

well as the other scheme of handicrafts, which again attracts poorer people and artisans in the country and are very important schemes for weavers as well as handicrafts will receive top priority. And we will see that no cuts affect the continuance of these schemes. We do hope with the support and sympathy of the House we might, in the supplementary Grants, get even more money.

[Translation]

**SHRI ABDUL HANNAN ANSARI :** Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, two questions have been combined here and it has created difficulties, because they are connected with two different subjects.

I want to ask the hon. Minister whether it is a fact that after the announcement of the new Textile Policy, the rich businessmen and capitalists who own textile mills have indiscreetly raised the price of cotton from 10 per cent to 35 per cent and the burden of which has to be shouldered by the weavers who are groaning about the consequent glut in their stocks ?

Is it also true that cotton is being exported abroad and because of the resultant shortage, the price of cotton has increased ?

Is it also a fact that the Government agency which provides cotton to the weavers does not keep that variety of cotton which is required by the ordinary weaver ? If so, whether the Government is proposing to provide some relief to the poor people by reducing the artificial and non-practical hike in the price of cotton ? What do you propose to do in this regard ?

**SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA :** The handloom industry gets its raw material from several sources. There are cooperative societies which manufacture cotton yarn in the mills in the cooperative sector. We have also set up a corporation which buys cotton from various places to give it to the weavers. We have not yet received any complaints regarding such

shortages or such exorbitant rise in prices of cotton. Of course, the prices have increased, but we do not think that they are too much. The prices are being watched carefully. The cooperative societies and the corporation, the headquarter of which is at Lucknow, would make an effort together to provide cotton to meet any shortage.

So far as the question of export of cotton is concerned, the Government has framed a policy according to which 6 lakh bales of cotton will be exported every year during the next three years. Along with it, not only cotton, but thread is also being exported, because the international situation seems favourable for it. We are getting a good price in the international market and the internal situation is also not being particularly affected much by it. However, we are aware of the situation and we would continue to watch the situation and would see to it that such conditions are not created which may affect the handloom or other sectors adversely.

**Proposal for Export of Groundnuts**

\*153. **SHRI DHARAM PAL SINGH MALIK :** Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal under consideration of Government to export groundnuts ;

(b) if so, the broad outlines of the proposal ;

(c) the names of countries to which groundnuts are to be exported ; and

(d) the terms of the export and the foreign exchange likely to be earned as a result thereof ?

**THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BRAHMA DUTT) :** (a) to (d). A Statement is given below.

**Statement**

(a) and (b) : Exports of HPS groundnuts are permitted on OGL as per present Export Policy.

(c) Our traditional markets for exports of HPS groundnut are the U. K., Holland, West Germany, Japan and USSR. In recent years, the bulk of our export of this commodity have been to USSR.

(d) No specific terms on export are stipulated in respect of HPS groundnut. While exports to GCA are against 100% of credit, the exports to Rupee Payment Currency areas have as per recent amendment been permitted against 98% irrevocable letter of credit subject to the balance 2% being repatriated within 6 months from the date of shipment of the first consignment.

**[Translation]**

**SHRI DHARAM PAL SINGH MALIK:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I want to ask the hon. Minister whether it is a fact that certain amendments have been made in the instructions regarding export of groundnuts ; if so, what are the details thereof, and the reasons for doing so ? What measures are being taken by the Government to increase the export earnings in the coming years ?

**SHRI BRAHMA DUTT :** Sir, generally, we consider groundnuts as a source for producing oil ; so its export is not included in our Export Policy. But certain HPS, which are hand-picked, are exported. We mostly export them to the tune of Rs. 20 to 22 crores. We are making efforts to increase our earnings, but as there is a shortage of edible oils in our country, we cannot include it under the OGL.

**SHRI DHARAM PAL SINGH MALIK:** The condition of the farmers producing groundnuts is pitiable and their profits are generally pocketed by the middlemen. In this connection, I want to ask the hon. Minister as to what is the total production of groundnuts and whether there

has been an increase or a decrease in its production ? Does the Government want to provide any incentives to the farmers in this regard ?

**SHRI BRAHMA DUTT :** The figures are not with me at present ; I will provide them to the hon. Member separately. But according to the policy of the Government, the imported oil including vegetable oil are not to be exported and our own people are to be encouraged. This would benefit the groundnut producers.

**SHRI ANOOPCHAND SHAH :** The production of groundnuts is maximum in the States of Gujarat and Maharashtra. It is due to the shortage of groundnuts that we have to import oil. Is it a fact that our production of groundnuts is not adequate for meeting the oil requirements of our country ?

**SHRI BRAHMA DUTT :** In my reply to the first question, I have already said that it is because of shortage of our oilseeds production that we have to import oil. Our policy is not to depend on imported edible oil, but to increase our own production. Hence, we are making special efforts to increase the production of groundnuts and other oilseeds.

**Gold Import Policy**

\*154 **SHRI MOOL CHAND DAGA :** Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have had a new policy in respect of gold import effective from 28 August, 1986 ;

(b) if so, the object of this policy ;

(c) whether the ornament exporters have been benefited due to this policy ;

(d) if so, the details thereof ;

(e) whether Government propose to continue with this policy ; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor ?