASU : Because you were sleeping for over 20 years.

The Minister has got the wrong end of the stick. As has been suggested on the floor of the House many a time, export of packet tea is the only solution, and in that one of the hindrances is the high import duty in certain countries from which we import a lot of items. I will only quote Mr. Hem Barua's...

MR. SPEAKER : He should come to the question.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BASU : This is a very important thing. The country is going to be doomed. We are paying 42 per cent of our total export earnings for servicing of foreign loans and you do not want to encourage discussion on this ?

The solution lies in the export of packet tea to be marketed through the grocers channel. After two years of hammering on the head of the Government, they have in principle accepted the theory that it should be done. I do not know what they are doing in this regard, but I want to draw the attention of the Government to another thing. There is the British wholesale Grocers' Bulletin which shows the trend of prices for items that are used in the household, daily necessities, the musts. I will show that tea and also sugar...

MR. SPEAKER : I asked you to come to a straight question.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BASU : I thought you liked the economics to be discussed in this House. If you do not I will not.

I would like to draw the attention of the Government to this Federation's Index of Wholesale Prices of Groceries and Provisions. For items such as tea and sugar, while in January, 1963, it was 99.7 and in June, 1967, it was again 99.7, for other items, as for example, biscuits, it has gone up from 101.7 to 115.5. While a British worker is earning about three times as much as others, he pays more price for all the daily necessities barring tea and sugar, what steps have the Government taken when you are hand in glove with other countries, good and bad—with the British Government, to see that our tea gets a fair and proper price in respect of the consumer ? Nothing at all.

SHRI B. R. BHAGAT : I purposely did not mention about package tea because, at the moment, a Parliamentary Committee, the Consultative Committee, is going into this. The hon. Member is a member of that Committee, and I am expecting a report on the package tea. But generally, it is true that instead of loose tea if we export tea in package form, we will get a much higher unit value.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BASU : Rs. 400 crores every year.

SHRI B. R. BHAGAT : In this matter, the hon. Member knows that our first handicap is that we have not yet been able to build up our national package tea industry and I think the Committee will submit a feasible report on that, and I can assure him that we will implement that and we will try to set up a package tea industry, a national industry, in our own country either in the public sector or in the joint sector, whatever form is more practical. But the main difficulty in the export of package tea, as the hon. Members know and many Members also know, is that there is a very strong national package monopoly in tea in many of the countries, and it is very difficult to persuade any government to allow package tea to be imported into their country, because of the very strong national monopolies that many of them have.

SHRI K. HALDER : May I know how many demonstration centres are functioning in foreign countries and what sort of brew of the tea is available there ?

SHRI B. R. BHAGAT : This question relates to the United Kingdom. I do not have the information at the moment, since the question relates only to the United Kingdom. In the United Kingdom, there are two tea centres, one is London and the other in Edinburgh perhaps. Two centres are operating and they have a budget ; they do the publicity and marketing, including the demonstration in the tea which the hon. Members refers to.

श्री भगवान दास : मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि पिछले तीन सालों में चाय का कितना उत्पादन हुआ है और उसका कितना प्रतिशत विदेशों को भेजा गया है ? मैं यह भी जानना चाहता हूँ कि जिन-जिन देशों में हमारी चाय का कम सेल होता है उन देशों में सेल को बढ़ाने के लिए सरकार क्या कदम उठाने जा रही है ?

श्री ब० रा० भगत : पूरे उत्पादन और निर्यात की फीगर्स तो हर साल पब्लिश की जाती हैं। इस समय मेरे पास वे सारे आंकड़े नहीं हैं। यूनाइटेड किंगडम के सम्बन्ध में मैं बता सकता हूँ कि सन 1967 में 107 करोड़

रुपए की चाय भेजी गई थी जो कि सन 1968 में कम होकर 86 करोड़ की रह गई। सभी देशों में पिछले साल, 1968 में 91 करोड़ की भेजी गई और इस साल ९ महीनों में 70 करोड़ की चाय अभी तक भेजी जा चुकी है।

SHRI GANESH GHOSH : May I know what special developmental programme for the expansion of tea drinking habit abroad has been taken since 1967, particularly to fight the competition of coffee from Brazil and American fruit juice ?

SHRI B. R. BHAGAT : It is true that the Coffee Board is spending much more money in the international market for the promotion of coffee, as compared to the Tea Board, and therefore the *per capita* consumption of coffee has been growing much faster than in the case of tea. In the case of tea, in co-operation with other countries, we are trying to promote tea drinking. In U. K. we are spending quite a lot of money. Our budget for expenditure in U. K. in 1969-70 is Rs. 14,39,000. In America, Germany and the European market also we are promoting tea drinking. In other countries like Japan there is a good market and we are trying to exploit and increase it.

SHRIMATI ILA PALCHOU DHURI : Is the hon. Minister aware that from Japan there was a requisition to buy 10,000 kg. of green tea ? What is the government doing to make green tea popular in India so that producers here may grow it ?

MR. SPEAKER : That is a separate question.

SHRI LOBO PRABHU : The decrease in the export of tea from South is about 50 per cent, very much higher than the decrease from North India. Is the Minister aware that it is related to the low grade quality of the tea produced in the South which has to face stiff competition from African tea ? Under these circumstances, without waiting for the results of the Committee which has been appointed, would the Minister allow the South Indian tea a higher reduction in export duty ?

SHRI B. R. BHAGAT : That point is always kept in mind at the time of framing

the budget proposals. But it is true that the fall in the export value, not in quantity, of the South Indian tea is mainly due to the fact that in auctions it is getting a lower unit value. The fall in unit value is much more in the case of South Indian tea, It has to face stiff competition and there is a glut in the world market because of production in other countries of that particular variety of tea.

SHRI LOBO PRABHU : What about reduction of excise duty? Would you allow it?

SHRI B. R. BHAGAT : I cannot say that.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA : In view of the fact that a loss of nearly Rs. 15 crores of foreign exchange has been incurred by the tea industry as a result of over production and less of export outside and in view also of the fact that our tea export trade is mostly controlled by the foreign monopolists, may I know whether the government is going to nationalise the tea export trade or at least the European tea gardens?

SHRI B. R. BHAGAT : The problem of tea is a more complex one and it cannot be solved by merely taking over the export trade. If it will help the interests of the public, I agree with the hon. Member that I am not only not against it but I am in favour of taking up more and more ventures in the public sector where it results in efficiency in the industry and public good. If there is a loss or dislocation by taking over a unit, I do not think we would be doing the right thing to socialise or nationalise it just for the sake of taking it over. Tea is one of those commodities where the position is a little complex. At the moment the supply of tea in the world market is much more than the demand. Demand is picking up much less as compared to production. So, some international action is necessary to regulate supply. Under the FAO that action is being taken. We are trying to regulate supply so as to get a higher unit value.

Then, the quality of the tea must be kept up. As producers of tea we have to see that our quality does not go down. Similarly, we must build up our packaging. We do not have expertise. Let us have

control in the internal market before we launch our export programme. As it is a highly competitive market we have to proceed step by step. If the purposes of public good and efficiency are served then I am one with the hon. Member about taking over anything in the public sector.

श्री हुकम चन्द कछवाय : अभी मंत्री महोदय ने बतलाया कि हमारी चाय बड़ी लोकप्रिय होती जा रही है और दुनिया के काफी देशों में उसकी जितनी माँग है वह हम पूरी नहीं कर पाते...

श्री ब० रा० भगत : मैं नहीं कहा।

श्री हुकम चन्द कछवाय : तो मैं सरकार से पूछना चाहता हूँ कि जितनी हमारी चाय बाहर जाती है और उसमें जो मुनाफा होता है उसका कितना प्रतिशत उन चाय बागानों में काम करने वाले मजदूरों को वोनस के रूप में बाँटा जाता है? चाय बागान के मालिकों को जो भारी मुनाफा होता है उसमें से चाय बागान में काम करने वाले मजदूरों को भी वोनस आदि के रूप में अधिक पैसा मिले इसके लिए मन्त्री महोदय क्या कोई कदम उठाने जा रहे हैं?

MR. SPEAKER : The question is not relevant. Further, the question hour is over.

श्री हुकम चन्द कछवाय : उससे सम्बन्धित क्यों नहीं है। मेरा प्रश्न एकदम संगत है। यह जो चाय बागान के मालिक चाय से मुनाफा कमाते हैं तो उस मुनाफे में से मजदूरों को अधिक पैसा क्यों नहीं देते हैं?

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

राष्ट्रीय प्रतिरक्षा प्रकाशनी के पाठ्यक्रम के पुनरीक्षण के बारे में महाजन समिति का प्रतिवेदन

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श्री जगन्नाथ राव जोशी :